

ELLA COFFEE COOPERATIVE (ECC)

About Ella Coffee Co-operative



Ella Coffee Cooperative (ECC) is a joint venture formed between Soul Coffee (Private) Limited and Amba Estate (Private) Limited. Soul Coffee (Pvt) Ltd was incorporated in 2016 as an arabica coffee roasting and packaging business. The company currently sources green bean from a number of independent wet processing mills and a green coffee trader and has a factory based in Colombo.

Amba Estate (Pvt) was incorporated in 2014 as a tourism-focused company selling premium farm stays and exporting tea, homemade jams, and (since 2018) arabica coffee. The company is situated in the Badulla coffee growing district. Both Amba and Soul Coffee sell roasted arabica coffee to the domestic tourism industry (hotels, restaurants and cafés) and premium local retail chains; they also export coffee.



Market Constraints

Sri Lanka's coffee sector faces challenges relating to both the quantity and the quality of specialty-grade coffee green beans. Coffee farmers experience produce losses during harvesting as well as in the post-harvest stage, due to a lack of information around best practices at farmgate and processor levels. As a result, production volumes are low and quality is affected, hindering the growth of the industry. MDF is seeking to address these constraints and thereby improve incomes of coffee farmers.

Intervention

-  Establish cherry purchasing system
-  Improve processing methods and techniques
-  Access to information on good agricultural practices

MDF is supporting ECC to establish a wet processing mill at the Amba Estate property and an outgrower network to source arabica coffee cherries from smallholder farmers in the Badulla district. The outgrower network will provide farmers with access to a new market for coffee cherries as well as extension support and information on coffee farming. The objective of this joint venture is to set up a single source arabica green coffee brand that can be established to meet the green bean production quality requirements of both Amba and Soul Coffee. ECC will also trial out selling high-quality green bean at a premium to specialty roasters in local and international markets.



Photo credit: Soul Coffee