



## **KENYA FT ORGANIC NYERI OTHAYA RUKIRA PEABERRY**

Notes: WHITE WINE, LIME ZEST, SPARKLING LEMONADE, WHITE GRAPES

### **ORIGIN INFORMATION**

Grower	600 producers organized around the Rukira Factory
Variety	SL28, SL34, Ruiru 11, and Batian
Region	Othaya, Nyeri County, Kenya
Harvest	November-January
Altitude	1700 - 1890 masl
Soil	Volcanic loam
Process	Fully washed and dried on raised beds
Certification:	Conventional

### **BACKGROUND DETAILS**

Mt. Kenya, at the helm of Kenya's Central Province, is the second tallest peak on the continent of Africa and a commanding natural presence. The mountain itself is a single point inside a vast and surreal thicket of ascending national forest and active game protection communities. The central counties of Kenya extend from the center of the national park, like six irregular pie slices, with their points meeting at the peak of the mountain. It is along the lower edge of these forests where, in wet, high elevation communities with mineral-rich soil (Mt. Kenya is a stratovolcano) many believe the best coffees in Kenya, often the world, are crafted.

Nyeri is perhaps the most well-known of these central counties. Kenya's coffee is dominated by a cooperative system of production, whose members vote on representation, marketing and milling contracts for their coffee, as well as profit allocation. Othaya Farmers



Cooperative Society, the umbrella organization that includes Rukira Factory, is one of Kenya's larger societies, with 19 different factories and more than 14,000 farmer members across the southern Nyeri region. The Rukira Factory has 800 members, 600 of whom are actively harvesting and delivering to the processing center. The factory's total cherry intake tends to hover around 150,000 kgs, meaning the average member of Rukira is farming enough coffee fruit for roughly one 30kg unit of exportable green.

The economics of smallholder systems are consistently difficult, and in Kenya in particular the number of individual margins sliced off an export price before payment reaches the actual farms is many, leaving only a small percentage to support coffee growth itself, and most often this arrives many months after harvest. However, Kenya coffees are sold competitively by quality, which means well-endowed counties like Nyeri achieve very high average prices year after year, and the smallholders here with a few hundred coffee trees at the most, plus additional land uses available and local job markets, are widely considered to be middle class.

Kenya is of course known for some of the most meticulous at-scale processing that can be found anywhere in the world. Bright white parchment, nearly perfectly sorted by density and bulk conditioned at high elevations is the norm, and a matter of pride, even for generations of Kenyan processing managers who prefer drinking Kenya's tea (abundantly farmed in nearby Muranga county) to its coffee. Ample water supply in the central growing regions has historically allowed factories to wash, and wash, and soak, and wash their coffees again entirely with fresh, cold river water. Conservation is creeping into the discussion in certain places--understandably in the drier areas where water, due to climate change, cannot be as taken for granted—but for the most part Kenya continues to thoroughly wash and soak its coffees according to tradition. The established milling and sorting by grade, or bean size, is a longstanding tradition and positions Kenya coffees well for roasters, by tightly controlling the physical preparation and creating a diversity of profiles from a single processing batch.