



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Inquiries: Jamie Lamonde
(608) 606-0105
jamie@kickapoocoffee.com

Kickapoo Coffee's Founders Announce Name Change

Rural Wisconsin-Based Roaster Cites Their Intention to Honor the Kickapoo Valley Lead to Appropriation of Kickapoo Nation's Name

VIROQUA, WI — April 17, 2019 — Kickapoo Coffee's founders and co-owners, TJ Semanchin and Caleb Nicholes, announced today their decision to change the name of their company after fourteen years.

"When Kickapoo Coffee was founded in 2005, we chose the name with the intention of honoring the place where our business has its roots: the Kickapoo River Valley," Semanchin explains, "But Kickapoo is not simply the name given to a river. The Kickapoo are a People."

The Native American Kickapoo Nation is composed of the Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas, the Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma, the Kickapoo Tribe in Kansas, and the Mexican-Kickapoos.

"By using Kickapoo," says Semanchin, "we claimed a name that was never ours to take. The decision to use the name, and to continue to roast under it, was an act of appropriation."

Semanchin and Nicholes have apologized directly to the three US-based Kickapoo Tribes, all of which were unaware of the name use until the company reached out last fall, and have shared their decision to change the company's name with each Tribe's leadership.

"It was surprising in this modern day that they didn't know about the Kickapoo Tribe, and not just us, but also in Kansas and Texas," commented David Pacheco, Chairman of the Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma.

"This announcement is just the first step," Nicholes noted. "We are dedicated to educating ourselves and approaching this work with humility and vulnerability. It is our intention to hold space for a thoughtful dialogue. As a company committed to social justice and the pursuit of a more fair and equitable world, we recognize that this work begins with us."

On their new name, Semanchin stated the company does not have one to announce at this time. “We have just begun the process and will roll out our new brand in early 2020. A pride in the place where we live, roast, and raise our families remains at the heart of what we do. Our new name will better reflect this in an honest, authentic, and respectful manner.”

###

About Kickapoo Coffee Roasters

Kickapoo Coffee (kickapoocoffee.com) is a Southwest Wisconsin-based specialty coffee roaster. The first solar powered roastery in the nation, with a strong commitment to sourcing certified organic coffee and one of the highest published minimum prices to coffee farmers, the company has long been known for its commitment to sustainability and social change. Kickapoo Coffee founders, TJ Semanchin and Caleb Nicholes, also co-own and operate three cafes across the state, in Milwaukee, Viroqua, and Bayfield.