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COFFEE FARMING IN UGANDA

World's best coffees are produced in East Africa which are mainly known for their co-ops, which are often formed at some washing stations and some known wet mills. This is the birthplace of coffee beans.

In Uganda Coffee is the most important cash crop throughout all the years, making it the top export business earner since the 1980s. It has also specialized in the production of 2 types of Coffee, which is the Arabica which is grown at high altitudes that are ranging between 1,300-2,300m above sea level and meanwhile the Robusta coffee is grown at lower altitudes ranging from 900-1,500m above sea level making Ugandan coffee to possess the best qualities due to a high altitude, soils, and farming systems that cannot be easily found on elsewhere in the world. The Arabica coffee only grows in a high altitude area of South Eastern Uganda as well as in South Western Uganda.

Coffee is grown in five areas: the Central, Western, South-Western, Northern, and Eastern regions. The last one comprises the Busoga regions (Robusta) and the Mountain Elgon region (Arabica). The Northern Region comprises the Mid-North (Robusta) and North-Western region (Arabica & Robusta). The South-western and Western regions produce both Robusta and Arabica. For Robusta, we have two varieties which is known as the Nganda and Erecta. High-yielding Clonal Robusta Coffee, which yields almost four times as much as traditional varieties, are being

planted to replace old and diseased trees. For Arabica, there are a number of varieties, SL 28 (high altitude), SL 14 (medium-altitude), KP 423 (medium), and the traditional Nyasaland grown in the Mountain Elgon region, Rwenzori Region, as well on the mountains of Zeu in Zombo District.

Coffee is produced by an estimated 1.7 million small-plot coffee farmers from 108 districts. The altitude ranges from 800 to 1,400 meters above sea level for Robusta and 2,300 to 6,000 metres above sea level for Arabica. The high altitude, especially for Ugandan Robusta, makes it very unique and characterised by intrinsic quality characteristics/attributes. Sustainable and specialty coffees are being sold to niche markets at high premiums compared to conventional grades.

2020 sees Uganda as Africa's largest coffee exporter, overtaking Ethiopia as the continent's largest coffee producer.