



MSc thesis topic

Farmers' access to new coffee hybrids and comparisons of varieties

Field locations: Nicaragua or Costa Rica

Introduction

During the last decade a number of new Arabica coffee hybrids have been developed for improved quality, higher yields, improved pest resistance and better resilience towards climate changes. Some of the hybrids are already being cultivated by farmers in Central America, making it possible to study the hybrids in real-world agro-ecological environments and compare them to other varieties. While studies are being done on the biophysical and economic performance of the hybrids in on-farm trials, less is known about farmers' access to the hybrids, the barriers and challenges they face during acquisition and cultivation, and their experiences with the new hybrids.

The thesis

The MSc thesis will take departure in the above context and investigate the barriers, challenges and incentives for uptake and dissemination of the new hybrids among coffee farmers in Nicaragua and Costa Rica. The thesis work should contain a farmer survey developed in collaboration with partners in the BREEDCAFS (www.breedcafs.eu), but the student can develop his/her own thesis proposal and choose to focus on topics such as factors of hybrids adoption, barriers and challenges to hybrid acquisition and cultivation incl. value chain aspects, and comparisons of traditional and new coffee varieties in different coffee systems.

Field work of approx. 3 months in either Nicaragua or Costa Rica is expected and Spanish is required. The student must secure funds for the fieldwork her/himself, but will receive guidance on fund raising. The local contacts in Nicaragua (NicaFrance) and in Costa Rica (CIRAD) 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. 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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