

Sustainable Harvest Coffee Importers



“ Sustainable Harvest invests in helping coffee farmers improve their livelihoods and buys coffee from smallholder farmers at fair prices from Central and South America and East Africa for import to North American markets. ”

COMPANY INFORMATION

★ Headquarters

United States

Countries of operation

Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Honduras, Malawi, México, Nicaragua, Perú, Rwanda, Tanzania, United States

Year founded

1997

Annual revenue

~US\$78 million

Employees

26-100

Sector

Agriculture

COMPANY HISTORY

Sustainable Harvest was founded in 1997. Since then, it has formed alliances with smallholder farmers in three regions, entering Central America in 2002, South America in 2006, and East Africa in 2007. Today, Sustainable Harvest has 36 dedicated staff members, and imports coffee from 14 countries around the world, with offices in Portland, Oregon; Oaxaca, Mexico; Lima, Peru; and Moshi and Kigoma, Tanzania.

In 2011, Sustainable Harvest generated US\$78 million in revenue, and it has been listed as one of the fastest growing companies in *Inc. Magazine's* annual list since 2008.

WHO THEY ARE

Sustainable Harvest Coffee Importers is an import company that buys coffee from smallholder farmers at fair prices for sale in North American markets.

HOW THEY REACH THE BOP

About 95 percent of Sustainable Harvest's coffee comes from farmers who live at the base of the pyramid. Most live in rural, highland communities in Latin America, where there are few formal jobs and little economic activity. Most never went beyond primary school, and many of them face food insecurity for one to two months a year. Their average farm is less than 2 hectares, they make most of their cash income from coffee production, and they have limited access to basic goods. Sustainable Harvest also buys from smallholder coffee farmers in East Africa, who generally earn little money from coffee production and have limited access to health and education services. Their livelihood is vulnerable to weather, drought, and political events that disrupt production.

In both regions, Sustainable Harvest tries to help farmers move from subsistence to sustainability by helping them improve the quality of their product, by including them in its negotiations with the final buyer, and by helping them to make informed decisions about the sale of their product. Sustainable Harvest operates according to a "relationship model," emphasizing transparency and sharing its costs, pricing, and transactional information with its supply chain partners. The company is highly committed to being transparent about where its coffee comes from and where it is sold.

SUSTAINABLE HARVEST'S IMPACT

In the past, finance organizations have been reluctant to lend money to smallholder farmers because they lack traditional forms of collateral, and as a result, it is difficult for them to grow beyond subsistence. To help smallholder farmers access financing, Sustainable Harvest contracts coffee from them six months ahead of scheduled delivery, which allows them to get loans using their coffee contracts as collateral.

Sustainable Harvest also helps farmers boost their yields and the quality of their production by offering them training and technical assistance. The company invests one-third of its retained earnings in providing training, technical assistance, and financial education to its farmers, teaching them to use organic fertilizers rather than chemicals and connecting them with finance organizations, international NGOs, and coffee roasters—partnerships that attract funding to support infrastructure for education and business operations.

LINKS AND RESOURCES

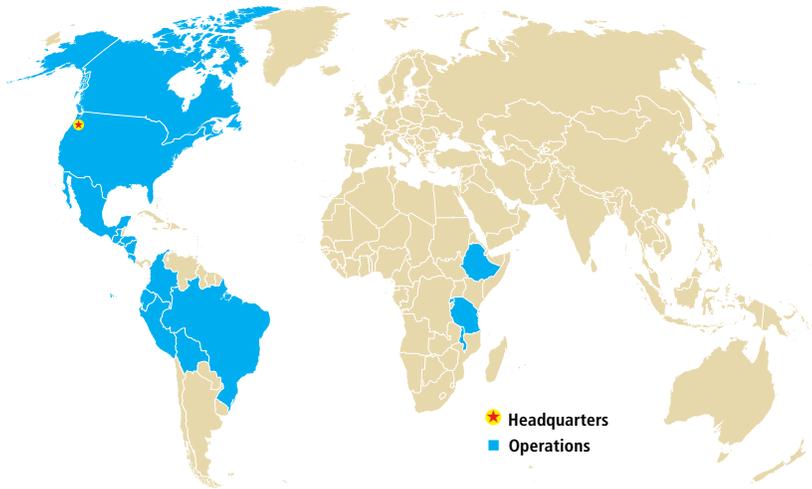
Official website <http://www.sustainableharvest.com/>

Stories of impact <http://www.sustainableharvest.com/stories/>

Sustainable Harvest Coffee Importers

GEOGRAPHY/EXPANSION

Sustainable Harvest has expanded, forming alliances with smallholder farmers in three regions, entering Central America in 2002, South America in 2006, and East Africa in 2007.



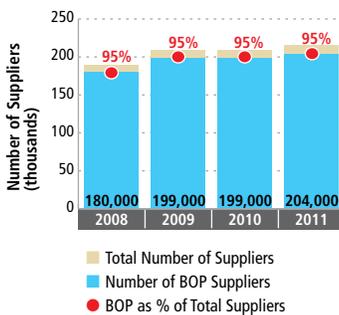
“ *The cooperative is very special to me because we began in poverty, but we got organized, we started helping each other, and we looked for a market that would be fair to us.* ”

— Romulo Sanchez,
President of Rio Azul Cooperative



KEY DEVELOPMENT RESULTS

BOP suppliers are organized into cooperative associations. The numbers below are for all the countries Sustainable Harvest operates in.



“ *There are hundreds of thousands of men and women in Mexico and the other coffee-growing countries around the world who depend on coffee for their livelihood but have no idea how to sell it.* ”