

Is there really a coffee shortage?

LONDON (AP) — Is there really a world coffee shortage?

It depends on whether you are an importer, broker, wholesale dealer, supermarket manager, or a regular or instant coffee drinker.

In the coffee year that began Oct. 1 and ends next Sept. 30, there is expected to be more coffee around, bean for bean, than the world will want to drink, according to international coffee experts, brokers, wholesale dealers and statisticians contacted here Tuesday.

But they add that there is an acute shortage of top-quality coffee, such as that grown in Brazil and Colombia and used for regular coffee. They say there are plenty of low-quality beans available for use in instant brands. Low-quality types, which come mainly from Africa, lose some of their acidity and sharpness when processed for instant coffee.

All of the experts agreed that the world coffee market is "tight," which means a delicate balance between supply and demand.

They said that if coffee growers are hit by bad weather, if there is civil strife in any of the growing areas, if there are cataclysms such as earthquakes or floods, there will be a real, all-around shortage.

Plantation owners in the coffee-growing areas of northwest Colombia expressed concern Tuesday that a month-long heat wave and a few inches of rainfall could hurt their current crops, and cut that South American nation's production for a second year in a row. Colombia's production goal for this coffee year was 1.46 billion pounds — up from 1.30 billion pounds last year — but coffee circles there said it all depends now on the weather.

All of the sources polled in London, a major coffee-trading center, agreed that increased world coffee prices can be attributed to the failure of the Brazilian crops or by a severe frost in July 1975.

Drink instant instead



Because of the frost, world coffee stocks have dwindled from a mountain to a molehill and could disappear altogether if adverse conditions hit the growers again.

That is why importers and brokers, roasters and wholesalers are buying more coffee than they can sell this year, but which will come in handy if a shortage does occur by fall. It is this intensive buying that is turning the present "tightness" into an apparent "shortage," experts say.

They estimate that coffee-drinkers around the world will consume 7.26 billion pounds of coffee this coffee year — reckoned from Oct. 1 to Sept. 30 because this is the period for calculating crops.

Forty-one of the world's coffee-growing countries, not including Brazil, have produced during the past five coffee years an average total of 5.28 billion to 5.54 billion pounds for export after satisfying their own domestic demand — totaling about 264 million pounds a year. The growers are expected to produce about the

same amount in the current crop year.

As of March 31 this year Brazil will have 1.7 billion pounds of coffee in its stockpile and will produce on top of this about 1.8 billion pounds from its current crop.

This means it will have a supply of 3.5 billion pounds. Between 660 million and 792 million pounds — more likely the latter — are needed for domestic consumption. That means Brazil will make about 2.7 billion pounds available for the world market.

The total world availability of coffee could then be set at about 8.3 billion pounds, as of March 31. This means there are now about a billion pounds available in excess of current world demand.

But Brazil already has shipped some of the coffee needed at the beginning of this year and this coffee has not gone into these calculations. It is expected that it will show up at the end of the coffee year, leaving Brazil with a reserve of about 1.32 billion to 1.45 billion pounds for the next coffee year, where in the past it has had as much as 4.6 billion to 6.6 billion pounds in reserve.

In countries such as the United States where regular coffee blends are generally preferred to instant coffee, Brazilian and Colombian coffees are in great demand.

Roasters and manufacturers, therefore, are chasing these and other good-quality coffees to blend with lower-quality coffees. This reduces their supply and pushes the price up.

Experts say there is a real shortage of good-quality coffees upon which companies depend for the success of their blends. It is these companies which cannot find all the good coffee they need.

The United States imports about 2.64 billion pounds of coffee a year. Experts here say that if Americans used more instant coffee they would pay less per cup because there is plenty of low-quality types available for instant coffee.



Winter Term

SPECIAL EVENTS

presented by your

EMU Student Cultural Forum

Friday January 14	Gil Scott-Heron, Jazz. EMU Ballroom 8 p.m. U of O Students \$4. ⁰⁰ General \$5. ⁰⁰	Sunday January 30	Film, "Hearts and Minds." 180 PLC 7, 9, & 11 p.m. \$1. ⁰⁰	Monday February 14	Hunter S. Thompson, Lecture EMU Ballroom 8 p.m. Free
Sunday January 16	Film, "Such a Gorgeous Kid Like Me." 180 PLC 7 & 9 PM \$1. ⁰⁰	Monday January 31	Sam Maloof, furniture maker, slides & lecture Room to be announced	Wednesday February 16	Koko Taylor, Blues singer EMU Ballroom 8 p.m. ticket prices to be announced
Tuesday January 18	Bella Abzug, former N.Y. Congresswoman EMU Ballroom. Free	Tuesday February 2	Bobby Hucherson, Jazz Vibist EMU Ballroom 8 p.m. Ticket prices to be announced	Friday February 18	Film, "They Might Be Giants" 180 PLC 7 & 9 p.m. \$1. ⁰⁰
Saturday January 22	Film, "Peter Pan" 180 PLC 5, 7, 9, & 11 p.m. \$1. ⁰⁰	Saturday February 5	Bill Monroe, Bluegrass EMU Ballroom 8 p.m. U of O Students \$4. ⁰⁰ , General \$5. ⁰⁰	Sunday February 20	Film, "La Plaisir" 180 PLC 8 p.m. \$1. ⁰⁰
Sunday January 23	Film, "Butley" 180 PLC 7 and 9:30 p.m. \$1. ⁰⁰	Sunday February 6	Steve Martin, Comedian EMU Ballroom 8 p.m. U of O Students \$3. ⁰⁰ , General \$5. ⁰⁰	Friday February 25	Film, "The Seduction of Mimi" 180 PLC 7 & 9 p.m. \$1. ⁰⁰
Tuesday January 25	Country Joe McDonald & Dan Hicks EMU Ballroom 8 p.m. U of O Students \$3. ⁰⁰ , General \$4. ⁰⁰	Thursday February 10	Royal Lichtenstein 1/4 Ring Circus EMU Ballroom 12 noon free	Wednesday March 2	Yusef Lateef, Jazz EMU Ballroom 8 p.m. ticket prices to be announced
Friday January 28	Film, "Last Honour of Katrina Blum" 180 PLC 7, 9, & 11 p.m. \$1. ⁰⁰	Friday February 11	Film, "Gypsy Moths" 180 PLC 7 and 9 p.m. \$1. ⁰⁰	Friday March 4	Jethro Tull Mac Court 8:30 p.m. ticket prices to be announced
		Sunday February 13	Film, "A Delicate Balance" 180 PLC 7 & 9 p.m. \$1. ⁰⁰	Thursday March 10	Film, "The Longest Yard" 180 PLC 7 & 9:30 p.m. \$1. ⁰⁰
		Monday February 14	Hunter S. Thompson, Lecture EMU Ballroom 8 p.m. Free		Margaret Sloan, Lecture EMU Room 167 2 p.m. free

* Watch the Emerald Classified for further information and for additional events not listed above.