

Background:

Africa Coffee Bureau (ACB) in cooperation with the Hawaii Agricultural Research Centre (HARC), is excited to announce the Africa stakeholders' coffee farm experience and familiarization tour to Hawaii (COFET-Retreat); which shall thereafter, conclude with the Africa coffee niche market traceability tour Air-Lift to Chicago, USA.

Why Hawaii Agricultural Research Center??

HARC (<https://www.harc.hspa.com>) is the leading research and development center on coffee in the United States and; besides, it undertakes research on cocoa and sugar cane, among others.

Coffee Farm Experience Tour and Retreat (COFET-Retreat) is bringing to attention the need for international cooperation and synergy between African stakeholders and Hawaiian counterparts on coffee research and development, to among others;

- 1) Explore possibilities of joint collaborative research and development projects on coffee science especially in the areas of Coffee Leaf Rust (CLR), Black Coffee Twig Borer (BCTB), Coffee Berry Borer (CBB) and yield increase per unit area.
- 2) Need to undertake joint collaborative intellectual capacity building and technical exchange between research institutions, farmer cooperatives, students, universities and innovation centers.

Therefore, there is need for synergies and this simply calls for multilateral cooperation, it's imperative, it's crucial now in our coffee arena and; this is right now possible with the COFET-Retreat innovation to quickly achieve this goal, be it in closing the gap in fighting against CLR, BCTB or CBB.

To re-emphasize this need for COFET-Retreat; in the UNIDO Director General's inaugural speech at 19th Session of the UNIDO General Conference in Vienna, December 3, 2021; Gerd Müller observed that..... "If we want to solve the global challenges of our time, we need global solidarity and a partnership-based cooperation between industrialized and developing countries" (<http://www.unido.org>). And, WTO has reiterated the same; "to build more resilience, there is need for more international cooperation" ([World Trade Report 2021: Economic Resilience and Trade](#)). Diaspora is a recognized key stakeholder in bilateral and global affairs nexus (International Organization for Migration Report, 2013), Africa Coffee Bureau's COFET-Retreat innovation inclusive. COFET-Retreat is a "Launch Tower", for cooperation between Africa and Hawaii, USA on coffee research and development agenda.

Justification and Prospects:

Notable, in the fiscal year 2015 alone, coffee contributed to the United States GDP an estimated US\$225.2Bn (<https://www.ncausa.org/Research-Trends/Economic-Impact>) and to AFRICA, it continues to be the primary source of income for 12 million households (www.cabi.org/tag/africa-coffee), besides being top foreign exchange earner for various continental governments.

However, coffee is threatened by escalating emergence of invasive species and in addition to erratic climate change. And, coffee production constraints remain the same in the different farming communities, irrespective of the *Coffea* species grown, geographical location and associated micro-climate orientations whether in AFRICA or Hawaii, USA.

But, the difference is in the uniqueness of management and mitigation strategy against the various production constraints; this is the hypothesis COFET-Retreat is hinged on. The assumption of different farming communities using different intervention techniques, science, technology edge, IPM reinforce and cultural practices acceptable to ameliorate the biotic and abiotic crises, is the urge for the cooperation between AFRICA and Hawaii, USA.

HARC is one such unique coffee model and, United States leading establishment on coffee science, with significant impact research outcomes for admiration to learn from, since its founding in 1895 as the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association (HSPA).

HARC is associated with numerous trending technologies including; incorporation of *Beauveria bassiana* into the IPM plan for control of CBB. Hawaii's impressive 849.43 Kg^{-Ha} yield of green bean (USDA-NASS Report 2020/2021), comparative to Kenya's 302 Kg^{-Ha} (www.ico.org: ICC 124th Session, 2019. Country Coffee Profile: Kenya) and, Rwanda's 385.71 Kg^{-Ha} (Coffee Production in the Face of Climate Change: Rwanda); in the Arabica value chain thus, quite phenomenon and intriguing scenario for AFRICA to learn from.

HARC has extensive experience on management of BCTB and, this poses huge prospects for partnerships with Uganda and neighboring nations on the future work to fight against the pest highly devastating the regional coffee and cocoa industry. For purposes of emphasis, BCTB accounts for 8.6% death of primary branches that translate into 8.6% loss of coffee export volume, estimated at US\$40M annually, in Uganda alone (<https://agritrop.cirad.fr/579968/>; [Impact of the black coffee twig borer and farmer's coping mechanisms in Uganda: Survey](#)

Report 2013). Therefore, there is enormous in existence for Hawaii and AFRICA to share including; Kenya's key breakthrough innovation of the Batian resistant variety to CLR.

COFET-Retreat to Hawaii is attracting private equity firms and investors interested in investing in commercial cocoa plantations in AFRICA and, commercialization of various technologies in coffee and cocoa, multiplication of foundation seed of resistant varieties inclusive besides, value addition ventures.

HARC being one of world's leading centers of excellence in sugar cane research, responsive to United States cane sugar demands and bio-fuels industry, qualifies it best bet facility for benchmarking by various African research institutions in early stages of setting up sugar cane research units and systems.

To pull together resources therefore, including the joint intellectual capacity resource in fighting back the increasing pressure on global coffee farming systems, ACB innovated COFET-Retreat.

COFET-Retreat seeks to galvanize and consolidate uptake of the highly scattered farming skills, knowledge and science in coffee through adventures and planned tours to scientific research station and development centers, innovation hubs and On-farm/Estates; for advancement in policy-led livelihoods improvement programs. COFET-Retreat is sought to bring together farmers, scientists, universities, private equity and investors, markets and policy innovation centers in Hawaii and Africa to learn from each other. Expected to culminate into collaborations at the various strategic levels in coffee science and development between Hawaii and AFRICA.

ACB in cooperation with HARC, welcomes African stakeholders to COFET- Retreat, Hawaii.

Feeling the Aloha Spirit!!!