

Songbird Foundation film at SCAA to document successes of sustainable high quality coffee growing.

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The Songbird Foundation announced today they are collaborating with the Center for Digital Communications at Vashon College, to create a film illustrating the importance of sustainable coffee growing and the specific solutions making a positive difference for farmers around the world.

Songbird Foundation is reaching out to other organizations in the specialty coffee industry to support the effort and contribute expertise in agroecology, deforestation, habitat restoration, and crop diversification. The film's production plans include interviewing dozens of coffee experts at this year's 20th annual conference of the Specialty Coffee Association of America in Minneapolis. Additional location production is planned in parts of Latin America including Guatemala, where sustainable techniques are just starting to take hold.

"The coincidence that organic shade-grown coffee produces a better tasting product and the world wide trend of more sophisticated coffee taste buds, allows an unprecedented opportunity to have the market help drive the issues of sustainability." Notes, Danny O'Keefe, founder of Songbird. "There are many economies in the tropical zones of the Earth for which coffee is the chief export and many lives, both human and other, as well as significant ecosystems, are dependent on the way coffee has been traditionally raised: under a forested-canopy of trees."

The film is planned not as an expose, but as a presentation of current problems coffee growers face and potential solutions. One of the film's producers, Miles Small editor of CoffeeTalk magazine explained, "Growers can adopt 'heritage' style agricultural practices, processors can embrace technological change to reduce energy use, innovation in the transportation of coffee can be implemented to maximize efficient energy usage, roasters can look for ways to conserve energy and seek alternative energy sources, and retailers can look for machines and systems that tread lightly on the world's resources."

The film's director is veteran filmmaker, Frank Foster who was a Senior Vice President at Sony Pictures, before returning to documentary productions. His recent film "One Bucket of Water" was also shot in Guatemala and has helped bring international attention to Florence Cassassuce, the inventor of the UV Bucket (recently featured on CNN), which is allowing poor families to purify water. According to Foster the timing of the new film couldn't be better. "To collect the solutions, demonstrate the successes and present a big picture of how all the parts can work together, is incredibly important especially at a time where climate change and global food shortages are suddenly part of the mix."

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