

# COOMAP NEWS

THIS MONTH WE WOULD LIKE TO INTRODUCE YOU TO OUR CO-OP STORE!



You might be thinking: why the hack has a co-op focused on Fair trade Coffee got an agricultural supplies store? **Doesn't it sound a bit incompatible?**

**WELL, NOT REALLY.** We believe that one of the ways of helping our members develop in farm activities and consequently improve the quality of their lives is by providing them products at fair prices, payment terms and dates and most important: selling to growers what they need! This last part sounds a bit confusing, doesn't it?

Allow me to put you into Brazilian perspectives: since paying for quality technical assistance is expensive and very few co-ops offer it to its members, it's very common that fertilizers and pesticides retailers hire agronomical engineers as salespeople in order to visit farms, offer a free one-visit technical assistance, make a prescription and take the year fertilizer and pesticide order.

It's not necessary to say that in most cases salespeople's sales goals are on top priority, even more than what the crop really needs and what growers can afford.

In some cases, depending on the way growers purchase these products, they might end up spending all of the extra money they were able to receive from certified coffee sales on these "not so fair" deals. And this is the reason why our co-op has decided to keep its store, which has been working since our foundation in 1957, after we became a Fairtrade Certified co-op.

**WELL, LET'S START TALKING ABOUT THE STORE ITSELF? OUR MEMBERS COUNT WITH A COMPLETE AND MODERN STORE THAT OFFERS THEM EVERYTHING THAT THEY NEED FOR THEIR FARM ACTIVITIES, FROM FERTILIZERS AND PESTICIDES TO HARDWARE, VACCINATION FOR HORSES AND CATTLE AND SO ON.**

**BUT WHAT ABOUT THE DISCUSSION WE RAISED ABOVE, REGARDING SELLING TO GROWERS ONLY WHAT THEY NEED AND AT FAIR CONDITIONS?**

None of our salespeople or agricultural technicians are commissioned. They are only allowed to sell to growers the exact quantity of fertilizers and pesticides that are in the prescription made by the technician responsible for his/her assistance, thus there will be no risk that they'll end up buying more than necessary. And since our technical department is really close

to the store, members can ask their own technician questions they have about a product so that they feel 100% sure they are getting the right product. Furthermore, they are able to pay for everything with coffee, either from current or from next crop. Prices paid by our members are average 7% cheaper than the rest of the market.

**It's important to highlight that the above mentioned discount can be even higher during our joint purchases events for fertilizers and machines, which will be introduced to you on a future edition of this newsletter.**

**And there is much more...**



Our members have available complete sections of houseware, cookware, presents, machine parts and everything they need for farm maintenance. They can even buy clothes, that's right... clothes at our co-op! And once again, everything can be paid with coffee. And

if we happen of not having something our members need, they just need to let us know about it and in a few days we'll probably be carrying that item. Take a look at some pictures of our beautiful store... everything made to provide the best to our members.





# GROWER OF THE MONTH

**Would you believe if we told you about a 46-hectare farm that's 100% cared by a family? No? Well, let us introduce you to Mr. Benedito Renato da Silva, or DITO, as his family and friends call him.**

This 61-year-old full of energy grower has been working with coffee crops for 41 years, that is, since the time his father passed away and left to him a small farm as inheritance. From that time on, as people in rural areas around here say, lots of water has flown under the bridge, that is, many things happened: he got married, had three children and raised a nephew as if his own son.

And that's the point where we start our discussion about his crops, since Dito, his wife, a very strong 51-year-old woman, his two sons and nephew take care of everything at their 46-hectare farm. But you might be thinking: how is it possible? Through only one word: MECHANIZATION.

## FAMILY MECHANIZED GROWERS

He has got tractors, manual harvesting machines, a huller, a dryer and some other machines which allow them to do all the farm work with no need to hire other people. Because his family and him do everything, they are considered family growers, both according to certifications and our country's requirements.

And that makes a lot of sense, because if you get their farm, which might be considered very big in comparison with other countries, and split it between his 6 family members and him, we'll have less than 8 hectares for each one, which is not that much anymore, considering it's the only thing they do for their and their families living, after all his children and his nephew are all married and have their children too.

His farm has a yield of 40 60-kg-bags per hectare and he is always telling everyone that he's really grateful to technical assistance for this excellent productivity. On high productivity years his farm produces 2000 bags and on low years 600. This is possible because he really puts into practice all of his technician is recommendations and he's always renewing his crops in order to have more productive diseases resistant varieties.

## BUT HOW IS IT POSSIBLE FOR DITO TO BUY ALL OF THE MACHINES HE'S GOT?

One of his main supports in this aspect is COOMAP store and the joint purchases events the co-op organizes. Through the co-op he's able to buy machines and pay it with coffee in up to four yearly payments, which in his opinion is always the best payment alternative since the price paid for coffee at these fixations is higher. Check his opinion

about our co-op store: "We constantly have salespeople at our farm trying to sell fertilizers, machines and pesticides for us, but it's not worth it because at the co-op I have everything that I need and I can always count on my technician, who's constantly available to tell me the best product for my farm and explain the right way to use it".

**At this moment his wife got into the conversation and said that she's also a loyal client of the co-op, after all she buys clothes, gifts and cookware at the co-op.**



Dito, his wife and grandson.

**SOMETHING ELSE WE HAVE TO PRAISE DITO FOR IS THE FACT THAT HE'S A PARTICIPATIVE MEMBER WHO ALWAYS ATTENDS GENERAL ASSEMBLIES AND IS INTERESTED ON THE CO-OP MANAGEMENT.**

## FAMILY SUCCESSION AND GRATITUDE

Recently he's done something really nice: he put his children in charge of dealing with fertilizers purchases and payments. He said he's doing it to get them ready for the future. That's family succession! Another aspect he's grateful for the co-op is harvest pre-financing, which is offered every year in order provide money for growers to pay for harvests costs before they get to sell a part of their production

and for which no interest is charged. Like some of our previous growers whose life story was told in this section, Dito says that everything he has is because of coffee and that's why he doesn't like to listen to people criticizing it. And to confirm that he's really satisfied with his profession, this year he's going to plant coffee on 7 more hectares of land he has just bought.

**We end up this month's story with some nice pictures taken at Dito's farm, including his nice united family.**



Dito and the technician responsible for his assistance

