

A coffee blend for palate, profit

When Mark Stell gets talking about the coffee business, he doesn't percolate into coffee blends and roasting formulas. Instead, the founder and president of Portland Roasting Co. tells stories about a farmer in Papua New Guinea who has been able to increase her yields; the new water treatment facility his company helped install on a farm in Guatemala; and a shade tree reforestation program the company helped implement near a coffee farming community in El Salvador.

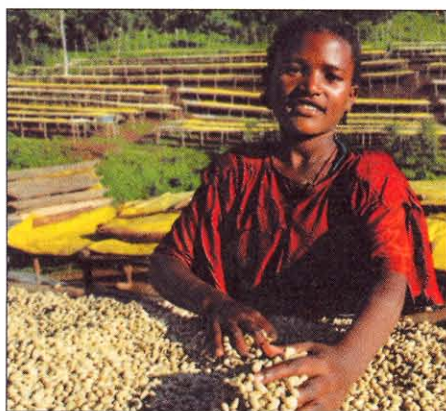
SMALL BUSINESS PROFILE

It's not unusual for a company to reinvest its profits back into the systems that help make it profitable. For specialty roasters such as Portland Roasting Co., high-quality beans yield high returns. Over the past 25 years, specialty coffees have increased their share of the U.S. coffee market from less than 1 percent to more than 20 percent, helping drive Portland Roasting Co.'s 20 percent annual growth rate.

Portland Roasting is a certified organic facility, but it does not buy organically grown coffee exclusively. It aims to buy shade grown coffee, for which it pays a premium directly to farmers. Farmers are paid 35 percent above current Fair Trade prices, according to Stell, who has a master's degree in sustainable development from Portland State University.

The company recently invested in a high-efficiency after-burner for its roaster, purchases renewable energy from its local utility and runs its delivery trucks on biodiesel fuel. As part of its Farm Friendly Direct program, the company is also working to plant nearly 17,000 trees in coffee farming communities to help offset its own greenhouse gas emissions.

In 2007, International Paper Co. approached



A farmer in Ethiopia sorts coffee beans.

Company name: Portland Roasting Co.

Headquarters: Portland

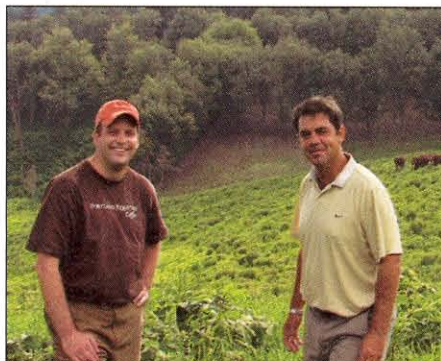
Founded: 1996

President: Mark Stell

2007 sales: \$5 million

Claim to fame: Its Farm Friendly Direct program, which pays coffee farmers a price that's currently 35 percent above Fair Trade prices, and its award-winning coffee.

Learn more at: www.portlandroasting.com



Mark Stell (left) fosters direct relationships with farmers.

Portland Roasting to help pilot its Ecotainer, a hot beverage container made from corn-based plastic and paper harvested from trees managed according to Sustainable Forestry Initiative guidelines. Portland Roasting is currently helping its customers—coffee shops, hospitals, college campuses, hotels and other retail outlets—implement composting programs.

The company has won awards for both its coffee and its sustainability practices: The City of Portland awarded its robust recycling and composting practices and the Coffee Association of America recognized its Farm Friendly Direct program's work to expand sustainability within the coffee industry. For the past two years Portland Roasting was named a "Roaster of the Year" finalist by *Roast* magazine.

While the bulk of the company's customers are located in the Northwest, Marie Franklin, Portland Roasting's national sales manager, says Portland's reputation as a sustainable and food- and drink-savvy city only aid the company's marketing efforts. "We might not be able to take over the world, but we can take over Portland," Marie Franklin says. ●

Atmospheric Sciences, Forest Resources and Marine Affairs. If approved by the UW Board of Regents, a new department called Environment, Society and Culture would also be created. UW faculty sees a competitive landscape in environmental studies right now, but recognizes its position as a research leader and location on the West Coast give it a competitive advantage, according to the draft proposal delivered to UW Board of Regents.

Jennifer Allen, associate director of Portland State University's Center for Sustainable Processes and Practices, says UW's effort is the right direction for West Coast universities to take.

"Anything that makes it easier for students to get more complete training by drawing on disciplines that weren't more accessible, I think it goes a long way toward helping out," Allen says. She says she often hears of a need for more people with "hybrid" degrees who can problem solve in systemic ways and who come from programs that develop systems thinkers.

UW's College of the Environment will compete with four other universities with comparable organizations: Duke University's Nicholas Institute for Environmental Policy Solutions, Stanford University's Ward W. and Priscilla B. Woods Institute for the Environment, University of Michigan's Environmental Sustainability Institute, and Arizona State University's Global Institute of Sustainability. The institute at Duke is the next closest in research expenditures with \$15 million in FY 2007.

Allen says Portland State University is also looking into creating a similar program.

Pending approval by the Board of Regents, the college will open as an institute in the fall quarter of 2008, funded by a donation of \$1 million. Over its first five years, UW plans to seek funding for another 20 full-time academic positions and 10 full-time staff positions to meet expected growth of the college.

Washington triples FSC forestlands

[OLYMPIA, WASH.]

With the recent certification of 145,000 acres of state-managed land by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), Washington tripled its FSC-certified acreage.

Updated forest management plans direct the state's Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to certify eight additional Habitat Conservation Planning Units to FSC standards, with a final goal of certifying timber coming from all 2.1 million acres of state-managed land.