

Dear Friends of the Coffee Connections Project,

I am currently in Kenya and as things are really starting to ramp up, I thought I would send you an update on what has been going on.

### **Outside the Box Holiday Gifts**

In the run up to the holiday season we have launched a holiday gift promotion called Outside the Box. We are offering the opportunity to buy charitable gifts, where you can purchase things like a donkey, farm tools or organic certification on behalf of your loved one. Contrary to some other charitable gift programs, the proceeds go towards buying that particular item for one of the farmers in our program. This is not always the case for all other charitable gifts – often people think they are buying a goat or a well, and the money just goes into a large pot for the charity to spend as it sees fit. This is not Safi enough for us – Safi means honest or transparent in Swahili. We guarantee that all gifts purchased under the Outside the Box program are exactly what they claim to be.

The gifts available under the Outside the Box program include:

Plant a tree (\$10)

Natural fertilizer (\$25)

Organic certification (\$35)

Fair trade certification (\$50)

Farm tools (\$60)

Drip Irrigation (\$75)

Clean Water (\$100)

A Donkey (\$100)

If you are interested in purchasing an Outside the Box gift for one (or more!) of your loved ones this holiday season, [click here!](#)

### **NGO Status in Kenya**

Just this past week I picked up Rural Development Connections' official certificate of NGO status. This is huge – it can take a long time for this registration to be processed and we have been waiting eight months. Now that we are a legally recognized entity in Kenya, we can really begin to ramp up our programming and start working with the farmers to improve their standard of living.

I met with a number of the farmers this week and they were very excited about the next growing season. They are keen to learn how to produce the best quality coffee possible, so that they can earn more for their harvests. Until now they have sold their coffee blind to the factory and have never known how good or bad their coffee was. This will be the first time they will be able to sell and get a fair price based on quality. It makes sense to us that the better the coffee the higher the price they can get for it. One of our farmers told me how much he wants to be self sufficient and how he believes that with our help, he can be in the future.

### **Safi Coffee**

The retail arm of the Coffee Connections Project is being launched in 2010. Through participation in the Coffee Connections Project, smallholder Kenyan farmers have a direct stake in Safi Coffee, the company that sells their product on the global market. Empowered by the tools and training provided by our affiliated non profit Rural Development Connections, these once impoverished farmers will become global businessmen and women, with a stake in their and their community's future. To find out more about Safi Coffee, visit [www.saficoffee.com](http://www.saficoffee.com) During this current trip to Kenya we are working with the farmers on buying and exporting coffee from their current harvest. Further to the coffee arriving in the USA we will start sales in 2010. This will be the first direct supply of coffee from the partner farmers available for sale.

That's all for now – check out our Facebook page and our blog for regular updates, otherwise look out for our future monthly email alerts. Please add this email address to your contacts so that it does not land in your junk mail folder! Thanks to all for your support—both moral and financial!

Shannon McGuire Mulholland,

Executive Director, Rural Development Connections  
Chief Executive, Safi Coffee