

2018-2019 CROP SETS A NEW RECORD OF EXCELLENCE

EJO HEZA – part of KOPAKAMA COOPERATIVE – Rutsiro District, Rwanda



Rwanda – vista of Lake Kivu from 1600m high at Kopakama's washing station

Cooperative: The Ejo Heza (means “bright tomorrow”) women are members of the KOPAKAMA cooperative. Founded in 1998, they now have 774 members, 474 men and 300 women. The women were supported to form their own “sub-cooperative” in 2011.

Location: Mushubati, Rutsiro district, western province

Certification: Fair Trade, Rainforest compliant. Organic certification

Coop Quality: Lean at Origin trained

Variety: Bourbon – Arabica

Grade: A1

Altitude: 5,200-6,500 ft/ 1,600-2,000m

Processing: Fully washed

Screen size: 15+

Cup score: 86

Flavor notes: Complex. Aroma includes plum, maple syrup, red wine. Flavor has strawberry jam, vanilla, roasted almond, butter and clove with aftertaste of butterscotch and hints of orange. Great smooth body with the familiar Rwandan ‘sparkle’ of acidity.



Ruth Ann Church pictured center with Ejo Heza leaders Olive NYIRAGAHIGIRWA (L) and Therese UWIMANA (R).



Ejo Heza leaders show the community plot of trees where they do experiments to optimize plant health. [[Click here for blog story.](#)]

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Therese UWIMANA, president of Ejo Heza, presented the diagrams she and her husband created when they did Gender Active Learning System (GALS) training.

A closer look at the Kopakama cooperative:

- Ruth Ann visited the women many times while she lived in Rwanda, Nov. 2015 – Aug. 2016, and at least annually since then.
- As farmers, the women of Ejo Heza are eager to find ways to increase the health of their trees.
- With a lot of agronomist support provided by KOPAKAMA, the women have been encouraged and are even conducting experiments on optimization of weeding and mulching techniques. ([See blog post.](#))
- The Ejo Heza members pick coffee together as a group on Tuesdays at their community plot of trees. They remember to only pick the best cherry.
- The KOPAKAMA washing station, where Ejo Heza cherry is processed, is recognized as well-managed.
- What do they do with their “bonus” from coffee? Their cooperative helped them start a microcredit savings and lending group in 2016. ([See blog post.](#))

To view a flavor and water activity report received from a roaster who cupped Ejo Heza, [click here](#).



Ejo Heza Kopakama members started a micro-savings and lending group in January 2016. The micro-credit “bank” meets monthly at the washing station.



A closer look at Artisan Coffee Imports:

Ruth Ann Church founded Artisan Coffee in 2009 with the mission to trade coffee sustainably and in ways that improve the lives of farmers. Supply chain sustainability consulting was added in 2016 to support the mission by helping farmers achieve quality and profitability standards. Ruth Ann has field experience spanning over 20 years and several continents. She has been a speaker at numerous coffee events, including Re:Co Symposium, World of Coffee Dublin and the IWCA Convention. She recently completed a master’s degree in Community Sustainability from Michigan State University. During her graduate studies she was awarded a Leadership Award for exemplary leadership. Her most treasured learning experience was her participation on an MSU coffee support program in Rwanda.



Ruth Ann Church