



Location: La Libertad Province, El Salvador

Partner Institution: Banco Hipotecario

Crop: Coffee (production, processing, roasting)

Use of Funds: Working capital

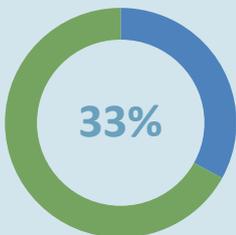
El Salvador's Coffee Production at a Glance



1.8% of El Salvadorian forest is primary forest, where native species are **untouched** by human activities.



7% of forested land in El Salvador are **shade-grown coffee plantations**.



33% of the coffee produced in El Salvador is certified by sustainability standards.

32.2 million tons of carbon are stored by coffee plants in El Salvador annually, or the equivalent amount of carbon released by **6.8 million** cars driven each year.



Coffee from Siberia

Fabio Morán and Epifanio Silva began growing coffee in the Apaneca-Ilamatepec mountain range in El Salvador in 1870. The tradition has been passed down from generation to generation and inspired the establishment of the business known today as “Sicafe.” They named their farm La Siberia for its hostile weather conditions and difficult accessibility. The mountainous region where they still grow coffee under the Sicafe brand, encompasses a biosphere reserve extending across 53,000 hectares: including forests, lava flows, and lagoons. The region is home to a diverse set of flora and fauna, out of which 14 plant and 23 bird species are endangered.

The family maintains its entrepreneurial spirit by managing six coffee farms spread across the Apaneca-Ilamatepec region, running a wet and dry coffee mill named San Pedro, and developing its own brand of estate coffee, Entre Cerros. Their mill can process around 150 tons of coffee per season and provides milling and trading services to small-holder farmers. The Silvas’ farms are mainly planted with Bourbon and Pacamara coffee varieties and are situated between 1,400 and 1,720 meters above sea level, allowing Sicafe to produce high-quality shade-grown coffee. To date, the company has won nine national and international coffee awards.

Banco Hipotecario

[Banco Hipotecario](#) has been a key partner institution of the eco.business Fund since 2015 and is one of the few institutions that specializes in the agricultural sector in El Salvador. The bank has developed an expertise in providing credit to companies in the coffee value chain who's production is either certified or are willing to pivot their practices and become more sustainable. The bank, with a dedicated team of agronomists, monitors and evaluates each client's practices and overall performance.



Coffee cherries

Responsibly Produced Coffee

Throughout the entire production process the Silva family seeks to minimize the environmental impact of their company by using natural resources sustainably and contributing to the preservation of El Salvador's biodiversity. As part of their sustainable farming practices, the Silva family grows coffee under shade instead of clearing up valuable trees to make space for the farm. They also plant coffee varieties that can withstand the effects of climate change.

In addition, they only use rainwater to process coffee, made possible by a water reservoir the family has built and expanded over the years. The company also applies different techniques to make its wastewater from the milling process as safe as possible for the environment by using natural fertilizers and removing contaminants. The purified wastewater is then reused helping to achieve a 50% reduction in their overall water consumption.

In addition to the sustainable use of water, Sicafe also uses other eco-friendly methods, such as improved processes for removing the outer cherry husks and sugars for both dry and wet coffee.

Furthermore, the company is committed to reducing the use of chemical fertilizers by using worms, vermiculture, to create compost. They also treat coffee leaf rust with ecological fungicides instead of conventional chemicals.

Not only does the environment thrive from the farming practices of Sicafe, but the local community benefits from Sicafe's social engagements as well. During the harvest and processing seasons, the firm employs around 450 local workers who receive better salaries than the average worker in El Salvador, as well as free medical assistance. The company also offers a food aid program for senior citizens with scarce resources. Sicafe's sustainable business model proves that it is possible to adapt to changing climate conditions, caring for our ecological and social environment, and still lead a flourishing business.

About us - The eco.business Fund aims to promote business and consumption practices that contribute to biodiversity conservation, to the sustainable use of natural resources, and to mitigate climate change and adapt to its impacts. By providing financing for business practices that conserve nature and foster biodiversity, the fund seeks investments with both environmental and financial returns. The fund mainly provides loans to qualified financial institutions that on-lend the money to eligible borrowers, which include holders of recognized certifications or those making improvements in line with conservation and biodiversity goals. The fund supports sustainable operations in the sectors of agriculture, fishery (including aquaculture), forestry and tourism. For additional information please visit www.ecobusiness.fund or email us at: info@ecobusiness.fund

In Brief: Sicafe's Sustainable Practices

Sustainable Practices	Benefits
 Shade-grown coffee system	Serves as a carbon sink Reduces use of chemical fertilizers Prevents soil erosion
 Coffee plant renewal	More resistance to pests Greater productivity
 Ecological coffee pulpers	Efficient use of water
 Water recycling and rainwater collection	Efficient use of water Access to water during low rainfall
 Water treatment tanks and wastewater discharge to a sedimentation field	Efficient use of water Avoids contaminating the region's watershed as wastewater is purified
 Integrated pest management	Reduces use of chemical fertilizers Reduces use of energy

Funded by:



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