



Partnerships offered in Mareeba coffee

INVESTORS this week will have the opportunity to buy partnerships in what will be one of only four large-scale Australian coffee plantations to come into production since the early part of the century.

Jaques Brothers Management Pty Ltd of Dimbulah Rd, Mareeba, are offering 80 limited partnerships in their new venture, Tableland Coffee Plantation — a 44.55 ha plantation about 10 km west of Mareeba, of which 40.5 ha will be planted with up to 136,000 coffee trees.

The brothers, Dick and Nat Jaques, already farm the 64.8 ha Mareeba Coffee Plantation, 9 km west of Mareeba, 34.43 ha of which is planted with 90,000 coffee trees expected to come into viable production next year.

The pair are no strangers to the coffee industry.

Their family have farmed coffee plantations in Tanzania, East Africa, for years and their father still runs a family plantation near Arusha in that country.

Both brothers were brought up on coffee plantations and are fully experienced in all facets of the coffee industry.

Dick, 35, has been in Australia for seven years and also has a thorough background in marketing through Woolworth's management training program.

Nat, 30, has been in Australia for four years. The brothers leased Mareeba Coffee Plantation from the Queensland Irrigation and Water Supply Commission soon after Nat's arrival in Australia.

Since then they have spent more than \$200,000 developing the plantation into a commercial proposition.

The coffee trees on the Mareeba Plantation now are three years old and will come into viable production next year and into full production two years after that.

The Jaques brothers bought their new Tableland Coffee Plantation in April for \$131,000 as part of a future expansion program and plan to take in partners to help finance the development of this second venture.

Detailed prospectuses on the investment will be available from Cairns real estate agents this week.

A hundred shares will be issued in the new plantation of which 20 will be held by the brothers and 80 will be sold to investors for \$12,812 a share on the basis of a limited partnership.

Each share will entitle its owner to a one per cent equity in the assets — including the land — of Tableland Coffee Plantation.

Payment for shares purchased will be by way of 10 instalments of varying size spread over five years at the rate of two a year.

The first payment of \$3000 will come due on September 17.

Limited partnership-type companies currently are available only under Queensland and West Australian law.

They provide for a greater spread of investors, in the form of partners, than otherwise allowed.

The general partner — in

this case, the Jaques brothers — bears the full liability of the company, so all management decisions remain their prerogative.

Special partners bear only a liability limited to their capital contributions.

The investment will offer investors tax write-offs over the first five years, with an estimated 30 per cent a year return on investment thereafter, Dick Jaques said.

Coffee previously was a profitable industry on the Atherton Tableland between 1900 and 1930.

Frosts destroyed a large part of coffee plantations at Kuranda — the Jaques properties are on largely frost free higher land — but the main reason for the demise of the plantations throughout the Tableland was the loss of cheap labor, Dick Jaques said.

Coffee plantations were extremely labor-intensive operations and with the loss of the cheap Kanak labor force, originally imported to work the cane farms, cheap labor no longer was available.

The Jaques brothers have overcome this problem by completely mechanising.

A fully automatic irrigation and fertilising system already serviced each individual tree on the Mareeba Plantation and a similar system would be installed on the Tableland Plantation, Dick said.

The Jaques brothers also are planning to revolutionise the most labor-intensive aspect of coffee bean production — harvesting.

Later this week the brothers will take delivery of a new \$70,000 prototype coffee-picking machine being shipped to North Queensland from New Zealand.

The machine is a New Zealand berry-harvester which has been altered substantially to the Jaques' specifications for use as a coffee bean harvester.

Only Brazil among other world coffee producers is experimenting with mechanical harvesting.

Australia imports about 30 million kg of coffee a year at prices varying from \$3.75 to \$4 a kg (with production costs below \$1.50 a kg), according to Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) figures, Dick said.

He said the estimated production from the Tableland Plantation would be about 150,000 kg a year, with another 100,000 to 150,000 kg coming from the Mareeba Plantation.

According to the ABS figures for 1979-80, Australian coffee imports were worth \$107 million of non-roasted beans and \$20 million of processed coffee and substitutes.

The Jaques brothers will grow only Arabica coffee trees, which are of a higher quality than Robusta varieties from which most instant coffees are made.

Five varieties of Arabica coffee plants now are under cultivation by the Jaques brothers though eventually only the one most suited to the Atherton Tableland will be used.

In the future the brothers hope to open their plantations to public tours on the same basis as the Nerada Tea Estates, near Innisfail — Australia's only tea plantation.

Two other potentially commercial coffee plantations also are under development on the Atherton Tableland west of Mareeba.

One has trees which now are two years old and the other still is in the nursery stage.

A third and much smaller plantation on the Daintree River, about 90 km north of Cairns, already is producing small quantities of beans.

Snedden looks to US for stability

CANBERRA (AAP) — The US was expected to lead the free world in restoring confidence and stability to world trade and currencies to help bring an end to competitive devaluation and trade barriers, the speaker of the House of Representatives, Sir Billy Snedden, said in Chicago on Saturday.

Addressing more than 1000 US State legislators, Sir Billy said Australia saw America as her second largest export market.

"The volume of trade could be much greater. We would dearly like to break down some barriers you have put in the way of our trade with you."

These barriers were not money duty barriers "but worse, they are barriers which limit the entry of our goods into the US."

"We expect the US to lead the free world in restoring confidence and stability to world trade."

"Until this is done, countries will not see the achievement of their national objectives as they did in the disciplined terms of the Bretton Woods agreement," Mr Snedden said.

Referring to the call initiated by Prime Minister, Mr Fraser, prior to the Versailles economic summit earlier this year, the speaker said a "small start" towards lifting trade barriers was made then.

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