

EQUATOR COFFEES



IMPACT REPORT
JANUARY - DECEMBER 2023



“As a B Corp certified organization, we remain dedicated to continuous improvement and accountability, striving to set the standard for excellence within our industry.”

Helen Russell

Co-founder, Equator Coffees



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As we reflect on Equator's journey throughout 2023, we are inspired by the unwavering dedication of our team and the ongoing support of our community. This past year has been filled with milestones, challenges, and opportunities for growth, and we are proud to share our progress with you.

At Equator, our mission has always been clear: to bring high quality coffee to our community while championing transparency, sustainability, and inclusion in every aspect of our business.

As founders, it has been our lifelong passion to uphold these values and to continually strive for positive impact in the coffee industry. In 2023, we furthered our commitment to these principles. From donating over \$65,000 through our giveback programs for valued organizations locally and globally, to collaborating with value aligned brands, we created opportunities to innovate, collaborate, and further our impact.

We celebrated ten years at our first cafe at Proof Lab, reopened our SoMa location in San Francisco and opened a beautiful new cafe in Laguna Beach in the new Rivian South Coast Theater. We collaborated with fellow B Corp TCHO Chocolate to release an organic and fair trade chocolate bar, celebrated and empowered our teams through education and enrichment, and so much more. As a Certified B Corporation, we remain dedicated to continuous improvement and accountability, striving to set the standard for excellence within our industry.

As we share our annual impact report with you, we invite you to join us in celebrating the growth we made together in 2023. **The sustainability work that we do is a team effort and it cannot be done without your support. We are grateful for the opportunity to engage with our community in this ongoing dialogue.**

Onward together,



Helen & Brooke, Co-Founders, Equator Coffees

FROM OUR FOUNDERS



WHO WE ARE



As the first Certified B Corp coffee roaster in California, we're dedicated to an unwavering focus on quality, environmental sustainability, and social responsibility.

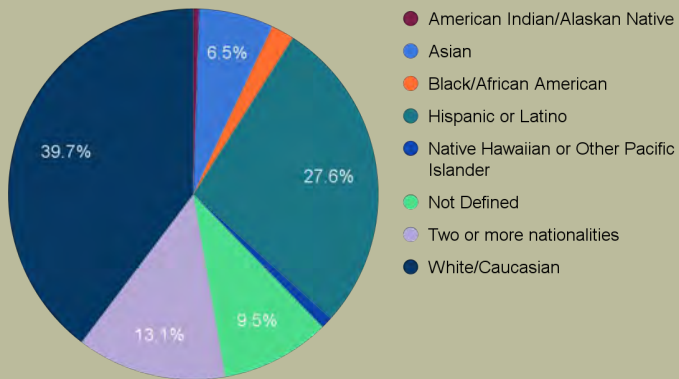
Every one of us, from baristas to roasters to our founders, is committed to our guiding belief that **good coffee** made by **kind people** creates a **better planet**.

OUR PEOPLE BY THE NUMBERS

199

EMPLOYEES

Racial or Ethnic Identity



Executive Leadership

50%
Female

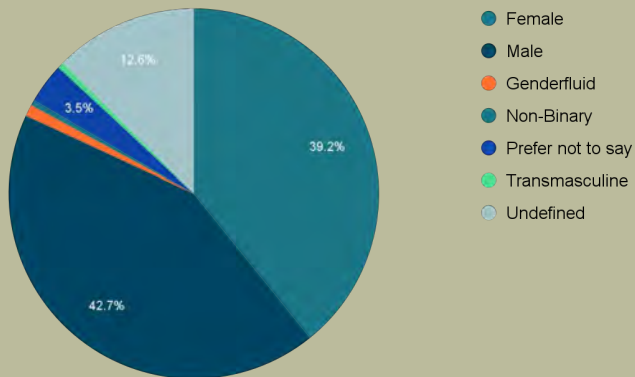
50%
Male

Department Heads

50%
Female

50%
Male

Gender Identity Breakdown



Tenure	% of Employees
< 3 months	15%
3-12 months	34%
1-3 years	30%
3-5 years	10%
5-10 years	8%
10+ years	4%

Location	% of Employees
Roastery	14%
Retail	75%
HQ	11%
Out of State	1%

A CULTURE OF KINDNESS

At Equator, we understand that our relationships with one another define our very essence. Our people are united by their shared values and a genuine desire to leave a lasting and positive impact. We are committed to using coffee as a force for good.



Maggie Moticka
Controller
6 years with Equator



Alex Spishakoff
Associate Roaster
5 years with Equator



Zoe Alyeshmerni
District Manager
2 years with Equator



Jonathan Whalen
Wholesale Account Manager
2 years with Equator



INVESTING IN OUR PEOPLE

Investing in our people and growing the next generation of coffee professionals remains a top priority of ours.

In 2023, we continued to invest in our employees through:

- Online onboarding courses on anti-harassment, unconscious bias, and diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Paid coffee education classes that cover topics such as an introduction to coffee, the impact of extraction percentages, water quality, roasting, the sensory lexicon, latte art, how brew method changes flavor profile, espresso preparation, triangulation, and brewing variables
- An expansion of onboarding and training in Spanish language
- Paid time off for employees to volunteer at a nonprofit of their choice such as Marin Foster Care Association and Adopt a Family of Marin
- Established Juneteenth as a paid company holiday starting in 2024
- Paid time off to vote
- Paid professional development such as the Q Arabica Course and Exam, Coffee Roasters Guild Retreat, SF Coffee Festival, HR conferences, and Speciality Coffee Expo
- Over 10,000 free courses available to employees via Paylocity's Learning Management System and our Employee Assistance Program on topics from leadership development, to health and wellness, and beyond
- Paying 100% of health care premiums for enrolled employees and lowering the deductible by \$650



SBA LEGACY AWARD

In October 2023, we were honored with the Small Business Administration (SBA) San Francisco District Office's **Legacy Business Award**, which recognizes the critical contributions of small business owners in the U.S.

Being presented with this award gave us the opportunity to reflect on our journey, from inception to our ongoing expansion.

Through the use of SBA resources, we've been able to create sustained growth, contributing to job creation and community enrichment along the way. We're proud to be home to over 190 employees dedicated to crafting quality coffee while fostering positive social and environmental impact.



"[Equator Coffees] is an example of a company that strengthens the small business ecosystem by providing jobs, investing in their employees and being a cherished member of the local community."

- SBA District Director Chris Horton (left)



TIGER COLLECTIVE

The Tiger Collective is our team of ambassadors comprised of inspiring athletes, makers, activists, and advocates for healthy lifestyles that represent our brand and our values. United by their commitment to excellence, kindness, and a shared love of great coffee, they embody our mission and help bring our message to the wider community.

NEW MEMBERS WE WELCOMED TO THE COLLECTIVE IN 2023



Nicki Clarke (she/her)

Nicki is a surf coach, a mindfulness teacher, a functional fitness coach, and a mom of two teenagers. Her specialty is guiding people in finding a healthy relationship with the ocean as a path to increased confidence and joy. Based in the San Francisco Bay Area, she owns and operates Marin Outdoor Adventure and is passionate about supporting all people to connect with nature and adventure as a way to cultivate joy and connection in their lives.



Ryan Cassata (he/him)

Ryan is an award-winning singer-songwriter, actor, performer, published writer, and transgender activist based in Southern California. He has been at the forefront of the transgender liberation movement since his early teens. He is the first-ever recipient of the Harvey Milk Memorial Award.



FROM BEAN TO BREW

Our coffee team remains at the forefront of both coffee culture and sustainability initiatives. They continuously explore innovative practices, ensuring we lead the way in delivering ethically sourced and environmentally conscious coffee.

Our Regenerative Organic Certified (ROC®) partnerships grew from one in 2022 to **three** in 2023: Nicaragua Sacaclí, Nicaragua Las Hermanas, and Peru Chirinos. By 2024, we're set to expand to at least five ROC® partnerships, solidifying our dedication to regenerative farming practices.

2023 was the first year we offered our first co-fermented coffee—an innovative processing method driven by producers from Finca Santa Monica in Colombia. Our coffee team continues to support producers' experimentation with processing, empowering them to add value at the farm level within the supply chain.

In an effort to deepen our relationships at origin, members of our coffee team traveled to Costa Rica, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Colombia, and Indonesia throughout 2023.

Director of Coffee, Ted, cupping coffee at Nicaragua Sacaclí



COFFEE REVIEW AWARDS

We take great pride in providing our customers with high-quality coffee.

Exceptional coffee quality results in elevated scores. These point scores drive increased demand for these coffees, enabling producers to establish higher price points, thereby generating greater income for reinvestment into their farms and their people.

Committing to quality and sustainability fosters the production of superior coffee, initiating an enhanced economic cycle. It all leads back to our core belief that **drinking good coffee leads to good things**.



DATE	COFFEE	POINT SCORE
MARCH	Mocha Java Blend Fair Trade Organic	93
APRIL	Ecuador Finca Lugmapata	94
MAY	Java Argopuro Mountain Anaerobic	93
AUGUST	Burundi Women of Turihamwe	92
SEPTEMBER	Guatemala El Injerto Ethiopia Landrace Natural	94
OCTOBER	Guatemala El Injerto SL28	94
NOVEMBER	Colombia Las Flores Mint Macerated	93



World Coffee Research is an industry-driven organization that advances agricultural innovation for coffee, with the mission of growing, protecting, and enhancing supplies of quality coffee while improving the lives of those who produce it.

Since 2018, Equator has donated a half-cent per pound of coffee from eligible purchases to support their programs.

This "check off" program allows for an equitable donation based on volume and is often matched by our importers.

Through partnership with World Coffee Research, the global coffee industry drives collaborative innovation in agriculture to ensure the future of coffee.

OUR 2023 DONATIONS:

\$5,225.29

AMOUNT MATCHED BY IMPORTER PARTNERS:

\$2,586.17



SOURCING SPOTLIGHT

Sumatra Koperasi Ketiara

In 2015, we solidified a purchasing relationship with Ketiara, a women-led cooperative located in Sumatra's Gayo Highlands. In November 2023, Ted, our Director of Coffee, visited Sumatra to connect with the producers and cup their latest coffees together. Ketiara is a cooperative that is inclusive of women farmers, with women making up over 50% of membership. Equator purchases coffee exclusively from the women members of the co-op, with proceeds going to programs that benefit women.



Director of Coffee, Ted, with members of the Ketiara cooperative in Sumatra

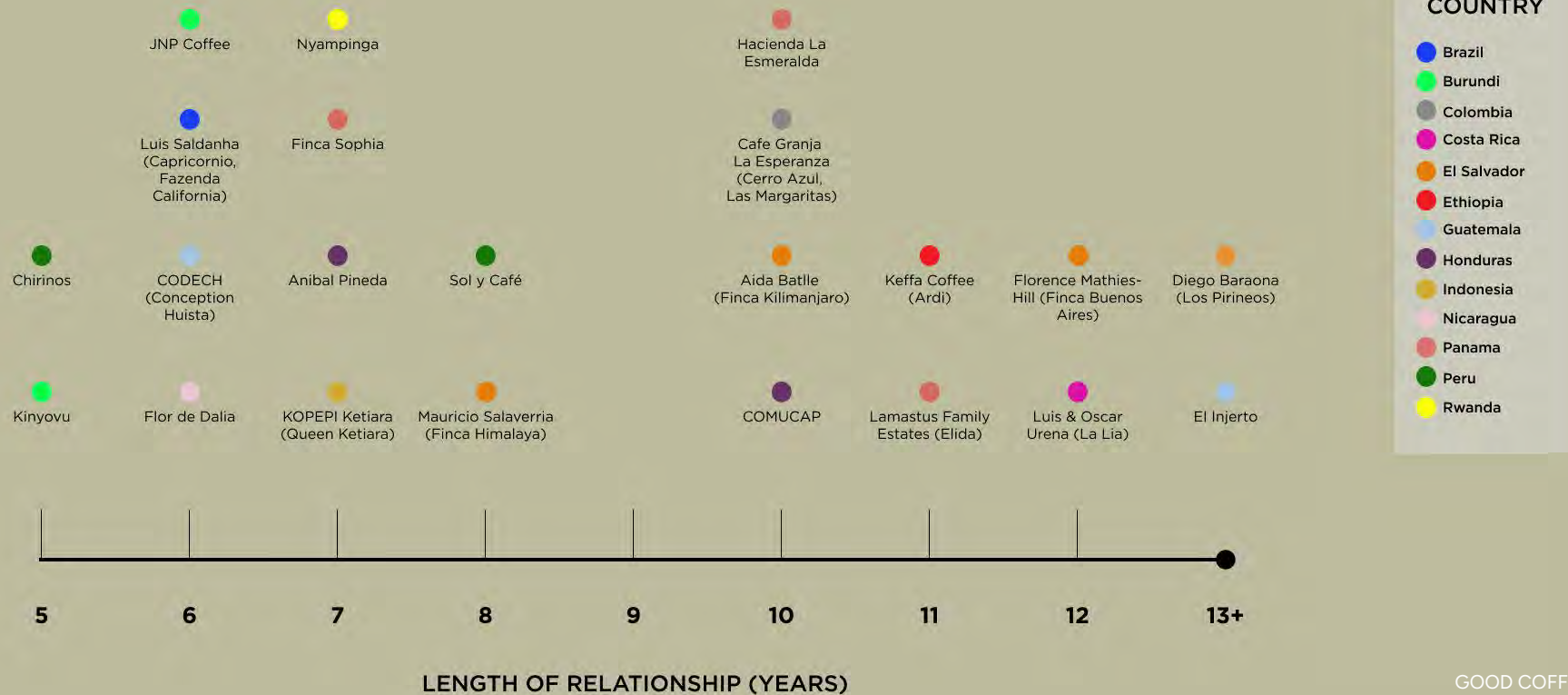
El Salvador Finca Buenos Aires

In March 2023, Nate Breckenridge, our Associate Director of Coffee, went on his first sourcing trip since the pandemic to connect with our sourcing partners at Finca Buenos Aires, Finca Kilimanjaro, Finca Los Pirineos and more. Our partners were able to share valuable insight into El Salvador's coffee industry - its challenges and opportunities. Coffee is not only the country's largest export, but provides protection against deforestation - 80% of the country's remaining forested areas are attributed to coffee farms.



Assoc. Director of Coffee, Nate, with team and farm manager Alejandro Flores (right) at Finca Buenos Aires in El Salvador

LONG-TERM PARTNERSHIPS



FINCA SOPHIA



Finca Sophia, established in 2008, is an experimental coffee farm co-owned by our founders, Helen Russell and Brooke McDonnell, in partnership with Willem Boot and Catherine Cadloni of Boot Coffees.

It features staggering altitudes up to 2,175 meters and dramatic views of Cerro Punta and Volcan Barú.

A few years ago, we began noticing a small number of plants produce cherries with a noticeable crown, or protrusion, opposite the stem end of the fruit. Guava fruit has a similar characteristic, which is why this particular coffee was given the nickname “Guayabita.”

In 2023, we planted 4,000 new Guayabita seedlings. Seeds and leaves from the Guayabita plant were shipped to a lab in France called RD2 Vision for testing. The lab analyzed the plant material and discovered that the previously unidentified variety indicated a genetic resemblance to an Ethiopian cultivar called 74110. Although it was not an exact match, it shows that the sample is from an Ethiopian landrace variety that is very rare outside of Ethiopia.

Finca Sophia continues to push boundaries. Currently, we are in the process of installing two bioreactors to create high quality compost.



BREWING FOR GOOD

Cup For A Cause

We give back to our local and global communities through our Cup For a Cause program. \$1 from every pour-over coffee purchased at our cafes is donated directly to an organization that was nominated by an Equator Coffees employee. In 2023, this program raised \$25,567 for various valued organizations.



New to the Neighborhood

In December 2023, we opened an Equator cafe in Laguna Beach. During our first week of service, we donated 10% of sales to the Laguna Canyon Foundation, which is dedicated to preserving, protecting, enhancing, and promoting the 22,000 acre South Coast Wilderness.



COMMUNITY CARE

We believe in the power that coffee has in creating shared connections and we find joy in being active members of the communities in which our cafes are located.

In 2023, we remained active members of our communities by:

- Holding a coat drive across all Northern California cafes and bringing in over 100 new coats for local families
- Celebrating 10 years at our first cafe at Proof Lab
- Purchasing holiday gifts for families in need in our communities
- Hosting after-hours events such as the Thursday Night Throwdown at Round House cafe
- Hosting and sponsoring athletic clubs and local events, such as Hella Bae Running meetups, Dawn Patrol Tam mountain biking ride-outs, our Tour d'Equator bike ride with Mike's Bikes, and our 2023 Pride Ride celebrating the LGBTQ+ community



SEASONAL CAMPAIGN GIVEBACKS

We make a 5% giveback pledge on every seasonal campaign. Ensuring we give back to a cause at origin is paramount to us, which is why the producers of the core coffee in each blend are the beneficiaries of our seasonal blends.



Snow Leopard | Las Rosas | \$3,191 giveback

Las Rosas offers micro loans for members of the group to spend on fertilizers for their coffee crops, infrastructure improvements, and food security through the purchase of livestock for their families. Las Rosas was able to disburse 10 additional micro loans in 2023 compared to 2022 due to the increase of capital from this campaign, resulting in a total of 36 micro loans distributed.



Super Bloom | Cooperativa Sacaclí | \$4,291 giveback

Our partners at Cooperativa Sacaclí were able to use the funds from our Super Bloom campaign to outfit their new cupping laboratory by purchasing quality control equipment and cupping supplies including a high-precision electronic scale. These will all assist Sacaclí in improving the quality of coffees grown in the cooperative.



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Golden Hour | Belift Green Beans | \$4,979 giveback

Belift Green Beans used their funds to purchase a drying rack and additional tarpaulins to improve drying infrastructure at their mill. With these additions they were able to increase production capacity by making the sorting process easier and faster. At the same time, the improvements provided better control over the drying of the coffee, resulting in higher quality.



Holiday Blend | CODECH | \$5,009 giveback

In the coming year, 36 producers from the three base organizations of CODECH will establish pilot plots with the support of the funds raised by this campaign. The goal of these pilot plots is to increase production and quality of coffee grown, and thereby improve quality of life for the beneficiary families.



2023 GIVEBACK TOTALS

Giveback Program

Black History Month Grant
Challenged Athletes Foundation Blend
Chef Brandon Jew
Chef Dominique Crenn
Chef Tanya Holland
Chef Thomas Keller
Chef Tyler Florence
Chefs Mary Sue & Susan + Cup For A Cause
Chefs Mary Sue & Susan + Fairfax Opening
Cup For A Cause (January) + Snow Leopard 2023
Cup For A Cause (February)
Cup For A Cause (April) + Super Bloom 2023
Cup For A Cause (May)
Cup For A Cause (June) + Pride Month merch
Cup For A Cause (July) + Golden Hour 2023
Cup For A Cause (August)
Cup For A Cause (September)
Cup For A Cause (October)
Cup For A Cause (November) + Holiday Blend 2023
Cup For A Cause (December)
Holiday Blend 2022 Collection
Laguna Cafe Opening Week
World Bicycle Relief Blend

Beneficiary Organization

Coffee Coalition for Racial Equity
Challenged Athletes Foundation
Cut Fruit Collective
LYRIC Center for LGBTQ+ Youth
Mandela Partners
Ment'or BKB Foundation
United Service Organizations
Regarding Her (RE:Her)
Los Angeles LGBTQ Center
Las Rosas Women's Group
Grounds For Health
Cooperativa de Servicios Múltiples Sacaclí
Bay Area Ridge Trail
The LGBT Asylum Project
Belift Green Beans (via Sustainable Harvest)
Brown Girl Surf
Guide Dogs For The Blind
Center For Domestic Peace
CODECH (via Atlas Coffees)
Marin Foster Care Association
International Women's Coffee Alliance
Laguna Canyon Foundation
World Bicycle Relief

Donation

\$1,000
\$354
\$844
\$5,716
\$1,007
\$17,959
\$7,776
\$1,774
\$1,366
\$3,191
\$944
\$4,291
\$1,345
\$1,599
\$4,979
\$925
\$993
\$1,130
\$5,009
\$1,059
\$342
\$663
\$1,404

DONATION TOTAL: **\$65,670**





COOKING UP AN IMPACT

We partner with award-winning chefs to craft incredible coffees for great causes. Uniquely designed with input from each chef, each coffee supports communities the chefs are passionate about. **\$34,796** was donated to charities in 2023 through the Chef Collection Coffees program.

In June 2023, we added California Soul Blend in collaboration with Tanya Holland, an award-winning chef, author, and restaurateur. Acclaimed for her inventive take on modern soul food, as well as comfort classics, she is the Executive Chef/Owner of the internationally renowned and beloved Brown Sugar Kitchen restaurant in Oakland, California.

\$1 from every 12oz bag of California Soul Blend and \$2 from every 2lb bag is donated directly to Mandela Partners to fund programs that build community power through food.

In 2023, **\$1,007** was donated to Mandela Partners from California Soul Blend proceeds.



PURPOSE-DRIVEN PARTNERSHIPS

As a women and queer founded company, we recognize the significance of solidarity and collaboration within our community. Embracing diversity and inclusivity isn't just a mantra; it's a fundamental aspect of our ethos. We believe in uplifting and amplifying the voices of fellow women and queer founders, understanding the unique perspectives we bring to the table.

We take pride in partnering with **Boichik Bagels**, a women & queer founded company, for the bagels served at many of our cafes. Together, we're breaking barriers, challenging norms, and paving the way for a more inclusive future in business and beyond.



boichik





Certified



®

Corporation



B Corporation certification signifies that a business meets the highest standards of social and environmental impact. In 2011, Equator was the first coffee roaster in California to be certified as a B Corporation, marking a pivotal moment in our dedication to sustainable business practices.

This certification underscores our unwavering commitment to transparency, accountability, and positive impact across our entire company, from our supply chain to our employees to the wider community and environment. Being a B Corp affirms our belief in using business and coffee as forces for good.

A B Corp score is dynamic, reflecting an ongoing journey of improvement fueled by a steadfast dedication to industry-leading practices. The median score for businesses who complete the B Corp assessment is currently 50.9. **Based on the B Impact assessment, Equator's current B Corp score is 85.2.**

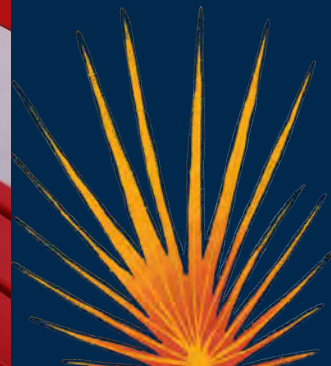


GREAT COFFEE MEETS GREAT CHOCOLATE

We were thrilled to join forces with TCHO Chocolate in 2023, a company equally dedicated to sourcing premium ingredients ethically and sustainably. Both Equator Coffees and TCHO are Certified B Corps, and together, we share a mission to make everything better—from cacao to coffee.

Our collaboration resulted in the creation of a truly special product: the Dirty Chai chocolate bar. This innovative treat combined delicious spices with TCHO's exceptional Fair Trade and Organic certified cacao with our Fair Trade and Organic certified Jaguar Espresso.

The Dirty Chai chocolate bar represents more than just a delicious treat; it's a testament to what can be achieved when like-minded companies come together to create something meaningful.





ROASTING SMARTER WITH LORING

By investing in energy-efficient Loring Smart Roasters, we **reduce our carbon emissions per batch by 80%**. We roast 50 hours per week, 3 batches per hour, which means that how we roast matters.

An early adopter of Loring Smart Roast technology, we're able to roast high volumes while maintaining consistency *and* reducing our environmental impact via lower natural gas usage and emissions.

240,575

Lbs of CO2 kept out of the environment by
our Loring Peregrine Roaster

100,591

Lbs of CO2 kept out of the environment by
our Loring Kestrel Roaster



AT THE ROASTERY

2,550

Lbs of upcycled coffee

EXCESS COFFEE WITH EXTRAFOOD

By partnering with ExtraFood, we are ensuring that 100% of excess coffee is redistributed to the community and kept out of landfills.

1,605

Lbs of ROC® coffee sold

REGENERATIVE ORGANIC CERTIFIED (ROC®) COFFEE

The tropical and subtropical regions crucial for coffee cultivation, are facing disproportionate impacts from climate change. Regenerative agriculture is crucial to safeguarding the future of coffee and our planet. Sourcing ROC® coffees is demonstrative of our accountability for sustainable and holistic practices.

16,758

Lbs of burlap bags recycled

BURLAP & CHAFF RECYCLING

The burlap coffee bags from our roastery are donated to local farms for reuse.

The chaff produced by our roastery is picked up biweekly by Marin Sanitary Service and is put through a biodigester to produce compost for the local community.

315,000

Ft of plastic tape kept out of the waste stream

KRAFT PAPER PACKING TAPE

By using kraft paper tape instead of plastic paper tape for our bulk boxes, we reduce the amount of plastic in the waste stream. In 2023, we kept 315,000 feet of plastic tape out of the landfill.

Note: **GrainPro bag recycling** will return in 2024 and it will be local to the roastery. We have partnered with an organization that allows us to recycle 100% of our GrainPro bags, helping to reduce landfill waste.



AT OUR CAFES

NEW! Too Good To Go

Too Good To Go is a service that reduces food waste by allowing businesses to provide customers with surplus food at a great price. In 2023, we rolled this program out in 5 of our cafes with the intention of being part of the solution in fighting food waste. We are currently in the process of rolling out this program in 3 more of our locations.

Personal Cups Program

We offer a \$0.25 discount to guests who bring in their own reusable cups. In 2023, **16,992** personal cups were used across our cafes, a **40% increase** versus 2022.

To-Go Compostables

We use 100% compostable cups and to-go containers at our cafes. Our Better Earth hot coffee cups are compostable and cold cups are made from petroleum-free bioplastics. Our to-go containers are made from renewable and recycled materials with plant-based bio-plastic lining.

Reusable Serveware

We continue to encourage customers to get their drinks in our for-here serveware in cafes. In November and December 2022, for-here cup usage was 4.62%. In November and December 2023, for-here cup usage was 8.29%, a **79% increase** versus 2022.



EQUATOR COFFEES

[2022 Impact Report](#) | [2023 Impact Report](#)