



Mrimbo Uuwo AMCOS

Kilimanjaro, Tanzania

Partner since: 2022

Traceable to: 305 members

Altitude: 1400 - 1700

Varietals: Kent, Bourbon

Processing: Cherries are sorted before home pulping with wooden hand pulper, then fermented in clean water for 72 hours. Parchment is then washed and raised on dried beds for 11-14 days.

Harvest: July August September November December January

Booking: October November December February March April

Arrivals: February March April May June



Mrimbo Uuwo AMCOS was one of the original cooperatives in Kilimanjaro. Founded in 1984 as part of the now-defunct KNCU (Kilimanjaro Native Cooperative Inion), the AMCOS managed to survive KNCU's collapse, and maintain its organic certification over the 8 years since. This is no small feat. Most smallholder groups in Kilimanjaro find it difficult to get certification, let alone maintain it without direct clients. In 2021 the group join an international and local development project called the 'Kilimanjaro Revival Program'. This provides training, seedling, and incentives to increase smallholder engagement in specialty coffee so as to preserve the heirloom practices and varieties that made Tanzanian coffee famous in the first place.



Tanzania is a country rich in history, culture and resources. In East Africa, only Kenya has more wealth. But these numbers hide the incredible disparity you see between rich and poor, north and south, estates and smallholders. Only 7% of Tanzania's harvest makes to the US – compared to 37% which go to Japan – and most of what arrives is in the form of block lot 'Tanzania AA' or 'PB'. Block lots are bought from auction and blended to customer specification; 75% of Tanzania's coffee is sold through auction in this way. The alternative to the auction is the Direct Export Channel, which came under fire from recent (2018) governmental reforms. The reforms were aimed at eliminating the grey area between three parties: farmers – organized into Agricultural Marketing Co-Operative Societies (AMCOS), mills, and exporters who are confined to operate at the auction level. In practice this cut off investment, cut short agricultural extension programs, cut out the direct export channel – reducing options for farmers and buyers alike. So, after 9 months these reforms were reversed, and the direct export channel is open again. But this is just the most recent in a decade-long roller-coaster that's hampered Tanzania's ability to compete for larger parts of the US specialty coffee menu. Lower production, aging plants, lack of irrigation, dwindling markets all sparked the TechnoServe-backed KiliCafe organization; an association of northern smallholder groups founded in 2001. The KiliCafe effort is credited with turning around coffee in this area, and it has successfully reinvigorated quality. But political forces, including corruption, caused this to collapse right around the time Crop to Cup started sourcing in the area. In the South we are looking primarily at Mbeya and Mbinga. Both are two-days drive from the capital and port city of Dar es Salaam. Both are large, rugged areas dominated by smallholding coffee farmers. And both are in a fluorescence. In the early 2000's cuppers started noticing the variety of flavors coming out of the South. Compared to the

North, where volumes are dominated by large estates, the South is home to diverse terroirs and profiles. Over the next two decades this interest has encouraged AMCOSs and exporters alike to get more involved, increasing both quality and production.