



MSc thesis topic

Socio-economic viability and productivity of new coffee hybrids under shade and full sun

Field location: Nicaragua

Introduction

The global coffee community is continuously developing new coffee varieties for improved quality, higher yields, improved pest resistance and better resilience towards climate changes. During the last decade a number of new Arabica coffee hybrids have been developed and are now being evaluated in experimental and on-farm trials in various countries. Some of the hybrids are being cultivated by farmers as well, making it possible to study the hybrids in real-world agro-ecological environments, both in agroforestry systems, where the coffee is grown under shade trees, and under full sun.

The thesis

The MSc thesis will take departure in the above context and investigate the socio-economic viability and productivity of the new coffee varieties among small scale farmers in Nicaragua. An existing questionnaire will be used in a tablet-assisted survey of farmers, but the student will develop his/her own thesis proposal based on own interests. The focus can e.g. be on socio-economic analysis of the coffee farms, comparing old and new varieties across different altitudes and agroforestry systems taking into account shade tree products, farm economic analysis incl. cash flows, IRR and NPV, or productivity and efficiency analyses.

While the study focuses on economics and productivity of coffee varieties, the student should expect to take an interdisciplinary approach and make use of farmer surveys and e.g. focus group discussions, interviews with key stakeholders etc. The student should not be afraid of analyses of quantitative data.

Field work of 3 months is expected in Nicaragua, in the coffee growing area around Matagalpa. Spanish is required. The student must secure funds for the fieldwork her/himself, but will receive guidance on fund raising. The local contact at the NGO NicaFrance will be of assistance before and during the fieldwork.

Supervision

The student will be supervised by Aske S. Bosselmann, assistant professor at IFRO, and select project partners in the BREEDCAFS project (www.breedcafs.eu). As such, the MSc project is a great way to expand the student's international network. The student can identify a relevant co-supervisor if needed.

Contact

Interested students should contact Aske via email: ab@ifro.ku.dk

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DEPARTMENT OF FOOD &
RESOURCE ECONOMICS
(IFRO)

ROLIGHEDSVEJ 25
1958 FREDERIKSBERG C
DENMARK

TEL 45 35366800
DIR 45 35336889

ab@ifro.ku.dk
www.ifro.ku.dk/eng

REF: ASB