FOREWORD

This practical guide to arabica coffee growing has been written primarily for Coffee Advisory staff, progressive coffee growers and as a teaching or training manual.

The objectives have been to improve productivity per unit area and to improve the quality of the green bean whilst maintaining the health and vigour of the commercial arabica coffee trees.

Recognised and successful international techniques based upon research work done in many leading producer countries have been considered: selected practices have been adapted and adjusted for the very unique growing conditions present in the highlands of the Yemen Arab Republic. They were arrived at after field observations of the current methods practised by farmers during field tours in the northern parts of the country.

A more usual and logical procedure would be for new production techniques to be examined under controlled conditions within a programme of adaptive research at a national level. Such a programme would examine and assess these techniques against traditional methods in a critical manner. In the absence of a national coffee research structure this approach is not possible at the present time.

Such comparisons of field techniques may only be made at present by small scale demonstration on individual farmer's coffee trees when more advanced growers are prepared to co-operate. However, improved seedling production techniques can be adopted in central nurseries.

Establishing small field demonstrations on a few farmer-trees is not easy to implement because in general, coffee growers will not permit visiting technical staff to do anything more than look, comment and discuss coffee problems and growing methods.

J. Brian D. Robinson Coffee Specialist