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“CAFÉ RWANDA” — HELPING REBUILD A NATION, ONE CUP AT A TIME
Members of the U.S. Specialty Coffee Industry Unite with the Freeplay Foundation to
Empower Rwandan Coffee Farmers and Their Communities with the Gift of Education

Madison, WI, March 28, 2006 — Prior to the 1994 Rwanda genocide, a three-month long massacre that claimed the lives of more than one million people, the primary cash crop and heartbeat of the Rwandan economy was a vibrant coffee trade of Arabica beans. In 1990 Rwandan farmers exported 45,000 tons of coffee per year. Over a decade later, this predominately agricultural nation and its more than 450,000 coffee farmers exported less than 15,000 tons. Still reeling from the devastation of genocide, Rwanda’s survivors (mainly widows and children) are faced with the enormous challenge of rebuilding their nation. It is in honor of the Rwandan farmers’ great courage and perseverance that Ancora Coffee Roasters is launching its “Café Rwanda” program in support of the Coffee Lifeline project in Rwanda.

Beginning in April 2006, Ancora Coffee Roasters will donate \$1 for every pound sold of its critically acclaimed Rwanda A1 Gikongoro Bucafe coffee towards the funding of self-powered Freeplay Lifeline radios and educational programming for the Coffee Lifeline project. Ancora’s coffees are available nationwide through its network of over 300 independent coffeehouses and online at www.ancoracoffee.com.

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The Coffee Lifeline project was conceived in 2002 by Peter Kettler, a U.S. based specialty coffee importer, who brought his idea to the Freeplay Foundation. The innovative project seeks to empower coffee farmers in producing countries by utilizing the Freeplay Foundation's self-powered Lifeline radios to provide access to information and education in isolated rural areas. With almost 100,000 Lifelines currently benefiting an estimated 2 million villagers in 20 countries, the radios have proven to dramatically benefit people's lives by enabling access to vital news sources, educational curricula, agricultural and health information, and financial and governance issues. The radios do not require batteries or electricity, but operate using patented wind-up technology and solar-powered mechanisms.

According to Kettler, "A little more than a decade ago, Rwanda's acting government used radios as an effective tool to help spread the genocide in that country. Today, through the Coffee Lifeline project, radios are being used to reverse much of the hatred and distrust that still lingers from that tragic period. Each Lifeline radio, shared within a listening group of 20-30 people, enables farmers to tune into broadcasts containing coffee market and technical information, weather forecasts, and HIV/AIDS education as well as programs dealing with women's health issues and at-distance learning classes directed at orphans. Although there are many worthwhile development projects that the Specialty Coffee industry can be proud of, the Coffee Lifeline project is unique in that it empowers farmers to help shape their own future through access to information and education. This is not a 'hand-out', but a 'hand-up'."

The weekly Coffee Lifeline radio broadcasts will be delivered in Rwanda's native Kinyarwanda language, and are being developed in conjunction with *Radio Salus*, a new radio broadcasting facility associated with the National University of Rwanda.

Since Ancora led the U.S. launch of Rwandan specialty coffees in the spring of 2004, this exceptional coffee origin has become one of the most electrifying and talked-about topics in the market. Industry giants Starbucks and Green Mountain have recently started promoting Rwandan offerings of their own and Ancora's Rwanda A1 Gikongoro Bucafe received one of the highest ratings of 2005 by Coffee Review. "It didn't take long for the coffee world to recognize what they have in the Rwanda origin", says Phyllis Johnson of BD Imports, a pioneering importer of Rwandan coffees in North America. The key to this success, according to Johnson is that "The farmers started producing at the highest level. Because of the war and circumstances they were overcoming, total commitment to quality was vital to reestablishing a coffee trade and providing for their families."

When introduced to Coffee Lifeline, "we knew this was a tremendous opportunity for Ancora to make a real impact in the lives of Rwandan coffee farmers," says Sue Lobeck-Krug, co-owner of Ancora. "What excited us was the true 'ground-floor' nature of the project. Our 'Café Rwanda' donation program is full circle. It connects someone enjoying a cup of outstanding Rwanda coffee, directly to the Rwandan families farming the land. Ancora's goal is to get radios in the hands of at least 50 more listening groups and help fund the Coffee Lifeline broadcasts throughout 2006."

"We applaud Ancora's 'Café Rwanda' program in support of Coffee Lifeline," said Kristine Pearson, executive director of the Freeplay Foundation. "Hundreds of thousands of Rwandan coffee farmers are working hard to revitalize their industry. This important contribution from Ancora Coffee Roasters and its customers will enable coffee growers to make informed decisions as they rebuild a staple industry of the Rwandan economy."

Ancora Coffee Roasters is a premier specialty coffee roaster, retailer and distributor located in Madison, Wisconsin. Ancora's Small Batch Artisan Roasted® coffee beans are sold to independent coffeehouses and finer restaurants across the country, and are available for consumer purchase at Ancora's three retail locations in Madison or online at www.ancoracoffee.com.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- 1. Freeplay Foundation** – The Freeplay Foundation is a registered charity in the U.S., U.K., and South Africa. Its mission is to enable access to information and education to the most vulnerable populations via sustainable technologies, particularly the self-powered Lifeline radio. In 2001, the Foundation was the first winner of Silicon Valley's Tech Museum Award for Technology Benefiting Humanity, and in 2005 the executive director, Kristine Pearson, was awarded the James C. Morgan Global Humanitarian Award, sponsored by tech giant Applied Materials. Academy Award winner Tom Hanks serves as the Foundation's American Ambassador, while famed humanitarian and former hostage Terry Waite serves as European Ambassador. <http://www.freeplayfoundation.org>
- 2. PEARL Project** – PEARL is a partnership comprised of USAID, Michigan State University, Texas A&M University and the National University of Rwanda that collaborates with almost 15,000 coffee farmers and has achieved impressive results since 2001 in revitalizing the coffee sector. PEARL works with grower cooperatives on the production and marketing of specialty coffee, chili peppers and cassava products, and with Rwandan agricultural institutions to rebuild their educational and research capacities. <http://www.pearl.org.rw>
- 3. East African Fine Coffees Association** – Association of coffee producers, processors, marketing people and organizations in the ten Eastern and Southern African countries of Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe and the Democratic Republic of Congo as well as others from outside Africa. <http://www.eafca.org>
- 4. Specialty Coffee Association of America** – Industry trade association of specialty coffee merchants in the United States. <http://www.scaa.org>
- 5. Coffee Review** – Leading, independent coffee review and buyer's guide organization led by editor/writer Kenneth Davids. <http://www.coffeereview.com>