



CJO1401 – Crown Jewel Ethiopia Organic Wenago Wolde Hirbe Raised Bed Natural

January 22, 2021 | [See This Coffee Online Here](#)

Overview

This is a traditional natural from Wenago, Ethiopia, produced by farmer Wolde Hirbe as a special agreement between the Yirgacheffe Coffee Farmer's Cooperative Union and Royal Coffee.

The flavor profile is complex with peaches, berries, and floral notes layered on a creamy body.

Our roasters found the coffee easy to roast and responsive to heat adjustments, producing tasty results on multiple profiles.

When brewed, the coffee was enjoyed on multiple brew devices. On a flat bottom brewer at high TDS the coffee was expressive and deep, while a lower extraction percentage on a cone filter highlighted bright, tropical notes.

Taste Analysis by Sandra Loofbourow

Talk about a crowd pleaser! This late-season arrival is creamy, sweet, and complex. It has tons of potential: berry notes range from artificial to delicate. Floral notes appear as marigold, jasmine, and sage. The acidity is wild and juicy, offering peach, lime, blood orange, and even passionfruit. Finally, the sweetness is super intense - think almond extract and marzipan, maple syrup, and applesauce. In a pour over, there's room to pull some of these flavors out; at longer extractions it can be delicately sweet while more concentrated brews bring intense fruit flavors and more black tea astringency. Espresso would likely be thick and syrupy sweet with plenty of complexity and a long-lasting finish. I would love to try it as a one-and-one – the addition of milk would be a real treat.

Source by Chris Kornman

The story of Wolde Hirbe's coffee is one of unexpected resilience despite many obstacles.

Mr. Wolde grows coffee on a small pair of farms in the Jemjemo and Dodoro communities of the Wenago district in Gedeo, located about halfway down the main road between Yirgacheffe and Dilla in the Gedeo Zone. His family



of 10 helps him with the annual harvest, which he contributes to the Adame Gorbota cooperative, a member of the large Yirgacheffe Coffee Farmers' Cooperative Union (YCFCU). This is the only single-farmer lot we've featured as a Crown Jewel from YCFCU this season, though not for lack of trying.

A little background: Royal Coffee and the YCFCU began a program in 2012 that identified "model farmers" of individual cooperatives and separated them to be processed and milled separately. It was a huge success, despite technically being what Royal CEO Max Nicholas-Fulmer has described as "cloak and dagger tactics" until updates to the [Ethiopia Commodities Exchange \(ECX\) in 2017](#) formally allowed this type of transaction.

Wolde Hirbe was among the farmers first selected in 2012 and has participated in the program ever since. It's not just a quality concern, this is a way to specifically reward individual farmers for going above and beyond, and a financial premium is associated with the results. You probably recognize one of our favorite success stories of the project, Bedhatu Jibicho, who used the premiums she earned from her coffee sales to establish an independent export business.

Wolde Hirbe, whose coffee farming history spans over thirty years, has stuck with his cooperative, Adame Gorbota. The coop only just rejoined YCFCU in the last 10 years. Founded in the mid 1970's originally as the "Kelo" cooperative, the membership enjoyed a successful bid in the 2006 Africa Taste of Harvest competition, taking home the prize for top coffee. The success was short lived however, as a few of the members were granted large bank loans in the wake of the winning harvest, on which they defaulted. Left on the line for the debt and with families to feed and coffees yet to harvest, the remaining membership redoubled their efforts and paid down their outstanding debts, rejoining the YCFCU by 2011. As a result of their history, the group remains among the smallest and most tight-knit cooperatives in Yirgacheffe. Royal's efforts with Adame Gorbota have not been isolated to single farmers, however. We regularly prefinance outturns from the cooperative to provide working capital as the operation ramps up each harvest cycle.

This late-December arriving natural is a fluke of Covid-related shipping delays combined with a complex supply stream in which Royal tries to, according to Max "navigate the ever-evolving landscape while wanting to do right by farmers we've worked with for many years." To say that we experienced some unforeseen challenges in 2020 would be a massive understatement. Fortunately, all this has done nothing to dull the lush flavors of Wolde Hirbe's coffees, and we're proud to release the coffee, even as the new harvest is already ripened on the trees. After all, it won't be 'til summer when we see fresh crop arrivals, and it's certainly no fault of Wolde's that the coffee was late to the party.

Grower:	Wolde Hirbe / Adame & Lemicho Farms / Adame Gorbota Cooperative	Process:	"Natural" dried in the fruit on raised beds in the sun
Region:	Jemjemo and Dodoro communities, Wenago, Gedeo Zone, Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region, Ethiopia	Cultivar(s):	Dega, Wolisho, Kurume
Altitude:	1600 -1800 masl	Harvest:	October 2019 - January 2020

Green Analysis by Chris Kornman



This is a pretty standard Grade 1 Ethiopian coffee by most of the physical metrics. Somewhat small in size but relatively tightly distributed (70% in screens 15 and 16), the green is quite high in density as well. The moisture and water activity figures look a little elevated for an Ethiopian coffee, but not especially high in any objective sense.

YCFCU and Wolde Hirbe have supplied us with the cultivars grown on Wolde's farms, which include three unique Ethiopian landrace selections (terms used to specify locally adapted varieties, each of which were identified for particular characteristics, isolated and bred/cloned, and distributed by the Jimma Agricultural Research Center (JARC) in the 1970s). Kurume is a short stature tree, while Wolisho is tall and Dega an intermediate height. Each occur with regularity in Ethiopia's southern highlands.

Screen Size	Percent	Density
>20	0%	696 g/L (free settled)
19	0.35%	729 g/L (Sinar)
18	3.13%	
17	10.19%	Total Moisture Content
16	36.31%	11.1% (Sinar)
15	35.91%	
14	13.16%	Water Activity
≤13	0.96%	0.576 @ 23.37C (Rotronic)

Diedrich Analysis by Candice Madison

This coffee ticks all of the boxes for me as a roaster, it's a smooth ride in the roaster and is delightfully quaffable! A late season arrival and in great shape – metrics-wise, I chose to treat this coffee as I would any other Ethiopian naturally processed coffee, keeping in mind the slightly higher than expected moisture readings.

Starting at my new normal charge temperature of 380F, I charged the drum with 4lbs of coffee. This is the smallest batch I'm comfortable using on this machine to ensure no roast defects, such as scorching. Bearing in mind the moisture level of the green coffee and the fact that, in my experience, natural coffees are very good at quietly soaking up heat and racing through the roast surprisingly quickly, I started at 90% heat, but began backing off the gas almost immediately. I turned the gas down to 70% at the turning point, and to 50% at around 230F.

This initial profile allowed me to spend less time in stage 1 and drive off enough moisture to significantly up my time ratio for stage 2. I know this coffee is super sweet with some exceptional fruit and floral notes, and I wanted those qualities to come to the fore, as I had a specific brew method in mind for this roast. In the end, there was only a 40 second time difference between stage 1 and stage 2 – almost exactly what I had hoped for!

Although I didn't make one, I would advise one additional gas change before first crack at around 350F. This would allow for the rate of change (rise) to descend steadily, instead of plateauing, as it did here, and give you more space to work with the roast going into first crack. The crack is quiet and sparse at first, so be sure to keep an eye on your RoC (rise) and exhaust temperature read out, as you approach temperature – it'll help you manage the



roast if your facility doesn't allow for you to hear it. That's the only tricky part of this roast. Other than that, the coffee is super responsive in the roaster and the green metrics, such as the tight screen size, allow for an even and unchallenging ride. Be aware that this is quite a chaffy roast, so you'll want to ensure the drum is clear and your bin is emptied regularly.

And the result? A blueberry lemon slice of heaven and then some! The ease of drinking belies the complexity of this cup; multiples of floral, fruit and sweet notes, as well as layered acidity, tied together by a silky, smooth body. I got notes of jasmine, and floral blossoms, bright candy sweetness, overlaid by caramel and sweet malt and cream. Fruit notes of blueberry compote, berry fruit roll ups, red plum, nectarine and Meyer lemon complimented the acidity of mandarin, pomelo and lime. I roasted this with a long, warm, early afternoon pour over in mind to see us through the longest month of the year (or so it feels!), and having had a mug, I'm more than happy with the result.

Quest M3s Analysis by Evan Gilman

Unless otherwise noted, I follow a set standard of operations for all my Quest roasts. Generally, I'll allow the machine to warm up for 15 minutes until my environmental temperature reading is at least 250F, weigh out 150g batch size, and begin roasting when I've reached my desired charge temperature. [Read my initial post here](#) and my [updated post here](#).

I will never complain about roasting an Ethiopian coffee, and I don't care how late it is. I've seen Ethiopian coffees shine a year after harvest and beyond, so I don't mind that this is a late arrival – even more so because it's tasting and looking great.

Not only that, but this coffee was also a dream to roast. Since this was my third roast of the day, my Environmental Temperature was stable at about 265F on charge, which likely contributed to the ease of the roast. I started with 10A heat application and full fan, cutting airflow at turning point. I didn't want to do anything too tricky with this roast. I engaged fan to 3 on the dial at 260F / 2:30, and reduced heat application to 7.5A at 275F / 2:45 to mellow my way into Maillard.

And mellow it was. Reducing further to 5A at 330F / 4:05, this coffee took its leisurely way through Maillard phase, and I felt bold enough with the rate of rise to increase my fan speed to full at 340F / 4:25. This rewarded me with a long and even sugar browning as airflow swept away the abundant moisture in this coffee. Right before what I thought was first crack (380F / 6:00), I turned off heat application entirely and rolled into first crack (388F / 7:27) at a nice low rate of rise. After 1:18 of post crack development, I dropped the coffee at 399F / 8:45.

This was a super easy and languid roast, great to finish off my day of roasting.

Upon tasting, this coffee was full of fruit compote notes, and a really nostalgic fruit leather flavor that you could lose a tooth on. My extraction was middling on the Chemex, but I did notice some of the black tea notes coming through the thick sweetness in this coffee. I do think that a slightly faster roast or just a touch less post-crack development would have benefited the finish in this coffee, but so much sweetness is coming out, I'm satisfied as is. As this coffee cooled, I found that Sandra's notes of marigold and sage deserve a big nod, and the coffee just gets sweeter. I would recommend this coffee for any application.



Ikawa Pro V3 Analysis by Nate Lumpkin

As of September 2020 we are running all Crown Jewel Analysis roasts on an Ikawa Pro V3, using the most recent app and firmware version on “closed loop” setting.

I’ve had the chance to taste quite a few Ethiopian coffees this season, but nothing quite like this one! I was impressed with its green metrics—its tight screen size and high density suggested an easy roast, and it ended up performing very well in the Ikawa. All of the roasts moved into color change and crack at the expected time, and while other Ethiopian coffees I’ve worked with had a very soft and difficult to hear crack, this one was audible and easy to track.

Our hot and fast profile produced a delicious, complex cup with a fascinating mix of chocolate, brown sugar sweetness, and bright fruits. It had a loud and timely crack, and a full minute of development. At first sip the coffee had a flavor of strawberries and cream, with further notes of fig, fruitcake, vanilla, maple, and bright watermelon, with a slight florality like jasmine. Its sweetness was more caramelized and brown-sugar-like than I expected to be produced from this roast, and its body was dense and syrupy. I loved this cup.

Our Maillard focused profile produced a coffee that at first tasted a little simple, like milk chocolate covered raisin and orange slice, but improved immensely as the coffee cooled. It opened up into flavors of grapefruit topped with brown sugar, kiwi and green grape acidity, and a sweet and light cookie quality, like a vanilla lemon wafer. This was also delicious, and its browned cookie-like qualities I imagine were directly related to its longer time spent in Maillard phase.

Our low airflow profile produced a cup that was once again a little simple at first sip, but became much more well-rounded after the coffee cooled down considerably. At first I tasted navel orange and simple syrup, and a slightly thin body, but as it cooled, the coffee developed flavors of kiwi, lemon, passionfruit, dark chocolate, black pepper, a long sweet finish, and a pleasantly buttery body.

You can download the profile to your Ikawa Pro app here:

Roast 1: [Crown Standard SR 1.0](#)

Roast 2: [Crown Maillard +30 SR 1.0](#)

Roast 3: [Crown 7m SR LowAF 2](#)

Brew Analysis by Nate Lumpkin

This last Ethiopia of the season was such an easy and delicious roast on Ikawa that I was very curious to see how it performed on a handful of different brew devices. I know that coffees like this one often perform well with the Fellow Stagg, so I reached for that right away, as well as the Saint Anthony C70 for a contrast with the Stagg, and the Aeropress to see how it performs at higher concentrations.



I really enjoy using the Fellow Stagg for juicy Ethiopias like this one. Its high walls and narrow bed create a higher extraction that allows some of their more complex flavors shine. This was absolutely the case for this coffee! It brewed through fairly quickly at 2:24, and as expected showed a slightly higher TDS and extraction, at 1.45 and 21.28% respectively. This cup had a bright grape aroma, with a mixture of peach flavors including white and yellow peach, peaches and cream, and white nectarine, along with a touch of blueberry, strawberry, as well as notes of cinnamon, pecan, and maple. I also tasted some light florality, like lilac or jasmine. This cup was really sweet, juicy, and well balanced in its acidity.

I like using the C70 as a contrast with the Stagg, as I find its conical shape and deeper brew bed often highlight different aspects of the coffee. The C70 brewed through a little bit slower, at 2:55, and produced a TDS and extraction of 1.33 and 19.33%, as expected. In the cup it was a little lighter overall, with brighter fruit notes of kiwi, blood orange, passionfruit, black cherry, and lemon, with a creamy, slightly syrupy body. This coffee was also really delicious, and its lower extraction seemed to highlight its tropical, bright qualities.

I put this coffee through the Aeropress a couple different ways, first with a higher dose of 18g coffee and 200g water, and secondly with a lower dose of 15g coffee and 200g water. The first cup had a lovely flavor profile, like marzipan, vanilla, almond cookie, and dried apricot, but a kind of chewy finish, and its TDS was too high for my preference. The second 15g dose had a more well-rounded flavor profile, with notes of maple syrup, baked apple, nectarine, raspberry, and milk chocolate. This was an interesting experiment, and I was surprised at how it highlighted the coffee's sugar browning qualities, but I preferred the Stagg overall.

Roast	Method	Grind (EK43)	Dose (g)	H2O (g)	Ratio	Bloom (g)	Bloom (s)	Total Brew Time	TDS	Ext%
Diedrich	Stagg	8.5	18	300	1:16.6	45	30	2:24	1.45	21.28
Diedrich	C70	8.5	18	300	1:16.6	45	30	2:55	1.33	19.33
Diedrich	Aeropress	7.5	15	200	1:13.3	35	30	1:54	1.43	20.99