

New Nespresso blend helps revive fragile coffee farming in the DRC

Nespresso has released Kahawa ya Congo, the first organic coffee blend in its Reviving Origins range and a coffee that helps revitalise one of the world's most fragile farming regions. Meaning 'hope of Congo', the Kahawa ya Congo seasonal blend is grown on the rain-rich volcanic soils of Lake Kivu in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) where the once-thriving coffee farming community has been devastated by decades of political and economic instability.



Source: Supplied

Nespresso's Reviving Origins programme aims to restore coffee production in regions impacted by adversities such as conflict, economic hardship, and environmental disasters. Since its launch in 2019, the programme has enabled production of exceptional coffees from challenged areas of Zimbabwe, Uganda, Colombia and now, the DRC, to become available as seasonal coffees for Nespresso fans.

The brand's sustainable sourcing model in coffee-producing countries, the Nespresso AAA Sustainable Quality Program, provides the foundation for its work in Reviving Origins regions and involves more than 110,000 farmers across the world.

Yassir Corpataux, MEA coffee ambassador said: "We're delighted to introduce one of the world's finest and most exclusive blends to consumers. Through our Reviving Origins programme, we're helping the farmers of Kivu to restore Congolese coffee to its full glory and rebuild their livelihoods, while bringing vital social support to enhance the welfare of the communities behind our Kahawa ya Congo coffee."



Source: Supplied

Reviving coffee and communities in Kivu

Just four decades ago, coffee was the second most important export for DRC and ranked among the world's finest, but years of upheaval have led to coffee volumes falling 10-fold since 1980. For many hard-working communities that have farmed these lands for generations, their way of life is now at risk of disappearing.

Nespresso, together with global non-profit TechnoServe, the U.S Agency for International Development (USAID) and coffee trader Virunga Coffee/Olam International, are working with 2,500 farmers in South Kivu to improve coffee quality and yield, and embed sustainable farming practices, while increasing incomes. Nespresso is also in the process of expanding the programme across North Kivu to potentially include up to 1,700 organic certified farmers.

Kivu coffee farmer, Turanyi Kabasura, said: "I see my remaining days being better than those in the past, because I am going to work, assured of receiving regular pay and a bonus each time after the coffee sale. In my whole life, no one has ever given me such a bonus. I can use that to develop other strategies, such as raising small livestock, or my wife can run a small business. I am starting to see the results of my work."

Addressing healthcare challenges

The project also goes beyond coffee, with plans in place to tackle healthcare challenges impacting farming communities in DRC. In partnership with the Eastern Congo Initiative (ECI), Nespresso is investing CHF1m to support the establishment of 23 water access points across the Kivu region, in addition to one primary and five mobile health clinics, which will deliver 13,000 health consultations per year to local communities, helping in the fight against cholera, a major health issue in the country.

The rain-rich volcanic soils along the Kivu lakeshores of Eastern Congo are ideal for growing specialty Arabicas. The Organic Kahawa ya Congo coffee is split roast, meaning that a small portion of the beans gets a darker roast to bring out the full intensity and body of the coffee.



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In cup, Nespresso says the smooth and balanced Arabica reveals "alluring sweet cereal and nutty aromas", reflecting its ideal terroir origin. With milk, these aromas are transformed into a light, sweet and creamy cup full of biscuity notes, a hint of walnut and a silky texture. Kahawa ya Congo is now available online and at Nespresso boutiques.

Alongside this launch, Nespresso is also reintroducing two other seasonal Reviving Origins coffees for 2021, helping bring long-term economic stability to local farmers, as well as showcasing their craftsmanship to the world: Amaha awe Uganda, a single-origin coffee with medium acidity and body grown in the Rwenzori Mountains of Uganda; and Tamuka mu Zimbabwe, a flowery espresso from the famous Honde Valley in the Zimbabwean Eastern highlands.

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