

A Rwandan cooperative participating in the ICO project “Improvement of coffee quality in East and Central Africa through enhanced processing practices” took second place in the Rwandan national section of the “Taste of Harvest” cupping competition. The competition, which is sponsored by EAFCA, took place as part of the 4th African Fine Coffee Conference and Exhibition held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 15 - 17 February 2007.

The Taste of Harvest event features the top five winning coffees from each EAFCA Member country which have been selected at national cupping competitions. A panel of top international judges cups the coffees and selects the best coffees which are subsequently auctioned. At the first auction on 17 February, the winning coffees secured prices of between US\$2 and US\$5 per pound. The event was developed using other international coffee cupping programmes as a model. The original model was developed by the ICO/CFC/ITC US\$1.5 million project to develop the potential of gourmet coffee, as a way of recognizing high quality coffees and rewarding farmers for their hard work and effort.

The cooperative, Terimbere Kawayasu-Shyorongi, is participating in a US\$3 million project sponsored by the ICO and funded by the CFC and Illycaffè to improve the production of quality coffees by farmers at the village level, by improving wet-processing and sun-drying methods of processing coffee. Quality coffees command premium prices and can help to increase income for small farmers and their families.

EAFCA members include Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Malawi, Rwanda, Zambia and Zimbabwe and produce around 15% of the world’s speciality coffees.