

How to Develop Coffee Consumption

There Has Been No Material Increase in Per Capita Coffee Drinking in the United States Since 1920—Members of the Trade Offer a Number of Reasons for Present Conditions, with General and Specific Suggestions for Improvement—United Campaign for Coffee, the Beverage, Proposed.*

IN the long view, the most important problem that confronts the coffee trade of the United States is how to increase the coffee consumption of this country. This same problem applies as well to many other coffee-consuming countries and it is one that should command the best thought of all that want to see coffee more widely used—this concerning the green coffee interests, the roasters, other distributors and retailers. Not the least interested are the coffee-producing countries themselves.

HAS THE SATURATION POINT BEEN REACHED?

Has the saturation point of coffee consumption been reached—and if not, what can be done to awaken a greater coffee consciousness in the consuming public?

In order to get a consensus of opinion on the problem, this journal invited a number of coffee roasters and green coffee merchants in the United States to give their explanation of the causes of this situation and to suggest remedies. A splendid proportion of these replied and their fine responses betoken a keen interest in the subject. Some of these replies we take pleasure in giving herewith, reserving others for subsequent issues of this journal, with a final summary of comment, with possible recommendations for definite procedure in the interest of increased per capita coffee consumption. However, before quoting these replies, it might be proper to consider coffee developments leading up to the present.

In doing this we shall take the period that is still familiar to the present day coffee trade, beginning at the end of the Civil War, with average per capita consumption in five- and ten-year periods, with certain "high spot" years from 1897 to 1920 and the annual per capita consumption from the lat-

ter date to June 30, 1933. Extraordinary economic events will be pointed out. The per capita will be translated into the average annual cup consumption and this added to the normal extra number of occasions where coffee might be used. With the high standard of living here, comparison will be made with consumption in certain other countries.

COMPARISONS

UNITED STATES coffee consumption in pounds, year ending June 30, 1920 (12.78); 1921 (12.02); 1922 (11.04); 1923 (12.36); 1924 (12.17); 1925 (10.92); 1926 (12.54); 1927 (11.97); 1928 (12.01); 1929 (12.01); 1930 (12.75); 1931 (13.96); 1932 (12.06); and 1933 (12.44), the last year named being, at forty cups per pound, 498 cups per capita annually.

Sweden, in 1932, consumed 13.80 pounds per capita—or 552 cups; Norway, 12.12 pounds—or 485 cups; Belgium, 12.88 pounds—or 515 cups; and The Netherlands, 10.32 pounds—or 413 cups.

CONSUMPTION 1866-1933

There was a time, within the memory of men now living, when coffee consumption was relatively low. For our purposes, let us assume the end of the Civil War to be the beginning of the period of consumption that we are now considering. Taking five-year periods, beginning 1866—fiscal year, July 1-June 30—the per capita rate in pounds was:

Five- and Ten-Year Periods	Per Capita Consumption—Pounds
1866-1870	5.79
1871-1875	7.15
1876-1880	7.34
(10-year average—1871-80)	7.25
1881-1885	8.86
1886-1890	8.33
(10-year average—1881-90)	8.60
1891-1895	8.25
1896-1900	10.05
(10-year average—1891-1900)	9.15
1901-1905	11.64
1906-1910	10.29
(10-year average—1901-10)	10.97
1911-1915	9.44
1916-1920	11.18
(10-year average—1911-20)	10.31
1921-1925	11.70
1926-1930	12.26
(10-year average—1921-30)	11.98
1931	13.96
1932	12.06
1933	12.44
(3-year average—1931-33)	12.82

*The fourth of a series of articles discussing the possibilities for developing coffee consumption in the United States.