

Competitor Finder

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BOTTOM LINE

Fernwood Coffee Roasters operates in a rapidly expanding specialty coffee market, facing strong competition from both local Vancouver Island players and broader Canadian roasters. While the market emphasizes ethical sourcing, quality, and comprehensive wholesale support, Fernwood holds distinct advantages through its co-owner's culinary expertise and championship success, alongside established direct trade relationships. To thrive, Fernwood must strategically amplify these unique strengths and refine its wholesale support to stand out in a crowded, quality-driven environment.

MARKET GROWTH

Rapid Expansion

Global CAGR 10.6% to 2036,
Canadian market CA\$6.2B in 2026

COMPETITIVE INTENSITY

High

Numerous established local & national players with diverse offerings

DIFFERENTIATION OPPORTUNITY

Strong

Culinary expertise, championship pedigree, unique instant coffee

WHAT MATTERS

- Fernwood's co-owner, Ben Cram, brings unique culinary expertise and a proven track record in coffee competitions, a significant differentiator in a quality-focused market.
- The competitive landscape prioritizes ethical sourcing, comprehensive wholesale support (including equipment and training), and freshness, areas where Fernwood has existing foundations to build upon.
- The overall market for specialty coffee is projected to see substantial growth, indicating strong demand but also increasing competition for market share.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- Develop specific marketing campaigns that highlight Ben Cram's background as a fine-dining chef and his multiple barista championship achievements, positioning Fernwood as a pinnacle of taste and expertise.
- Expand and formalize a robust training and equipment consulting program for wholesale clients, leveraging Fernwood's existing equipment knowledge to become a value-added partner beyond just coffee supply.
- Create compelling narratives around Fernwood's direct trade relationships, focusing on the specific long-term impact and sustainability efforts to connect with ethically conscious wholesale buyers and consumers.

COMPETITORS

NAME

Oughtred Coffee & Tea

SERVICES

- Premium freshly roasted coffee (signature blends, single-origin)
- Private label coffee and tea production
- Specialty green coffee procurement
- Toll roasting services
- Commercial coffee equipment sales
- Barista training
- Equipment recommendations and service
- Certified coffees (organic, carbon-neutral, direct trade, fair trade, Rainforest Alliance)

oughtred.com

oughtred.com

oughtred.com

WHO THEY ARE

A second-generation family business on Vancouver Island providing premium, freshly roasted coffee and extensive wholesale solutions, recognized as 'Roaster of the Year' in 2018.

NAME

Level Ground Trading

SERVICES

- Small-batch roasted fair trade and organic coffees (whole bean or ground)
- Fair trade teas
- Dried fruit
- Cane sugar
- Heirloom rice
- Cacao nibs
- Vanilla beans
- Coconut oil
- Spices

levelground.com

levelground.com

WHO THEY ARE

A Victoria, BC-based pioneer in fair trade, focused on direct and fair trade with small-scale farmers and committed to environmental sustainability.

NAME

Drumroaster Coffee

SERVICES

- Freshly roasted single-origin coffees
- Blends (House Blend, Espresso Blend, Gold Label Espresso, Classic Diner, Decaf)
- Coffee subscriptions
- Cafe operations

drumroaster.comdrumroaster.com**WHO THEY ARE**

A Cobble Hill, BC roaster emphasizing strong relationships with customers and vendors through a sourcing philosophy that supports coffee-producing communities.

NAME

The Stick in the Mud's Roastoreum

SERVICES

- Roasted coffee (online by bag, subscriptions)
- Blends (Tsunami Espresso Blend, Yeti Dark Blend, Unicorn Blend)
- Coffee classes (cupping, roasting, brewing, espresso)
- 24/7 'Bean Box' coffee bean vending machine

stickinthemud.ca**WHO THEY ARE**

A Canadian-owned roastery in Sooke, BC, offering freshly roasted coffee and unique customer engagement options.

NAME

Discovery Coffee

SERVICES

- Online shop
- Coffee subscription programs
- Cafe operations with drinks and food menu

discoverycoffee.comdiscoverycoffee.com**WHO THEY ARE**

A Victoria, BC-based company driven by a passion for exceptional coffee, offering online and cafe experiences.

NAME

Bows Coffee Roasters

SERVICES

- Specialty coffee roasting
- Cafe operations
- Globally sourced seasonal coffees

bowscoffee.com

WHO THEY ARE

A specialty coffee roaster and cafe in Victoria, B.C. focusing on sourcing and sharing seasonal coffees from select small producers globally.

NAME

Coffee Roast Lab

SERVICES

- Single-origin coffees
- Blends
- Espresso-focused roasts
- Robusta options
- Decaf and low-acidity coffees
- Wholesale coffee supply (25 lb minimum)
- Responsive support for cafes, restaurants, offices, hospitality

coffeeroastlab.com

coffeeroastlab.com

WHO THEY ARE

A Canada-wide wholesale roaster emphasizing freshness with small-batch weekly roasting and tailored support for businesses.

NAME

United Beans

SERVICES

- Green coffee beans (60 kg MOQ)
- Roasted coffee (15 lb MOQ)
- White-label services (50 lb minimum)
- Directly sourced premium single-origin green coffee
- Tier-based partnerships
- Incentive programs for new cafes
- Free samples
- Free/subsidized shipping

unitedbeans.ca

unitedbeans.ca

unitedbeans.ca

WHO THEY ARE

A Toronto-based family-owned operation providing a comprehensive supply chain model for specialty coffee across Canada.

NAME

Phil & Sebastian Coffee Roasters

SERVICES

- Direct trade coffees (transparency, sweetness, balance, cleanliness)
- Bespoke training for wholesale partners
- Top-tier service and support
- Streamlined wholesale processes
- Equipment recommendations
- Free shipping for wholesale orders above a certain size

scoutmagazine.ca

philsebastian.com

philsebastian.com

WHO THEY ARE

A Calgary, Alberta-based company internationally recognized for direct sourcing, producer transparency, and award-winning filter coffee excellence.

HOW TO STAND OUT

- Leverage the co-owner Ben Cram's unique culinary background, Canadian Barista Championship win, and sensory judge certifications to position Fernwood as a leader in refined taste and unparalleled coffee expertise.
- Expand and promote the high-quality instant coffee offering, highlighting its single-origin nature and freeze-drying process as a premium, convenient solution for specific wholesale segments like hospitality or offices.
- Deepen the narrative around direct trade relationships by providing transparent stories about specific farm partnerships, demonstrating long-term commitment and tangible impact, to differentiate from competitors with more general ethical sourcing claims.

- Enhance and market comprehensive wholesale support by offering advanced barista training, equipment optimization workshops, and maintenance services, establishing Fernwood as a full-service partner for cafes and businesses seeking operational excellence.

MARKET SUMMARY

The specialty coffee market is experiencing rapid growth, globally valued at approximately USD 111.5 billion in 2025 and projected to reach USD 337.7 billion by 2036 with a CAGR of 10.6%. Within Canada, the market is estimated at CA\$6.2 billion in 2026. Arabica Specialty Beans dominate with a projected 62% share, while Specialty Espresso Blends are expected to account for 26% of the product share. The competitive landscape is diverse, with numerous players emphasizing quality, ethical sourcing (fair trade, direct trade), and customized solutions for wholesale partners, ranging from local roasters on Vancouver Island to Canada-wide suppliers.

TIMELINE

- **1973:** Oughtred Coffee & Tea founded.
- **1997:** Level Ground Trading established.
- **2007:** Drumroaster Coffee founded.
- **2007:** The Stick in the Mud's Roastoreum began operations.
- **2007:** Fernwood Coffee Roasters commenced operations.
- **2009:** Pilot Coffee Roasters founded.
- **2010:** Ben Cram (Fernwood co-owner) won the Canadian Barista Championship.
- **2012:** Rising Star Coffee Roasters founded.
- **2014:** Ben Cram (Fernwood co-owner) held sensory judge certification for the United States Barista Championship.
- **2015:** Ben Cram (Fernwood co-owner) held sensory judge certification for the World Barista Championship.
- **2017 (at least):** Fernwood Coffee Roasters began a direct trade partnership with a farm in Brazil.
- **2018:** Oughtred Coffee & Tea recognized as 'Roaster of the Year' by Roast Magazine.
- **2019:** Coffee Bros. founded.
- **2020:** Fernwood's direct trade partnership with Brazil was disrupted due to the pandemic.
- **2021:** Wholesale accounts contributed 60-70% of Fernwood Coffee Roasters' revenue.
- **July 2024:** Intelligentsia Coffee partnered with Microsoft to develop AI-powered roasting technology.
- **2025:** Global specialty coffee market valued at approximately USD 111.5 billion.
- **2026:** Global specialty coffee market projected to reach USD 123.3 billion.
- **2026:** Canadian specialty coffee market estimated CA\$6.2 billion.
- **2026:** Specialty Espresso Blends expected to account for 26% of product share.
- **2026:** Arabica Specialty Beans anticipated to hold approximately 62% share.
- **2036:** Global specialty coffee market estimated to reach USD 337.7 billion.

GAPS / WHAT WE COULD NOT DETERMINE

- Specific pricing strategies of Fernwood Coffee Roasters and its competitors.
- Detailed market share information for individual roasters within the Canadian or Vancouver Island market.

- Customer testimonials or sentiment data for Fernwood and its competitors.
- Comprehensive marketing and distribution channel strategies used by competitors beyond what is explicitly stated.

ASSUMPTIONS MADE

- Fernwood Coffee Roasters is looking for competitive insights within its existing market and potential expansion within Canada.
- The 'Specialty coffee roasting and wholesale supply' industry implies that both B2B and potentially D2C channels are relevant for market analysis.
- The provided market data is current enough to inform strategic decisions for the immediate future.

AMBIGUITIES

- The specific current scale or revenue of Fernwood Coffee Roasters is not fully detailed beyond its 60-70% wholesale revenue contribution in 2021, making it challenging to precisely calibrate recommendations to its exact resource level.
- Detailed minimum order quantities for Fernwood's wholesale program are not provided, limiting precise comparison with competitors who do list their MOQs.

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