



Citation



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The Coffee Industry Board (CIB) extends, on behalf of the Government of Jamaica and its people, its heartiest congratulations to the Association of Japanese Importers of Jamaican Coffee (AJIJC) on the recognition and celebration of the fiftieth (50th) anniversary of its long standing trade relationship with the Jamaican Coffee Industry.

The journey to this milestone began with UCC Ueshima Coffee Co., Ltd. being one of the first Japanese companies to buy coffee directly from Jamaica in 1953 and with the liberalization of coffee importation that occurred in Japan during 1961, which allowed more Japanese traders to purchase coffee in small quantities. During the period of 1954 to 1966, majority of the coffee was brought to Japan by British Coffee Traders, this activity was regarded by the CIB as the Triangle Trade.

Our strong and solid trade relationship was marked in our history on Monday, January 9, 1967 when at that time the single largest shipment of coffee to Tokyo, Japan from Kingston, Jamaica was loaded on the SS Kasuga Maru and became a front page story in the local Newspaper (The Daily Gleaner). The highlight of the story was the fact that the CIB's Officers and the Press who were in attendance to witness this historic achievement were hosted on board the SS Kasuga Maru by Captain A. Kojima while the vessel was being loaded with the record volume of 1,400 bags of coffee.

We have come to recognize and hold in very high regard this date as we see it as pivotal in this trade relationship since the discussion began at a Board Meeting held on Wednesday January 18, 1967 when a Board Member asked the Manager about the recent excitement surrounding the newspaper report of Tuesday, January 10, 1967 regarding this historic shipment.

An excerpt from the Board Minutes is as follows;

"Through its Agents the Board had received quite a fair amount of business from Japan. He said in the past small quantities of coffee were sold to Japan, but these shipments had to be transhipped. However, now that there was direct shipment from Jamaica to Japan, many enquiries had been received from Japanese Importers for the purchase of Prime Jamaica Washed Coffee, but unfortunately the quantity available for export could not satisfy the demand. The Manager said the Board had not been able to sell any coffee to Canada and the United States of America recently because these Countries would not pay the prices which the Board could obtain from the European markets. Today, however, the demand for Jamaica's Prime Washed Coffee in Japan was evident and they were now paying the best prices for our coffee. The Board always sold to the market where the best prices could be obtained."

It is also to be noted that the Annual Report for Crop Year 1966/67 reported that the world famous Wallenford Blue Mountain Coffee Estate produced its second crop of Jamaica Blue Mountain Coffee, a total of 21 barrels, all of which was also shipped in 1967 to Japan.

We thank the AJIJC for the tremendous contributions in direct investments by your traders, and also for providing loans, grants and aid that the coffee industry benefited from. Some of the key milestones in our journey together are as follows;

- I. We honor the memory of Tadao Ueshima, founder of UCC Ueshima Coffee Co., Ltd. and a World Authority on coffee being one of the first Japanese companies to buy coffee directly from Jamaica in 1953.
- II. The visit of Mr. Fusao Miyata of Yutaka Trading on Saturday January 21, 1967, to meet with the Coffee Growers Co-Operative of the Jamaica Agricultural Society (JAS) to promote the buying of greater quantities of Jamaica Blue Mountain Coffee.
- III. The first Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) by Japanese Traders of two \$500,000 USD loans by Ataka and Co. signed in 1974 were used to initiate the first major expansion drive into the Blue Mountains - targeted acreage 241 in coffee (funds were fully disbursed in 1977).
- IV. UCC Ueshima Coffee Co., Ltd. acquisition of Craighton Estate in 1981 now a large coffee estate and tourist attraction.
- V. UCC Ueshima Co., Ltd. facilitation of the path breaking Japanese government loan for coffee expansion in 1984 (5.941 billion yen).
- VI. Wataru & Company Ltd. venture with local partner Dyoll Insurance Co. Ltd. to create Dyoll Wataru Farm and Estate Development during 1985.
- VII. Six (6) AJIJC member companies (Ataka, Kanematsu, Toshoku, UCC, Wataru, and Yutaka Trading) contributed to the 7.1 million USD Traders Loan, while UCC, the number one player in Post Hurricane Gilbert (1988) Restoration Loans contributed another 4.58 million USD.

As we look to the future, we are sobered by the lessons from our association with AJIJC over the past fifty (50) years. The Coffee Industry Board on behalf of the Government of Jamaica, Jamaica Coffee Exporters Association (JCEA), Jamaica Coffee Growers Association (JCGA), coffee farmers and all other stakeholders is confident that we will all stand on this solid platform which will contribute to our mutual aspirations and goals for a continued successful association over the next fifty (50) years and beyond.

Please accept our humble gift which is a replica of the front page Jamaica Gleaner Newspaper Story as we most profoundly celebrate this milestone date of Monday, January 9, 1967 with you and the entire AJIJC family

Honour Roll of AJIJC Members

Ataka Trading Company Ltd.
Kanematsu Corporation
MC Foods Limited
UCC Ueshima Coffee Co., Ltd.
Wataru & Company Ltd.
Yutaka Trading Company Ltd.



"Coffee Regulations from Seed to Cup"

Sylburn Thomas – Chairman
Coffee Industry Board



Jamaica Blue Mountain®



Jamaica High Mountain Supreme®



Jamaica Blue®