

## NEWS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release**

Tuesday, Mar. 14, 2006



### InterAmerican Coffee Sponsors Radio Project to Assist Coffee Farmers in Rwanda

**Cape Town, South Africa...**The Freeplay Foundation announced today that InterAmerican Coffee, Inc. is the sponsor of the new Coffee Lifeline pilot project in Rwanda. This initiative is the first link in a planned global communication chain among coffee producers who often live in isolated areas. Utilizing self-powered Freeplay Lifeline radios, the Coffee Lifeline project will provide these remote communities with access to timely market information, agricultural and other technical advice, and weather bulletins, thereby enabling sustainable economic progress.

“Rwandan farmers grow some of the finest coffee beans in all of Africa, indeed in all the world,” said Alan B. Odom, vice president of sales for InterAmerican Coffee. “We are gratified to be able to assist these important partners in accessing vital information that will advance productivity and promote economic and social sustainability for their communities.”

Lifeline radios have been distributed to farmers’ cooperatives, where they will serve as “information centers,” allowing almost 15,000 farmers access to coffee market information broadcast by the National University of Rwanda’s Department of Journalism. Using patented wind-up and solar technology, Lifeline radios do not require electricity or batteries.

“InterAmerican Coffee’s contribution helps deliver critical information to farmers working hard to revitalize Rwanda’s coffee industry, and we are deeply grateful,” said Kristine Pearson, executive director of the Freeplay Foundation. “This donation calls attention to the fact that the private sector can make an enormous difference in the growth of many interdependent industries around the world.”

Peter Kettler, a trader in the Specialty Coffee Industry, conceived the Coffee Lifeline project. “This donation from InterAmerican is integral in developing a project model that will be implemented in a number of different coffee producing regions, linking farmers for the first time through this simple, elegant technology,” said Mr. Kettler.

Dr. Tim Schilling is the country director for the Partnership to Enhance Agriculture in Rwanda through Linkages (PEARL) and is Coffee Lifeline’s primary partner in Rwanda. “For the first time ever in the lives of Rwandan coffee farmers, they are now starting to understand the complex nature of the international coffee market, thanks to the Lifeline radio,” said Dr. Schilling. “InterAmerican Coffee has funded a program that will enable farmers to avoid the traps of the past, where they were lured to sell their coffee at very low prices. This is like a ‘miracle’ in the hills where farmers have been growing coffee for 100 years.”

InterAmerican Coffee imports and distributes high-quality green coffee to roasters and dealers throughout North America. Working directly with coffee producers and exporters, InterAmerican has supported coffee growers in Rwanda for years. The company has offices in Houston, Oakland, and Seattle. In 1995, InterAmerican joined forces with the world’s largest coffee company, Neumann Kaffee Gruppe, based in Germany.

The Freeplay Foundation is a registered U.S. 501 (c) (3) nonprofit, and is a registered charity in South Africa and the United Kingdom. With offices in Cape Town and London, the Foundation works in more than a dozen countries in Africa and around the world.

###

Contact for InterAmerican Coffee, Inc.: **Alan Odom**, Vice President of Sales  
Phone: (925) 377-5633 Oakland, CA  
[aodom@iaccoffee.com](mailto:aodom@iaccoffee.com)  
[www.iaccoffee.com](http://www.iaccoffee.com)

Contact for the Freeplay Foundation: **Michelle Riley**, Senior Consultant  
Phone: (912) 898-2195 Savannah, GA  
[riley.freeplayfdn@gmail.com](mailto:riley.freeplayfdn@gmail.com)  
[www.freeplayfoundation.org](http://www.freeplayfoundation.org)