

As Green as It Gets Coffee cooperative





Supporting sustainable economic development
and direct trade in Guatemala

AGAIG Newsletter

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Their mission

Mission and Values

AGAIG provides coffee farmers and local businesses with training and support that enable them to create profitable, marketable products, thereby allowing them to improve their quality of life and help their communities in an environmentally and economically sustainable way.

Our goal, at its simplest, is to help those in poverty by enabling them to increase their income by engaging in well-paying economic activity. This activity is most beneficial when it is environmentally and economically sustainable – viable in the long-term without damaging to the environment. It should also be mindful of the community's needs and give back through better-paying jobs or access to services and infrastructure.

To that end we hold these principles:



Transparency

We believe that a long-lasting, trusting relationship between all stakeholders must be based in a firm adherence to openness. We strive to be transparent and open about our programs and their funding both with the Guatemalans we support as well as our foreign supporters and funders.



Empowerment

To every extent possible, we involve Guatemalans in our decision making process in a meaningful way, so that our programs are tailored to their needs and not the other way around.



Sustainability

We believe that environmental sustainability must be a fundamental part of how humans live. To that end, we strive to ensure that all projects minimize their negative impact on the natural environment and contribute positively wherever possible.



Visiting a coffee plantation with the grower



Newly planted coffee trees need shade from nurse trees

Nurse trees



The common nurse tree in Guatemala was Silky oak (*Grevillea*). It is fast growing and can eventually be used for firewood.



Coffee flowers



Coffee fruits



Coffee seedlings are grown in plastic bags in shaded nurseries



The *Grevillea* trees are grown in a similar way



Back from the field to learn how coffee is processed and roasted.



But first a
Geology lesson
from Anna



The harvested coffee needs to have the fleshy fruit covering removed.



This grower employs a bicycle-like pedal powered fruit removal machine.



Pedal powered machines are useful for all sorts of applications like this pedal powered blender.



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Center of Bicycle Technology

Maya Pedal is a Guatemalan NGO based in San Andrés Itzapa. We accept bikes donated from the USA and Canada which we either recondition to sell, or we use the components to build a range of "Bicimaquinas", (pedal powered machines).

Pedal power can be harnessed for countless applications which would otherwise require electricity (which may not be available) or hand power (which is far more effort). Bicimaquinas are easy and enjoyable to use. They can be built using locally available materials and can be easily adapted to suit the needs of local people. They free the user from rising energy costs, can be used anywhere, are easy to maintain, produce no pollution and provide healthy exercise.

We make water pumps, grinders, threshers, tile makers, nut shellers, blenders (for making soaps and shampoos as well as food products), trikes, trailers and more.

In Guatemala

We have a busy workshop staffed by locals and by volunteers from around the World. As well as building Bicimaquinas, we offer a bike repair service and sell used bikes in the surrounding area.

We also work with a number of [local partners](#), NGO's, agricultural cooperatives and organic producers.

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There is an NGO in Guatemala for making useful pedal powered machines.
Our guide at IMAP worked for Maya Pedal before moving to IMAP.



Katie

Once the coffee seeds are separated from the fruits they are roasted.

We were treated to a home-style roasting in a pan on the wood fired stove.



Anna giving roasting
a try.



Next was Sarah, turning
coffee beans with one
hand and taking notes
with the other.

The beans are getting
darker as they toast.



Finally, the coffee beans are dark enough to begin the grinding process.





This is old school grinding
using a grindstone.



The mother of the house
showed us the proper
technique.





Anna using the
grindstone



Mother only seems to be grinding faster than Sarah?