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STEPS TO DISCOVERY
Experience the taste that made coffee history

MINNEAPOLIS, MN (May 2, 2008) – Al-Ezzi Industries announces the U.S. launch of Haraaz Coffee, a new brand grown in the Haraz Mountain region of Yemen. With taste characteristics inherited from its ancestral roots, Haraaz Coffee revives the original taste of Yemen Mocha, the world's first cultivated coffee.

Unlike other coffees from Yemen, Haraaz is grown in the northwest highlands, an area geographically isolated, thriving exactly as it has for centuries. The terrain consists of rugged brownish-grey mountains of stone where steep, rocky terraces were engineered centuries ago, providing the basis for a method of farming. With limited access to any commercial farm supplies, coffee, as well as all agriculture, is grown in a naturally organic environment, free of pollution. Using traditional methods handed down through the centuries, coffee is sun-dried on mats made from natural fiber of the date palms. Continued drum drying, hulling, hand sorting and grading according to the green coffee quality standards of the SCAA is followed by packing in food safety sacks for shipment to international destinations.

During the past several decades, farming in the Haraz Mountains, as well as the rest of Yemen, has diminished due to a variety of economic, political and social problems. In an effort to survive, farmers started growing Qat, a shrub whose leaves offer a mild narcotic effect. Easy to grow and sell at profitable levels, Qat became attractive to farmers. Aside from the obvious detriments of producing a narcotic as a way of life, Qat farming also causes destruction to the soil, robbing it of nutrients and the scarce supply of water. Realizing the need for change and envisioning the potential opportunities for restoring commercial agriculture to the region, Al-Ezzi Industries started "The Haraaz Project."

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“The objective of this project is to support farmers in the restoration of commercial agriculture,” said Shabbir A. Ezzi, managing director. “We envision the exercise of marketing Haraaz Coffee will not only achieve commercial success, but raise awareness of this entire region. Consumers appreciate quality coffee, which Haraaz offers, along with a program that guarantees higher returns for farmers, and a transparency system that documents authenticity.”

One green coffee buyer visited farmers in this region last year and is quite optimistic about its success. Shirin Moayyad, director of coffee purchasing, Peet’s Coffee & Tea, discovered the Yemeni farmers in this region to be immensely hospitable and proudly committed to the coffee project. She offers this perspective:

“We have always been big fans of Yemeni coffee as a single origin offering and for our Mocha Java Blend, but this program offers an unprecedented clarity in supply chain movement and in tracing the threads of unique flavors that make up the commonly offered Yemeni blends. Novel as this model is, Haraaz Coffee is sure to add value to the Yemeni coffee industry.”

To discover the taste of Haraaz Coffee, stop by the Al-Ezzi Industries booth #2216 during the Specialty Coffee Association of America’s annual conference in the Minneapolis Convention Center, May 2-5, 2008. For more information, visit www.al-ezzi.com, email, info@al-ezzi.com

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