

FAIRTRADE

Fortnight 2011



Schools Action Guide

Fairtrade Fortnight is coming around again. Two whole weeks to tell everyone you know about the difference Fairtrade makes to the lives of farmers who grow the products we enjoy in the UK. And this year we are asking you get loud and proud and show off your label. Show off your passion, your favourite product, your producer stories. Load the FAIRTRADE Mark with meaning and get more people excited about the difference their choices can make. Last year, a million and one Fairtrade swaps were made.

This year let's go a step further, showing off what's behind the swaps and why Fairtrade is important. Most of all, we want to show off Fairtrade cotton and highlight the injustices that make Fairtrade a vital lifeline for cotton farmers in West Africa and India. Let's show off a different way of doing trade and why we support it!



Courtesy of Chetna Organic Farmers Association



Courtesy of Chetna Organic Farmers Association

Fairtrade cotton has been around for five years and we want to celebrate by letting everyone know how Fairtrade helps cotton farmers in India and West Africa by giving them a better deal. Cotton farmers are amongst some of the poorest in the world and come up against big obstacles.

- Cotton covers 2.4% of farmland in the world and is cultivated by 30 million farmers in 65 countries, including many developing countries
- Cotton cultivation uses about 50% of all chemical pesticide used in agriculture.

Fairtrade is a way of giving poor cotton farmers the chance to tackle these obstacles and take control of their lives.

Resources

This guide will give you ideas and inspiration about activities to celebrate Fairtrade cotton during Fairtrade Fortnight. Add this insert to your Fairtrade Schools Action guide and check the guide for more ideas to bring Fairtrade into your school during Fairtrade Fortnight and beyond.

For more resources go to www.fairtrade.org.uk/schools

If you are working towards the Fairtrade Schools Award your school needs to hold an event during Fairtrade Fortnight as part of Goal 5. If you have already achieved the award, your school will need to hold an event in Fairtrade Fortnight as part of your renewal and help you get the message out to your community.

To order or download more copies of this Action Guide Insert please go to www.fairtrade.org.uk/fortnight

This guide is also available to download in Welsh.

Some ideas for Fairtrade Fortnight

Show off your... bunting

Fairtrade cotton bunting kits are available from the Fairtrade Foundation for you to show off in a colourful way your support for Fairtrade. Just as many little triangles together make impressive lengths of bunting, so too do many little actions make a mighty wave of action for a fairer trade system. Why not incorporate your bunting designing sessions into a talk or quiz evening for parents and community too?

If you do **ONE** thing...
...try and do this!



Show off your... favourite

Show the world your favourite product or recipe, via a stall, swap or party. Why not hold a cake competition with points awarded for the greatest proportion of Fairtrade ingredients? Don't forget you can use Fairtrade sugar, cocoa, nuts, fruit & spices. Integrate curriculum work by doing the maths!

Show off your... knowledge

Hold a quiz or talk for parents and community members for students to tell them what you know about Fairtrade and why it is important to the producers in the South. Don't forget to order some posters and resources from www.fairtrade.org.uk/resources

Show off your... status

If you are a Fairtrade School already, Fairtrade Fortnight is the perfect opportunity to work with other schools, showing them what you have done to embed Fairtrade into your school curriculum and ethos. You could offer your committee to talk to other schools or bring other schools to you to see a presentation or take part in one of your other activities. Remember that the more people we tell about Fairtrade, the bigger the change for producers.



Extreme Labelling

Find as many weird, wonderful and creative ways of getting the FAIRTRADE Mark seen as possible. We want pictures of the biggest, best, weirdest, wackiest and most creative FAIRTRADE Marks you can possibly create, whether it is made out of people, flowers, sand, on a mountain side, up a tree, on top of a local landmark or anywhere else you can think of. Do this before Fairtrade Fortnight begins and use it to get your local paper involved in your Fortnight activities.



Show off your... support

A simple but effective activity is a treasure hunt around town looking for Fairtrade products in shops and cafés. Not only will this show the children the range of products available but letting the outlets know what you are doing and why will show that people are interested in their products. Why not get the children to design a certificate or prize for those places they find on their trail that stock Fairtrade products?

Cotton & Fairtrade

Your school shirt is probably made from cotton. At home you will have lots of cotton clothes, shopping bags and even cotton wool. But do you know where it comes from and who put in the hard work so you could have it?

Cotton grows around the seeds of the cotton plant, so the heads look like soft, fluffy flowers. Cotton grows in tropical countries and, like many products we enjoy in the UK, often comes from some of the world's less economically developed countries (LEDCs) in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Some of the poorest countries depend on cotton.

- 40% of West Africa's exports consist of cotton
- Two thirds of the world's cotton is produced in developing countries

What's the problem?

Subsidies paid to farmers in rich countries and competition from synthetic fibres means the price at which farmers can sell their cotton crop is falling. This means that farmers get paid little for their hard work and struggle to meet the needs of their families.

Fairtrade changes this by making sure farmers are paid a better price, giving them a little extra (called the Fairtrade premium) on top which is then invested in the farmers' community and ensuring they are able to farm responsibly and look after their environment.

Rich farming businesses in Europe, Japan and America get \$4.8 billion per year free money (subsidies) from their governments, so they can charge lower prices than African and Indian cotton farmers, who don't get this. This means that no-one will buy their cotton at a good price, and they go bust.

Children wear cheap clothes, but sadly, children pick the cotton in them too. Often cotton is picked by children who work long days and are unable to go to school, or by women who are denied the right to join a union.

Cheap cotton that works well for parents over in the UK unfortunately can have a brutal effect on the women, men and children that pick the cotton.

What can you do?

In the UK people spend £1 billion per year on school uniforms.

Some of this is made up of uniforms that schools sell themselves, some by independent uniform shops, and lots by supermarkets.

If we join together with other schools all around the country we can make sure millions of pounds of this money goes back to farmers by paying fair cotton prices, investing in farmers' communities, and helping protect the environment. We need to tell our schools, colleges, high street shops and supermarkets to Wear Fair!

You can join a national campaign in getting your school to change to Fairtrade cotton uniforms. And it's not just your school's uniform but also the clothes you wear out of school as well as tea towels, tights and bedding. Go to www.fairtrade.org.uk/cotton for more information

Swap your uniform!

Changing your uniform to Fairtrade cotton can help to tip the balance in favour of the poorest farmers.

If you are working towards the Fairtrade Schools Award you will already have a Fairtrade Steering Committee set up. The Fairtrade Steering committee can put changing your uniforms into their action plan and help to spread the message to the whole school about Fairtrade cotton.

Here are some ideas about how you can swap your uniforms.

The more support you get from other students the more likely you are to be successful so it is really important to tell your whole school.

There are loads of fun ways in which you can increase awareness of the issue in your school and build support from other students.

Some of the best ways to do this are to organise fun events or interesting assemblies that attract people's attention to the issue.

COTTON on to these ideas

1

Use the steering group. If you are already going for the Fairtrade Schools Award you will have a steering group set up. Start by getting your steering group involved as they will already be well informed about Fairtrade and how to get the message out to the rest of the school and parents. They can put Fairtrade in their Action Plan for the year. If you haven't got one already why not set one up? You could also talk to the school council.

2

Have an assembly about Fairtrade and then show your friends how important it is for farmers to be paid a decent price for their hard work. There are some films about Fairtrade cotton on our website.

3

Ask your teachers if they will help you. Together you can plan some lessons about Fairtrade.

4

Get the word out. Use the website, school newsletter, press releases, parents evenings, open days and letters home to parents to tell them what you are doing and why.

5

Have a fashion show of Fairtrade cotton clothes. You could include other clothes, not just uniforms. Why not invite parents and other community members to come along and learn about Fairtrade?

UNIFORM IDEAS

& Fairtrade

Don't forget that it is really important to get the message to mums, dads and other family members as they usually buy school uniforms!

If your school has a uniform shop:

1

Find out how the shop is run. Sometimes it will be the governors who are responsible for it so you will need to get them involved. It might be run by parents or an outside organisation. The best way to find out is to go along to the shop.

2

If you have a special uniform at your school, such as a sweatshirt or blazer with a school crest that you can only buy in one shop you will need to get the whole school on side to tell the shop why it is so important to change to Fairtrade.

3

Tell them what you think. There are lots of ways you can convince your school shop to sell Fairtrade. Get your friends to make some information sheets or posters about Fairtrade and how it helps producers, do a presentation or get people at school to sign a petition.

4

Help the shop to find Fairtrade cotton products by telling them to contact the Fairtrade Foundation www.fairtrade.org.uk/cotton

5

Keep trying! You might have to do more than one of these things, and keep telling the shop how much you want Fairtrade cotton before it happens!

If you have the sort of school uniform you can buy in any shop...



...such as a plain white shirt and grey or blue trousers or skirt, you will need to get the whole school involved to try to get the message to parents about choosing Fairtrade. For more information about where you can buy Fairtrade cotton uniforms go to www.fairtrade.org.uk/schools

1

Find out which shops in your local area sell Fairtrade cotton uniforms. If you cannot find any shops that sell them, why not ask some if they will? Get your friends to ask them too and write some letters to the shops' head offices. The best way of making Fairtrade cotton clothes more available, and helping more producers, is to tell shop managers that you want Fairtrade.

2

Make some posters and put them around school telling everyone about Fairtrade cotton uniforms, how Fairtrade helps the producers and where they can buy them.

3

Get the governors to support you. The school governors can change the policy on where your uniforms are bought. This may sound scary but don't worry! Chances are the governors will be very interested in what you have to say. This is also a great way to build your presentation skills and confidence.

4

Finally, but most importantly, choose Fairtrade cotton uniforms when you go shopping!



Cotton & Fairtrade

Cotton and the Fairtrade Schools Award

If your school is working towards the Fairtrade Schools Award, learning about Fairtrade cotton can help you meet the 5 goals

1

Our school has set up a Fairtrade School Steering Group

If you tell your school about Fairtrade cotton the steering group can add this to their action plan about how to get the whole school involved in Fairtrade

2

Our school has written and adopted a whole-school Fairtrade policy

Include in your policy how you will tell everyone about Fairtrade cotton and how you are going to encourage everyone to change their uniforms

3

Our school is committed to selling, promoting and using Fairtrade products

By buying Fairtrade certified cotton items you are supporting farmers and their communities. Show your school all the products they can buy to support farmers. Your school may have a uniform shop. Getting Fairtrade cotton uniforms into your uniform shop would definitely count towards Goal 3.

4

Our school learns about Fairtrade issues

Use cotton producer case studies and learn about the supply chain in class. This can be found at: www.fairtrade.org.uk/schools/cotton

5

Our school promotes and takes action for Fairtrade in school and the wider community

Tell your parents and community about Fairtrade cotton. It's not just school uniforms. See more great Fairtrade cotton products here www.fairtrade.org.uk/cotton

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It's not just cotton farmers who struggle to provide for their families. Farmers of many other crops suffer from unfair international trade rules that benefit rich countries. The processing and sale of these products is often controlled by a few very large companies who pay farmers little for their hard work, so they can lower the prices of the finished products. As a result many of these farmers fail to get a fair share of the financial benefits from this trade. Fairtrade seeks to address this by ensuring farmers are paid enough to cover sustainable production, paying a social premium on top which is then invested in the farmers' community, establishing longer term trading relationships and ensuring farmers are improving the way they farm, to protect the environment. Find out more at www.fairtrade.org.uk

Margaret Demidecka Fairtrade Award

1

for the best
**Fairtrade Fortnight event
in a school**

**East Sheen
Primary School**



Margaret Demidecka Award for the best Fairtrade Fortnight event in a school

After the success of the Margaret Demidecka Award in 2010, in 2011 there will be a cash prize for the best event in a primary school, and the best event in a secondary school. The prize is £350 for the best entry which the winning school can then use to strengthen the Fairtrade work in school.

Competition was tough last year and the judges will be looking for innovative and interesting ideas that really explore what Fairtrade is. To find out more about last year's winning entries, or to download an entry form go to

[www.fairtrade.org.uk/schools/news/
bestschooleventaward.aspx](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/schools/news/bestschooleventaward.aspx)

The Margaret Demidecka Fairtrade Award was started in 2006 by the Justice and Peace Group, affiliated to Churches Together in Tring, Hertfordshire and was given for the best Fairtrade Fortnight activity in a school in the local area. In 2009 the award merged with the Fairtrade Foundation's own awards for best activity in schools across the UK.



Wildern School



Choose products with this Mark

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