

# AGARO

## FOUNDATIONAL OFFERING

<b>COUNTRY</b>	ETHIOPIA
<b>REGION</b>	JIMMA, WESTERN ETHIOPIA
<b>COOPERATIVE</b>	DUROMINA [SITE 2]
<b>UNION</b>	KATA MUDUGA
<b>ELEVATION</b>	1,900-2,200 MASL
<b>VARIETALS</b>	HEIRLOOM LANDRACES
<b>PROCESSING</b>	WASHED
<b>SEASON</b>	NOVEMBER 2017-JANUARY 2018



Some of our favorite coffees come from Western Ethiopia, a region that until relatively recently was known to produce only low quality dry processed coffees for which farmers got paid abysmally low prices. In 2010 roughly 115 farmers came together and formed the Duromina Cooperative, an Oromo language name that translates to something like “make us rich.” With technical support, business advice and access to finance through TechnoServe (a nonprofit organization focused on harnessing the power of the private sector to help people lift themselves out of poverty) the members acquired and installed a wet mill and began processing fully washed coffee for the first time. The coffee caught the attention of Stumptown’s then coffee buyer Aleco Chigounis, who purchased it and catapulted this cooperative into the specialty coffee limelight.

Over the course of the following years TechnoServe worked with more Cooperatives in the Agaro region - Yukro, Nano Challa, Hunda Oli - names that have become synonymous with top quality in Ethiopia. Names that roasters fight to get on their offering menus. While the plant genetics, climate and geography are certainly to be thanked for these wonderful coffees, it is hard to stress how essential the business and management skills transmitted from the TechnoServe team have been in on the ongoing success of these cooperatives which no longer operate under TechnoServe’s guidance, yet continue to successfully uphold the model put in place.

Not only is there a huge emphasis on quality coffee at these cooperatives, but there is also a very large emphasis placed on community health. Kata Muduga, the Cooperative Union that these Agaro Cooperatives operate under have the follow goals:

- To improve the life standard of member farmers by enhancing household income levels. This is accomplished by providing a direct marketing channel to coffee buyers, which can better provide a good price for members’ products, and
- Return earning paid as dividend to producers from their primary cooperatives.

Kata Muduga Union operates on a clear and transparent financial model:

- 5% of the total price goes towards export related expenses,
- 5% of the total price is the Union's commission and goes towards staff salaries, and investments intended to help the union grow,
- The remaining 90% of the total price goes directly to the coops and is distributed by the coops as follows:
  - Outstanding bank loans are paid down,
  - 70% of the remaining money after paying down back loans is divided up amongst the members based on how much coffee was delivered to the cooperative (i.e. second payments),
  - 30% of the money that remains after paying down bank loans is put towards social projects: building schools, constructing roads, clean water, etc.

Since its formation, Duromina has grown from ~115 producers to over 2,000, and from one washing station to three separate sites. This 2018 Foundational lot comes from site two, which frequently produces some of our favorite lots in all of Agaro.

#### **IN THE CUP**

At once remarkably complex and subtle, our 2018 Agaro lot is rich with stone fruit and bergamot aromatics. In the cup one finds citrus, tea rose, cocoa, and caramel underpinned by a raw honey-like sweetness.

#### **THE TAKEAWAY**

Duromina, who produced our 2018 Agaro Foundational Lot, was formed in 2010 by a group of roughly 115 farmers. Previously producing only low quality dry processed coffees, Duromina now boasts 2,000+ small farmer members and produces some of the most coveted washed coffees in all of Ethiopia.

