

CLANDEBOYE, MANITOBA

WWW.GREENBEANCOFFEEIMPORTS.COM

Green Bean Coffee Imports

A passion for coffee is what drives Green Bean Coffee Imports. The opening quote on their website reads: “We all know what freshness means; we all have our own experiences... Those smells, tastes and experiences stay with you throughout your life. That is what your coffee experience should be.”

This quote is enough to pique both curiosity and taste buds! But there is more to this rural enterprise than just fabulous coffee. Green Bean Coffee Imports is a coffee roasting company based in Clandeboye, Manitoba, just north of Winnipeg. This company prides itself on providing freshly roasted organic and fair trade coffees from 18 different locations, and is dedicated to giving customers “the best coffee experience possible”.

Their goals are to maintain passion for their work in order to achieve sustainability while being socially, environmentally and ethically responsible. Derryl Reid, Green Bean’s founder and owner, was inspired by his passion for coffee, but his business

emerged out of careful planning and a lot of preparation. After a great deal of strategizing and many conversations with staff at his local Community Futures office, he jumped in with both feet and Green Bean Coffee Imports was formed in May of 2007. Initially, various suppliers steered Derryl away from Fair Trade coffees, arguing that it would be more profitable to work with conventional coffees. But as Green Bean’s mission statement and goals were revisited, Fair Trade model became an easy choice as both an ideological and a business decision. Business-wise, the concept of fairly traded coffee is gaining popularity with consumers, ➔



→ who are increasingly educated on corporate social responsibility. Ideologically, it made sense to encourage social responsibility in all stages of production.

Before long, the commitment was made to purchase beans that were both fair trade and organic. The entire Green Bean facility is Organically Certified, and it was the first Manitoba roaster to be licensed to sell Fair Trade coffee. This means an outside body ensures that the actions at Green Bean match their words. It also involves strict standards, regular reporting, submission to on-site audits, and specific terms of trade that include, among other things, minimum prices to be paid to producers. Through this ethical model, Green Bean is now directly supporting coffee farmers in 18 countries around the world in South and Central America, Asia, and Africa.

At the heart of this business is an interest in sustainable and fair economies. Green Bean has a philosophy of supporting local economies and social justice in all stages of production, beginning with the farmer-producers, and ending with a workplace's employees and the wider community. This is done through promoting fair trade principles to

the general public, but also by making roasted-to-order coffees available for community fundraisers and community events.

As they continue to expand, enough income has been generated to hire one additional full-time staff person. Although cash flow remains a challenge,

Green Bean has been able to show consistent growth and potential to Community Futures, who are providing business financing. Green Bean coffee is now available at over 31 locations in Manitoba including Winnipeg, Brandon, East St. Paul, Gimli, Minnedosa, Selkirk, Petersfield, Onanole, and at Green Bean's booth at the St. Norbert Farmers' Market.

Underlining this interest in sustainability, how-

ever, is a continuing passion for the product that is sold. Business research tells entrepreneurs to begin with their passions. It is clear that the folks at Green Bean Coffee Imports have done just that, and while being a privately owned business, they have clearly found a way to integrate many of the CED values and principles into their enterprise.

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