

# REFORESTATION IN COSTA RICA

November 2021



Reforestation is a serious issue in Costa Rica, where, in the 1970s, deforestation rates were among the world's worst due to deforestation for single crop use including the lucrative pineapple export industry. These are now being reversed though there is still much to do to promote reforestation, forestry awareness and sustainable forestry management, while supporting larger goals of mitigating climate change, conserving biodiversity, and regaining forest cover.

*“Volcafe’s project is a good example of how seriously coffee farmers are now taking the issue, with tree cover contributing to a liveable environment and a healthy planet.”*

Riley Thomson, Farmer Support Organization Manager for Volcafe in Costa Rica

The state electric company – the Costa Rica Electricity Institute – runs a comprehensive environmental protection programme aiming to offset carbon emissions and aid energy production. Seedlings grown by the Institute on its own land are donated to Volcafe to encourage reforestation. This partnership is now in its tenth year with Volcafe having delivered over 100,000 saplings in the period. Every year Volcafe’s local Farmer Support Organization (FSO) meets with representatives from the Electricity Institute to agree on the number of tree saplings and species to be taken to each farming region. In exchange for the trees Volcafe donates ‘sub’ products from the milling process including coffee parchment and used coffee sacks that are utilised in the Institute’s nurseries.

Volcafe promotes the planting of trees on farms through training and delivers the saplings to farmers during group training activities and follow-up visits. Riley Thomson, Farmer Support Organization Manager for Volcafe in Costa Rica, explains: *“This is an ongoing effort to provide saplings of native trees to our farmers to encourage reforestation on coffee farms. The saplings are delivered to farmers in the three regions where Volcafe buys coffee. Successful native tree planting is helping combat climate change by promoting carbon sequestration in trees and increasing the farms’ resilience to climate change through agroforestry.”*

Riley adds, *“A large percentage of Volcafe farmers have received and planted these trees over the last ten years creating visible changes on individual farms and the overall landscape in regions where farmer clusters are located.”*

## QUICK FACTS

**Country:**

Costa Rica

**Objective:**

promote reforestation, forestry awareness and sustainable forestry management following the massive deforestation in the 1970s.

**Timeline:**

2011 onwards

**Impact:**

100,000 saplings of native trees planted on the premises of coffee farmers

## LEARN MORE

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Pictures:

[Above] Sorting native saplings for delivery to coffee farmers.

[Below] Saplings on their way to the farmers.

