



## THE SUSTAINABILITY OF HARVESTING STRATEGIES

Carlos H. J. Brando  
P&A International Marketing  
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## OBJECTIVES OF HARVESTING

- Collect all ripe cherries (maximize quality)
- With as few unripe and over-ripe cherries as possible
- At a competitive cost
- Without damage to coffee trees (ensure future production)



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## SITUATION TODAY

- Percentage of unripe cherries growing markedly
- Labor factors
  - availability falling
  - costs growing faster than inflation and coffee prices
- Need to sort out cherries after harvesting
  - manually
  - mechanically
- Cherries with different degrees of ripeness
  - mostly processed together
  - quality losses

**POOR SELECTIVE HARVESTING BECOMING STANDARD  
(5 TO 15% UNRIPE CHERRIES)**

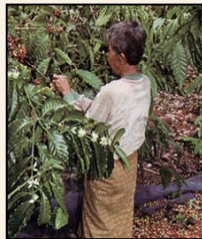
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## HARVESTING SYSTEMS I



Selective



Stripping



Mechanical



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## HARVESTING SYSTEMS II

- Selective (ripe only)
  - washed Arabica
  - some Robusta
  
- Stripping (some or all coffee in branch)
  - natural Arabicas
  - most Robustas
  
- Mechanical
  - some Arabicas in Brazil
  - other countries experimenting



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## HARVESTING SYSTEMS III



ITEM	SELECTIVE	STRIPPING	MECHANICAL
SELECTIVITY	High (Many picking rounds)	Low to high (1,2 or 3 picking rounds)	Low to intermediate (1, 2 or 3 picking rounds)
LABOR REQUIREMENTS	High	Intermediate	Low
COST	Highest	Intermediate to low	Lowest

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## HOW TO HARVEST MORE VOLUME (V) WITH LOWER COSTS: FEASIBLE OPTIONS

1. Selective harvesting..... V
2. Manual stripping..... 3 a 5 V
3. Stripping with hand held harvester..... 20 V
4. Stripping with self propelled harvester..... 500 V

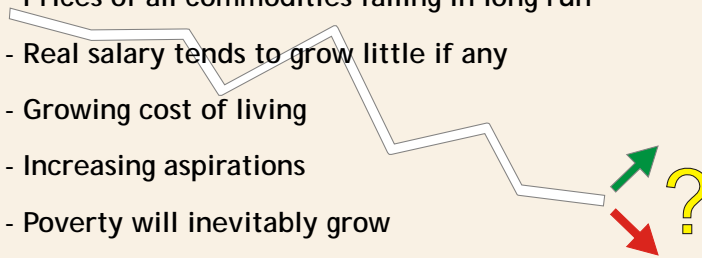


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## PICKERS' PERSPECTIVE UNDER SELECTIVE HARVESTING

- Limited to picking a given weight of coffee per day
- Prices of all commodities falling in long run
- Real salary tends to grow little if any
- Growing cost of living
- Increasing aspirations
- Poverty will inevitably grow



IS THIS SUSTAINABLE?

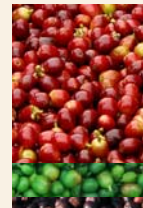
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## SOLUTION

- Shift to more efficient harvesting systems
- Pick cherries with different degrees of ripeness
- New generation of wet mills
  - sort mechanically
  - process separately
- Different qualities
- Different uses
- There are markets for cherries that are not fully ripe



ENABLE SUSTAINABILITY OF PICKERS  
(WHO STAY)

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## BREAKING PARADIGMS: MYTHS AND TRUTHS

**Myth 1.** Production of high quality coffee requires selective picking (of ripe cherries only)

**Truth:** High quality coffee comes from 100% ripe cherries (picked by any system, manual or mechanical)

**Myth 2.** Labor intensive coffee growing (picking) grants social and economic sustainability

**Truth:** Romantic approach: selective hand picking may condemn labor to poverty

**Myth 3.** There are no markets for coffees coming from semi-ripe and unripe cherries

**Truth:** There are already markets and others can be developed

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## SIDE EFFECTS AND EXPECTED NEEDS

- Need to grow more coffee to satisfy quality market
- Need to create markets for lower quality coffees
- Need to create jobs for displaced pickers
- Avoid migration to capital cities and regional centers

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## NEED TO GROW MORE COFFEE TO SATISFY QUALITY MARKET

- Less high quality coffee available
- New markets developed
- More coffee to be planted
- Stronger coffee business



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## NEED TO CREATE MARKETS FOR LOWER QUALITY COFFEES

- Soluble
- Consumption in producing countries
- New products
  - RTD
  - others



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## NEED TO CREATE JOBS FOR DISPLACED PICKERS

- Jobs in rural communities and towns
- Develop skills to increase income

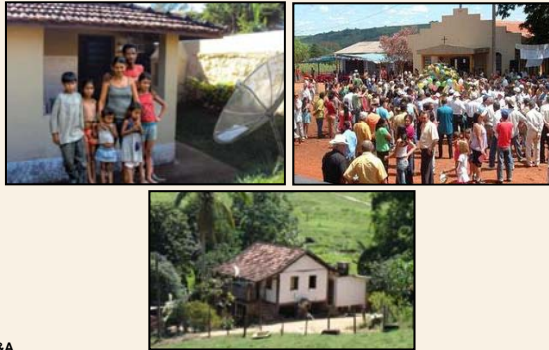


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## AVOID MIGRATION TO CAPITAL CITIES AND REGIONAL CENTERS

- Poor in coffee fields – risk of social unrest and manipulation
- Poor in periphery of cities – risk of drugs and violence
- Pickers and ex-pickers as citizens in rural communities – develop countryside

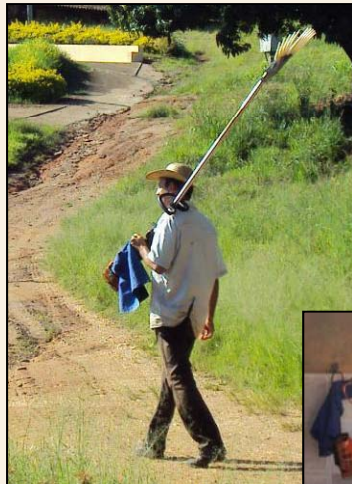


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## TENDENCY OR PROPHECY

CHANGE MUST BE MANAGED  
OR  
MARKET FORCES MAY CAUSE  
SOCIAL DAMAGE



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## COFFEE WORLD MUST UNDERSTAND PROCESS TO MANAGE IT

- Who?
  - workers
  - growers
  - traders
  - industry
  - **institutions**
  - **government**
- How?
  - know technologies available
  - face and destroy paradigms
  - pave way for change
  - create jobs and develop markets
- When?
  - as need develops
  - different in each country
  - but... it will come... and earlier than expected


  


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## COUNTER CHALLENGES BEING FACED BY MOST COFFEE PRODUCING COUNTRIES

- Youth unemployment
- Lack of "sense of" service towards the community
- No "culture of work"
- Younger generations fleeing countryside to work in cities
- Growth of poverty in urban areas
  - underemployment
  - slums
  - social unrest
  - violence

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## REENGINEERING COFFEE COMMUNITIES

- Labor empowering initiatives
- Employment outside farms
- Youth entrepreneurship
- Community service
- The power of local systems — “what works” for each place





“Half-educated, unemployed youth, with no prospect of being integrated into a better future is a prescription for disaster.”  
*Ismail Serageldin, World Bank*

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## SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Manual selective harvesting may condemn labor to poverty
- Alternatives exist and must be used
  - efficient harvesting
  - modern processing
- Need to destroy paradigms
  - quality
  - social
  - markets
- More coffee to be produced
- New markets to be developed
- Labor that remains to be empowered
- Jobs / businesses to be created for labor that leaves
  - retain people in countryside
- Manage change because process is unavoidable

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THANK YOU!

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