

# **Assessing Small-scale Coffee Farmers' Vulnerability to the Global Coffee Crisis:**

## **Results From a Participatory Survey in Northern Nicaragua**

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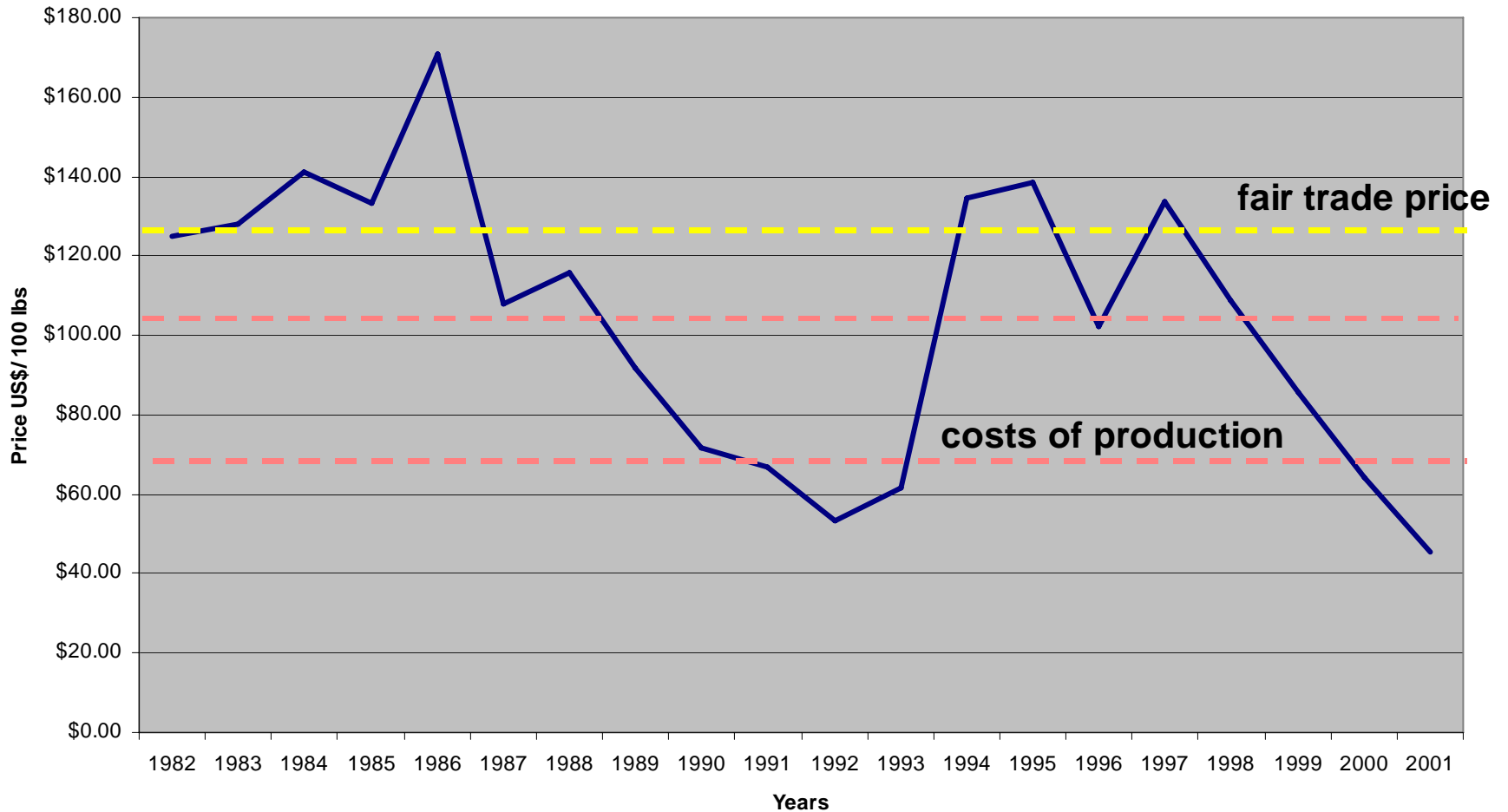
# Outline of Presentation

- I. Vulnerability, global coffee markets, and Nicaraguan farmers
- II. Are small-scale farmers linked to alternative markets less vulnerable?
  - a. Cooperatives respond to market changes
  - b. Research methods
  - c. Findings
- III. Learning from alternatives to suggest strategies that reduce vulnerability without reproducing structures that created it

# **Vulnerability, global coffee markets, and Nicaraguan farmers**

- a. Sustainability, Social Justice and Vulnerability
- b. Conventional and alternative coffee markets & networks
- c. Coffee production in northern Nicaragua

# The World Coffee Market





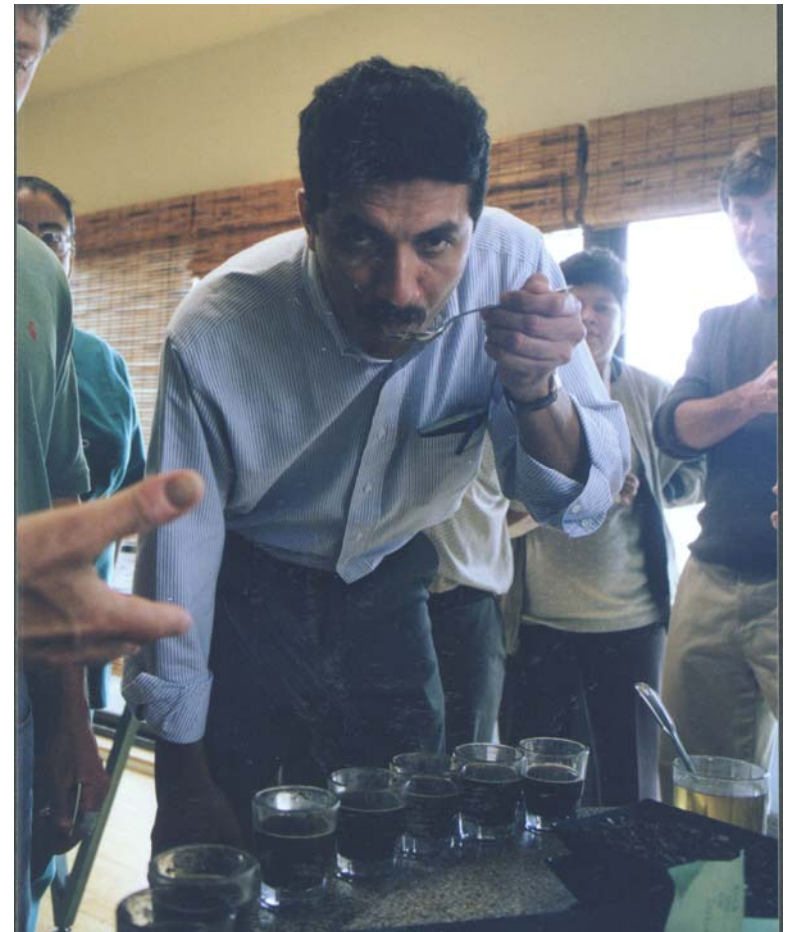
# Impact of the coffee crisis

- Large plantations
  - Owners
  - Workers
- Small-medium scale
  - Farmers
- Rural communities and economies
- Environmental Impacts

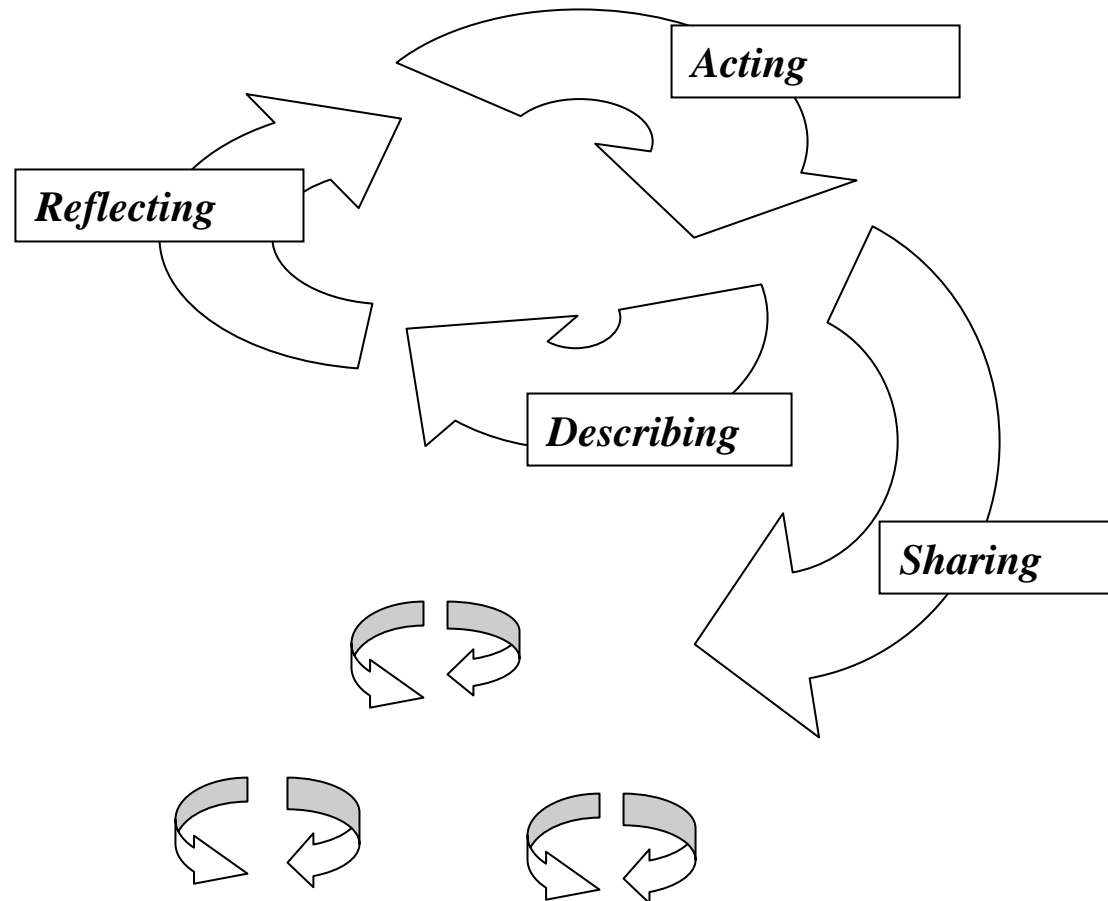


# Farmer cooperatives organizing to increase coffee quality and access to improve prices

16 cooperatives, representing 6000 small-scale producers—leading exporters of fair trade, organic, specialty coffees



# Participatory Research Process





# Coffee and Small-scale Farmer Livelihoods

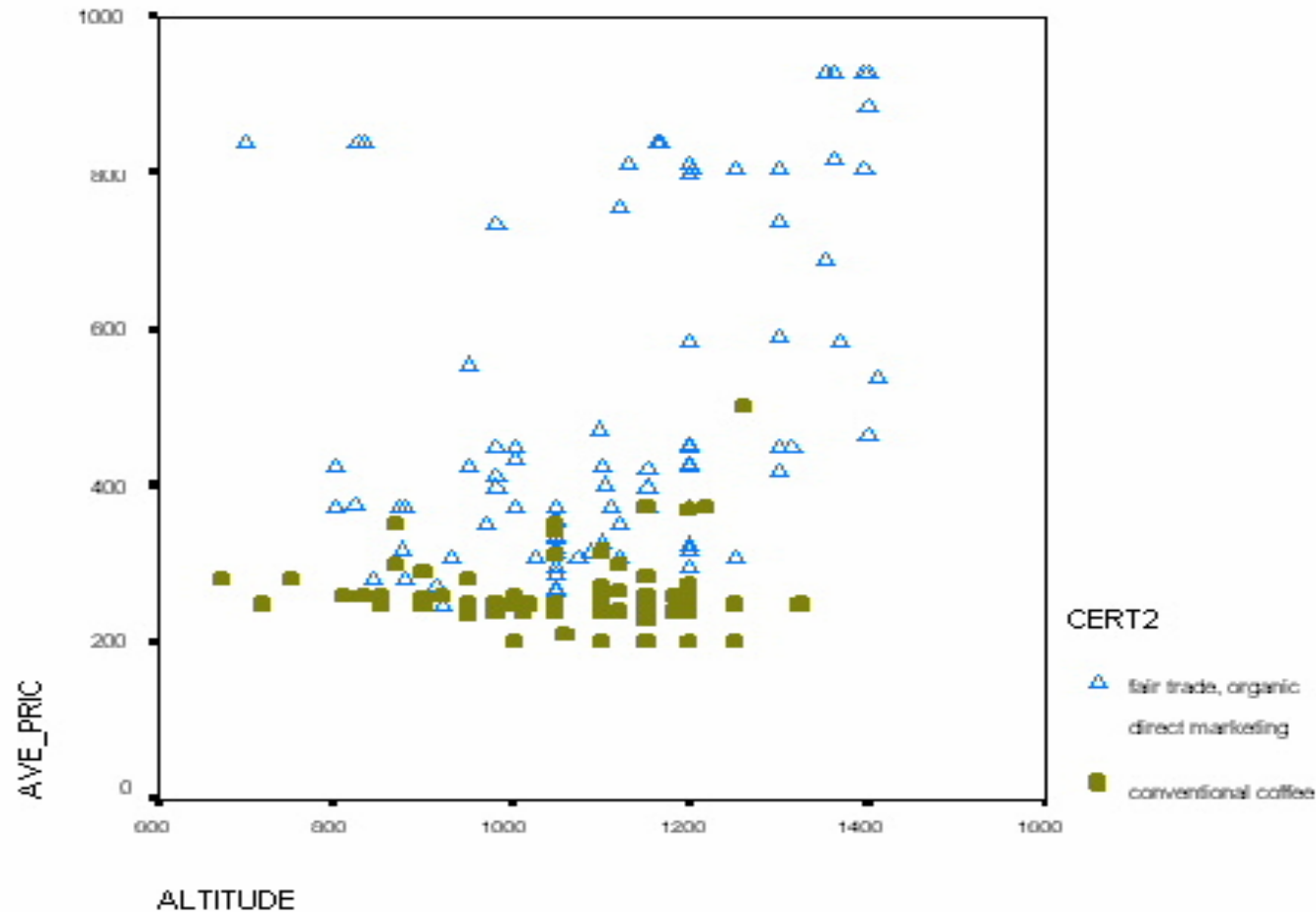
**Top:** Lazaro looks across community of Las Naranjas, Oaxaca, Mexico

**Right:** Santiago and the Riviera family in Madriz, Nicaragua.





# Determinants of Price at the Farm Gate



# Is there a risk that you will lose your farm this year?

- 180 farmers commercializing their coffee to cooperatives connected to alternative markets.
- 44 farmers who belong to cooperatives only commercializing through conventional channels.
- Eight farmers indicated a risk that they would lose their farms this year = 4.4%
- Eight farmers indicated a risk that they would lose their farms this year = 18%

***Conclusion: If you are a small-scale farmer who belongs to a cooperative linked to fair trade and/or organic markets you are four times less likely to indicate a risk of losing your farm to low coffee prices.***

# Prices Reported by farmers at the Farm Gate

Where did you sell the coffee?	Price paid per pound café oro	How long until you were fully paid?	How many farmers sold to each market?
<b>Cooperative-Fair Trade</b> <a href="#">[1]</a>	<b>\$ 0.76/lb</b> <b>(\$62-1.27)</b>	<b>57 days</b> <b>(0-90 )</b>	<b>53 farmers</b>
<b>Cooperative-Organic</b>	<b>US \$ 0.62/lb</b> <b>(\$0.33-1.27)</b>	<b>73 days</b> <b>(0-210)</b>	<b>61 farmers</b>
<b>Cooperative-conventional market</b>	<b>\$ 0.41/lb</b> <b>\$0.30-0.50/lb</b>	<b>46 days</b> <b>(0-260)</b>	<b>84 farmers</b>
<b>Agro Export Company</b>	<b>\$ 0.39/lb</b> <b>(\$0.30-0.65)</b>	<b>24 days</b> <b>(0-180)</b>	<b>51 farmers</b>
<b>Intermediary</b>	<b>\$ 0.37/lb</b> <b>(\$0.30-0.50)</b>	<b>9 days</b> <b>(0-120)</b>	<b>72 farmers</b>

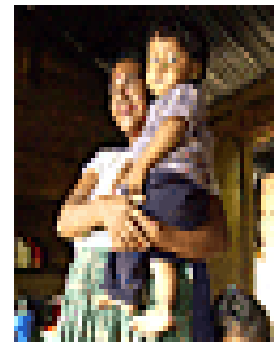
[\[1\]](#) Although, some coffee was certified as both Fair Trade and organic, most farmers understood and thus reported that they were commercializing either Fair Trade, or organic, they did not given a single price for both certifications.

# How have changing coffee prices affected your quality of life?



# Learning from alternatives to mitigate vulnerability without reproducing the structures that created the crisis

1. Many immediate crisis mitigation strategies support existing inequalities
2. We can learn from coping strategies at different scales.
3. Fair trade and links to consumer politics may have potential to transform markets—how do you scale-up?



Artwork © by Scott Krych

# Quality-Values-Sustainability

- What does quality mean, for:
  - Farmers
  - Roasters/Retailers
  - Consumers
- Certification as a tool to link quality and sustainability
- Movements of citizens, students, consumers and coffee companies connecting to cooperatives, farmers and states to make markets reflect social values.

# Thank You

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