

Lecture summary

[Science](#), [Biology](#)



Module Coffee has now become a dependency item with around 25 million people being directly dependent on coffee and another 100 million being involved (indirectly dependent) on coffee in one way another. Ecosystems carry immense importance in the lives of every living thing. Human beings are dependent on the ecosystems, which are being destroyed due to the cultivation of coffee. Major cultivation of coffee takes place in the central and south highlands of America. The coffee cultivation is affecting the quality of such forest which in turn has a direct negative effect on the present ecosystems. A complete shutdown of such activity is not recommended but there is surely space to carry out such activities in line with conservation of the forests and ecosystems. Luckily, small sized forests that are not considered for major cultivation, hence, are conserved.

A way to address this issue is to cultivate coffee on shade-grown farms. There are many added advantages for such cultivation. Firstly, it delivers a long list of forest products. These products include fruits, medicines and lumber apart from coffee. Shade grown coffee farms not only address social and economic needs, but also meet a large list of ecological essentials. Forest covers are maintained with the use of shade grown coffee and it minimizes erosion when compared to other coffee cultivating methods and agricultural systems. The leading examples being pasture for cattle grazing and sun coffee. Agro forestry provides a natural habitat to many birds. It is believed that birds not only reduce pest but also enhance its quality by bringing the damage to a minimum level. The retention of nutrients and the chemistry of the soil also has a great impact on the quality of coffee produced.

Around 5- 10% of the retail price of coffee goes to the farmers while the most coffee growing areas are 50 developing nations of the world. The corporate sector controls most of the coffee cultivation and around two fifth of the coffee market is controlled by big corporates giants such as Nestle, Sara Lee, Kraft and P & G. Theses corporate giants are also responsible for controlling more than three quarters of the US coffee market.

Farmers in areas like Gautemala are paid extremely low for picking coffee berries. On a average \$2. 50 is paid for picking 100 pounds of coffee berries. Hence, fair trade policies are essential and should be enforced.

The supply chain of coffee starts from the producers and after passing through the processors, exporter, importer and roaster is passed on to the retailer and consumer.