

U.S. organic coffee imports soar 12%

Organic coffee takes a third of all U.S. organic beverage sales

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The volume of organic coffee imports to the North American market grew 12 percent last year to 89 million pounds, valued at over \$1.3 billion, the North American Organic Coffee Industry Survey said Tuesday.

Organic coffee was the most valuable of all organic products imported into North America in 2008, and represented a third of all U.S. organic beverage sales, said coffee market analyst, Daniele Giovannucci, who conducted the survey.

“Consumers are being more selective and increasingly moving toward products they perceive to provide real and lasting value, both personal and to the environment,” said Giovannucci in a statement.

Organic coffee is grown using methods and materials that have a low impact on the environment.

Organic production systems replenish and maintain soil fertility, avoid the use of toxic and persistent pesticides and fertilizers, and build biologically diverse agriculture.

Third-party certification organizations verify that organic farmers use only methods and materials allowed in organic production.

Giovannucci released the survey data at an event in New York City's Union Square Café featuring new crop organic coffees from leading U.S. roasters including True Origin Organics of Weston, Fla., Green Mountain Coffee of Waterbury, Vt., and Equator Estate Coffees and Teas in San Rafael, Calif.



Above are members of the Organic Coffee Collaboration, a project of the Organic Trade Association, and host of the event.

From left to right: Nishi Whitely, Chiapas Farms; Laura Peterson, Green Mountain Coffee; Sandra Marquardt, On the Mark Public Relations and Organic Coffee Collaboration coordinator; Stephen Schulman, S&D Coffee; Silvia Covelli, True Origin Organics; Maria Cleaveland, Equator Estate Coffees & Teas; Brooke McDonnell, Equator Estate Coffees & Teas; Ed Wakeham, Maximus Coffee Group.

“Consumers have spoken loud and clear,” said Christine Bushway, OTA executive director. “Consumers choose to support organic agriculture even when times get tough.”