



KGBM Cooperative – Pegasing Farmers Group **Tengah Aceh, Jagong Jeget Sub-District, Sumatra**

Partner since: 2017

Traceable to: 2,276 Members

Altitude:

Varietals:

Processing:

Harvest: October November December January

Booking: December January February March

Arrivals: January February March April



Community Context

Arul means ‘water’, Badak means ‘Rhino’ – this group grabbed their name from a rhino that comes from their area. Their area is about 40 km (but 2+ hours) straight uphill from Takengon, and first turned to coffee in the late '90s. Farmers here still use the trusty machete and hoe for farming extremely small gardens.



Country Context

To talk about Sumatra we need to speak of its size. It's large. Larger than Texas and Florida combined. In the middle of the island is a caldera called Lake Toba: the largest caldera from the largest volcanic explosion this world has ever seen. In this lake there is an island bigger than the country of Singapore. It is because of this lake that Sumatra has the largest rainfall seen by any coffee exporting country – the lake feeds clouds trapped in by the island's 1500m tall mountains.

Sumatra is old. When Marco Polo visited the island's northern tip back in 1292, he found the local people speaking Sanskrit, one of the purest remaining forms of the ancient language. When the Dutch East Indian Trading Company came, Aceh (and later Java) became the first commercial coffee origins that the world had seen.

Sumatra is big; I know we already said that, but it is really, really big. There are over 52 languages over four major ethnic groups (Acehnese, Minangkabau, Batak and Mala) covering an area over 170,500 square miles around. However big the island, however, there is only one government-authorized port of export – the 15 million person city of Medan. To get here, coffee has to travel as far as 375 miles, over massive mountains and on roads that are mostly still mud.

That's 20 hours north to the producing regions Gayo Aceh, or 24 hours to the southern most Arabica regions in Kerinci. And this is the main reason that Sumatran coffee is hulled while wet, and dried while in the green. Called Giling Basah, this process starts with coffee parchment being dried to 30-50% moisture before being milled into green beans. Higher moisture during transport from the farm to the port can lead to the classic 'earthy, musty' flavors that you get in some Sumatrans.

Another source of Sumatra's unique flavors dates back to the turn of the 20th century when Indonesia's coffee crop was wiped out by leaf rust. Much of this was replaced with HDT (Hybrid de Timor) (Bourbon x Robusta), its direct descendant Tim Tim, or the more modern Sigarar Utang (Tim Tim x Bourbon).

And these are Robusta-Arabica hybrids; over the generations these have only added more Arabica

through crossing Tim-Tim and with Sigarar Utang (Ateng). But there are pure Arabica strains as well, like Jember (Bourbon x Typica), USDA (Ethiopian Arabica transplant), and Onan Ganjan (Jember x Bourbon). So the genetic stock is absolutely unique.

But what makes Sumatra truly unique are Sumatrans. As a new generation takes the reigns, they are taking the country headlong into specialty. The past years have seen an explosion of washed coffees, naturals, honeys, new varietals, new regions and new ways of thinking about Sumatra's role in specialty coffee. Not just locally, but regionally –Indonesian coffee has so much to offer, and so much of what comes out of Bali, Flores, Timor and Sulawesi comes through Sumatra.