ABOUT US

The Coffee Quality Institute (CQI) is a nonprofit organization working internationally to improve the quality of coffee and the lives of people who produce it. Since our inception in 1996, CQI has been known in the coffee and development world as the technical service provider, with a menu of offerings that provide technical training and assistance to arabica and robusta coffee producers, along with many others, in the supply chain. This program integrates everything, from research to agronomy to business development. We are dedicated to offering comprehensive, long-term solutions for our partners, measuring impact, and working with industry constituents on lasting strategic objectives to produce tangible results. We employ a global perspective, grounded in technical understanding, while offering practical solutions customized to local challenges. Uniquely, we operate with strong ties to the coffee trade to emphasize market access as a vital part of long-term solutions.

In order to achieve our mission, we work to increase the value, volume, and sustainability of high quality coffee production. Through our programs, we:

- Foster Resilient Communities
- Provide Integrated Coffee Opportunities
- Put Information (and Power) into Hands of Producers
- Share a Universal Language of Quality
- Enhance and Improve Livelihoods
WHAT WE DO

CQI has worked on a multitude of coffee programs in central and South America, east Africa, Indonesia, and Asia, completing over 500 training assignments while building a common language of quality used throughout the supply chain. Our Coffee Corps™ Program and Technical Services Program match coffee-industry experts with producers and associations at origin. Also owned by CQI, the Q Coffee System is based on the belief that quality and training are the keys to sustainability. The major components of this system are certification of professional cuppers as Licensed Q Graders, development of In-Country Partners and implementation of Q Grading Services (Q Coffees). Our newest program, Partnership for Gender Equity, is a collaborative research initiative to better understand the effects of gender inequality on coffee production.

On any given month, we're in the field, teaching producers how to process coffee more efficiently or teaching a Q Course via one of our talented Q Instructors or working with national coffee associations to instill forward-thinking change. The impact is immense and long lasting. So whenever you're enjoying a cup of high quality coffee, it's very likely that CQI has touched the supply chain at some point, creating more value, a common language, and a deeper respect for the commodity we all know and love.

WE ARE PIONEERS.

Since our founding in 1996, we have continued to think outside the box, expand our reach around the world, and develop programs to meet the needs of a volatile coffee market. We begin work in places that are relatively new to specialty coffee: generating industry-wide interest, connecting the entire value chain, and bringing a better tasting cup to market. Our Coffee Corps™ Program is completely unique to the industry. Through this program, we've been creating lifelong partnerships while increasing knowledge for all parties involved. Our Q Coffee System has continued to evolve over the years, as we adapt to challenges facing the industry and find innovative ways to expand our common language for quality. The Q Coffee System for Arabica has single-handedly changed the way buyers communicate with sellers. It is now integrated into the majority of specialty coffee businesses, where most quality control teams have at least one Q Arabica Grader on staff. When CQI began work on a robusta program over five years ago, it was met with criticism and skepticism from the majority of the industry. However, the international standards have been adopted worldwide and
continue to be used to expand fine robusta into the marketplace, creating both a better tasting cup and higher prices for all involved. We are pioneers, and we will continue to evolve with and bring forward-thinking ideas to the industry.
NORTH AMERICA

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<tr>
<th>Q ARABICA Graders</th>
<th>Q ROBUSTA Graders</th>
<th>Q ARABICA Instructors</th>
<th>Q ROBUSTA Instructors</th>
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IN-COUNTRY PARTNERS

Costa Rica
Specialty Coffee Association of Costa Rica

El Salvador
Salvadoran Coffee Council

Guatemala
Asociación Nacional Del Café

Honduras
: Honduras Coffee Exporters Association
: Instituto Hondureño del Café

Mexico
Asociación Mexicana De Cafés y Cafeterías De Especialidad A.C

Nicaragua
Asociación de Cafés Especiales de Nicaragua

U.S.A.
Specialty Coffee Association of America
SOUTH AMERICA

IN-COUNTRY PARTNERS

Brazil
  - Brazil Specialty Coffee Association
  - Conilon

Colombia
  - CafeCert

Ecuador
  - Asociación de Cafés Especiales del Ecuador

Peru
  - Central Café & Cacao

Q ARABICA Graders: 428
Q ROBUSTA Graders: 8
Q ARABICA Instructors: 2
Q ROBUSTA Instructors: 0
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WHY THE Q COFFEE SYSTEM?

The Q Coffee System identifies quality coffees and brings them to market through a credible and verifiable system. A common standard for both Q Arabica (Specialty Grade) and Q Robusta (Fine Robusta Grade) coffee has resulted in top scoring lots. The Q engages the industry at the producer level to identify lots for specialty, at the export/import level by certifying individuals to grade coffees, and at the buyer level to offer a consumer-facing product with the Q mark. We rely on In-Country Partners and Licensed Q Graders around the world to facilitate and grade coffees under our system.

The Q Coffee System has revolutionized the way the specialty industry communicates about coffee. By utilizing the arabica standards set forth by the Specialty Coffee Association of America (SCAA) and the robusta standards created by CQI and the Uganda Coffee Development Authority (UCDA), we have been able to create a level playing field where both buyers and sellers speak a common language of quality. It has shifted marketplace dynamics and has resulted in greater opportunity for producers to access the premium price in the market and improve their economic viability.

The Q Coffee System is more than just training cuppers or certifying coffees. The program has lasting and far-reaching impacts for producing countries. Eventually, and regardless of the form it takes, it leads to better tasting coffee.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A Q GRADER

When a company has a Q Grader on staff, it signifies not only a commitment to quality, but dedication to training and adherence of strict standards set forth by the industry. To become a Q Grader, one must pass rigorous testing, including a combination of cupping, olfactory, and other sensorial challenges.

Q Graders are vital in a company or organization: not just as quality control, but as product discovery for the entire supply chain. These accredited cuppers now infiltrate nearly every piece of the supply chain, whether it be at the mill, as an exporter or importer, or even as a roaster and barista, which means that we’ll continue to find and source great coffee while speaking the same language about its quality and potential in the market.
THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A Q COFFEE

When a coffee undergoes a Q Grading and receives a Q Certificate (deemed a Q Coffee), it means the coffee has passed all rigorous standards to be deemed specialty: arabica or robusta. It's an independent verification of quality from a cadre of trusted and professionally accredited cuppers, and an instrument to communicate and negotiate price. A Q Coffee also provides access to a network of interested buyers and like-minded companies in the supply chain. For consumers, it provides a third-party quality evaluation: the only of its kind.

OUR SERVICES

We believe that sustainability is predicated on a healthy supply chain. A healthy supply chain is only possible if value-discovery mechanisms are in the hands of producers. Producers can only earn the right price for their coffee if they understand the quality of the coffee, and the value that quality brings. We believe that none of the above is possible unless growers are given access to information – and training – regarding agronomy, processing, and flavor analysis.

CQI puts access to education and training into the hands of the producer, and we’ve been leading the coffee and development world since 1996. We offer a multitude of services and training that can be customized to meet the needs of anyone in the supply chain. Our services are broken into the following:

- Processing and production
- Cupping and lab development
- Consumption and roaster training
- Marketing and business development

For complete descriptions of our services and/or to receive a custom-build service plan, please email Lisa Conway at lconway@coffeeinstitute.org.
Every year, we expand our ability to bring quality improvement programs around the world. However, without the generous support of our partners, our impact would be greatly limited. We thank our partners for their trust and continued partnership.
“CQI's global work on coffee has had a large impact on the ability for traders and roasters, such as Keurig Green Mountain, to source coffees that meet their quality requirements. In a lot of instances, buyers can arrive at a location and find CQI trained, calibrated cuppers ready to go to work, with improved labs in place to conduct business. We feel that the entire value chain, including those closest to production, now have greater knowledge of their own product, which translates to better quality and communication with buyers.”

- Ed Canty, Keurig Green Mountain

“I went [to Africa] to serve in a training capacity, and frankly, it was amazing. This is an unprecedented opportunity for us to work in consuming countries essentially as the seed is being planted. No one is doing that aside from CQI. The initiatives to go out there and work with baristas are important ones: to actually celebrate the product that these countries are producing so well in a way that reflects the true glory of what they’re actually doing. I think one of the essential things that CQI does is identify a need, find the right people and put them in the right places. I would certainly consider the time and effort I spent working at these [barista] events to be some of the more valuable and well received trainings I’ve ever done. I don’t think you can calculate the value because the ripple effect is enormous.”

- Michael Phillips, World Barista Champion

“I started as a volunteer at CQI due to my passion for coffee, as many of us do. After several assignments in Ethiopia and Uganda alongside top coffee professionals, I haven’t just learned more: the experience has changed me. Today I see quality coffee as just a consequence of human growth through skill development and responsible management of the environment. So I am not just focused on the taste of coffee anymore; I am focused on PEOPLE and how the pursuit of quality could improve their lives. This is what I work for and what we work for at CQI.”

- Marcelo Pereira, CQI Consultant
“The continued success and scope of the Q Coffee System was readily apparent on a recent sourcing trip to Colombia. While traveling in a remote mountaintop region in the Sierra Madres, our buyer was amazed to find that a coop there had a Q Grader on staff to roast and prepare samples for his evaluation: incredible considering that this particular region was only discovered several years ago. The Q Coffee System has created a common vocabulary between buyers and sellers and has streamlined quality and price discovery for producers and consumers alike.”

-Jamin Haddox, Coffee Consultant

“The CQI Robusta program has brought an improvement in the quality of Robusta coffee and awareness of the distinctive Robusta attributes. The program is also impacting the perception that many people, especially buyers and consumers, have on Robusta coffee; they are beginning to appreciate it. Yet just years ago, it was referred to as harsh, unclean and bitter. Thanks to CQI, I have gained knowledge and am still gaining more from their team of experts, which will continue to further my career.”

-Faith Asanji, One of Uganda’s First Q Assistant Instructors

“The partnership with CQI has supported our capacity to increase Peru’s competiveness by providing premier coffee experts in roasting, basic and advanced coffee preparation, market linkages, institutional strengthening, Q Grading and cupping training. CQI has been a very valuable partner, deepening our impact at the provincial and national level.”

-Thelonious Trimmell, ACDI/VOCA-Peru Chief of Party
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www.youtube.com/coffeinstitute

PRESS

For a list of updated press releases, please visit http://www.coffeinstitute.org/about-us/press/.

BRAND GUIDE

For inquiries about our logo and its usage, please refer to our Brand Guide.

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