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SCAA Honors Project Focused on Linking Coffee Producers with Specialty Segment of Mainstream Retailer in United Kingdom

LONG BEACH, Calif. U.S.A. (February 18, 2014) --- The Specialty Coffee Association of America (SCAA), the world's coffee authority and largest coffee trade association, presents its 2014 Sustainability Award to Twin, a UK-based ethical trading organization, for their project *Congo Coffee Revival: Regenerating Communities by Linking Remote Farmers to Mainstream Markets*. This annual award honors individuals, businesses and organizations in the specialty coffee industry that have created innovative projects to expand and promote sustainability.

For this project, Twin set out to engage new producers in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and help them access value-added markets for the first time. Twin's first partnership was with Sopacdi, a coffee cooperative in this region, which had 284 members and was in need of support, capacity building and access to international markets. Since 2008 Twin has worked to build production and export capacity for this cooperative, including coffee farm rehabilitation, processing infrastructure, and business and governance capacity. Today, the cooperative has 5,200 members, including 1,450 women, and has constructed the country's first modern coffee washing station in 40 years.

Twin also partnered with the UK supermarket, Sainsbury's, and the roaster Finlays under a Food Retail Industry Challenge Fund (FRICH), funded by the Department for International Development (DFID) and Comic Relief in 2009. The collaboration sought to bring together a wealth of industry expertise to support marginalized producers with training and new facilities to improve quality, as well as provide access to mainstream markets and product development. In



2011, Sainsbury's successfully launched a DRC and Malawi blend that included Sopacdi's coffee.

Nicolas Mounard, Twin's Managing Director, says of the project: "When we first entered DR Congo to meet with coffee farmers, everyone thought we were crazy. Besides the security risk, almost everything had been lost to civil war – from coffee farms to processing facilities. But what we found at Sopacdi was not just the potential for world-class coffee; it was amazing, resilient people. We're proud to have brought Sopacdi to the US market, and we look forward springboarding many more promising new origins here, no matter what the challenge."

This project was selected for the Sustainability Award because of the many ways in which it supports the long-term sustainability of the coffee industry, such as investing in developing new origins to meet demand, as well as linking some of the most marginalized coffee farmers in the world to the specialty segment of mainstream retailers. The project strengthens each link in the supply chain, deepening engagement and understanding from all actors – which contributes to industry-wide sustainability. This project has made coffee a commercially viable and attractive crop for farmers who had largely abandoned or neglected fields, as well as providing regular income to families and young people in an area where formal employment opportunities are very scarce. To learn more about this project, visit www.twin.org.uk.

In 2003, the Sustainability Council of the Specialty Coffee Association of America created the Sustainability Award to promote, encourage and honor the efforts of programs and organizations like Twin, that serve as role models in the fields of sustainability. As part of its mission, SCAA is actively involved in issues relating to sustainability and looks to its members to take leadership roles in sustainable practices.

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About SCAA

The Specialty Coffee Association of America (SCAA), is a non-profit trade organization and the world recognized leader in coffee knowledge development. With over 9,000 members located in more than 40 countries, including member companies and their employees, SCAA members represent every segment of the specialty coffee industry, including producers, roasters, importers/exporters, retailers, manufacturers, baristas and other industry professionals. For over 30 years, the SCAA has been dedicated to creating a vibrant specialty coffee community, recognizing, developing and promoting specialty coffee by setting and maintaining quality standards for the industry; conducting research on coffee consumption, brewing and perfection of craft; and providing education, training, resources and business services for its members. Visit www.scaa.org.