



# **ISLAM** **AND FAIRTRADE**





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## WHAT IS FAIRTRADE?

Fairtrade is a simple, powerful way to make a difference to the people who grow the things we love. Fairtrade stands for changing the way trade works, through fair prices and better working conditions. This guide shows how Fairtrade and Islam share common values and perspectives. There's lots of ways to support Fairtrade through your mosque, your workplace or through what you buy.

Choosing products with the FAIRTRADE Mark means producers receive a fairer price for their hard work plus a little extra – the Fairtrade Premium – that farmers and workers can spend on projects to benefit their business or community.

Producers must meet the Fairtrade Standards, which cover social, economic and environmental aspects. It's important to know that Fairtrade is the only certification label 50 percent owned by the farmers and workers themselves. They are part of the most important decisions about how the worldwide movement works together and what it does.



### The FAIRTRADE Mark means that:

The producer received a price that covered their average costs of sustainable production, plus the Fairtrade Premium – a little extra money to invest in their business or community projects of their choice.

Workers on plantations have rights to decent wages, to join unions and work in safe conditions.

Farmers and workers, including women, have the opportunity to have their voices heard.

**“ALLAH SHOWS MERCY TO A MAN WHO IS KIND WHEN HE SELLS, WHEN HE BUYS AND WHEN HE MAKES A CLAIM.”**

***Bukhari***

# WHAT IS THE FAIRTRADE FOUNDATION?

Fairtrade is a global movement with a strong and active presence in the UK, represented by the Fairtrade Foundation.

Here's a snapshot...



**£1.67 BILLION UK SALES OF  
FAIRTRADE IN 2014**



**GENERATED FROM  
UK FAIRTRADE SALES**



We are the independent non-profit organisation behind the FAIRTRADE Mark, which we license for use on products in the UK that meet Fairtrade Standards. We help to bring together producers, consumers, campaigners and business to build a citizens' movement for change.



## WHAT DOES ISLAM SAY ABOUT FAIR TRADE?

Trade has a rich heritage in Islamic history. Trading was central to the lives of early Muslims, and so there are numerous Islamic teachings and instructions in the area of trade and business ethics. The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was a successful trader himself. His trading reputation as well as his other responsibilities was such that he was known as 'Al-Amin – the Trustworthy One'. Muslims today continue to strive to emulate the Prophet's (pbuh) character and this includes his business etiquette.

The Islamic principles of respect, dignity and fairness in trade and

business are reflected in the Fairtrade Standards, which cover fair prices, decent working conditions and equality among farmers and workers.

The Prophet (pbuh) promotes these principles throughout his teachings, saying: **'Your brothers are your responsibility. Allah has made them under your hands. So whosoever has a brother under his hand, let him give him food as he eats and dress as he dresses. Do not give them work that will overburden them and if you do give them such a task then provide them with assistance'** (Bukhari).



## HILFUL FUDL

A famous example of Islamic commercial dealings is the 7th century alliance known as Hilful Fudl or 'Oath of Excellence'. The alliance was created by Meccans to establish fairness in trade after a merchant was wronged. The Prophet (pbuh) was among the members who agreed to the pact (formed before his prophethood). It has played a significant role in Islamic ethics, laying foundations of human rights and justice. The Prophet (pbuh) held the alliance in high esteem. After receiving the message of Islam, the Prophet (pbuh) continued to acknowledge and respect the pact, stating that 'If I was to take part in it now in Islam, I would still do so.' This core of fairness and equitable dealing remains a central part of Islamic teaching and behaviour, and has close parallels with the values and practices of Fairtrade.



# YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

## HOW DO I KNOW THAT FARMERS AND WORKERS BENEFIT WHEN I BUY A FAIRTRADE PRODUCT?



The international Fairtrade system monitors and audits product supply chains to make sure that producers receive the Fairtrade Minimum Price, and that the farmers, workers and their communities are benefiting from the investment of the Fairtrade Premium. FLOCERT is an independent certification and auditing organisation that audits producer organisations and traders to ensure they meet the Fairtrade Standards and that producers receive their Fairtrade Premium.

## ARE FAIRTRADE PRODUCTS MORE EXPENSIVE?



Not necessarily. There's a huge range out there, from supermarket own-brands to high-end luxury products. However, Fairtrade is unlikely to be the cheapest product in-store for a few reasons:

- The Fairtrade Minimum Price is paid to producers to cover the average costs of sustainable production, however low world market prices fall.
- Independent certification, auditing and traceability programmes cost money to implement, and these costs are built into the price of the product through the supply chain.
- The Fairtrade Premium, and other investments by companies in the producers they source from, funds business and community projects.
- When a Fairtrade product is new to market, volumes may be small, so marketing, transportation, manufacture and packaging can be more expensive. As sales and volumes increase, the product costs often go down.



### **IS THE QUALITY OF FAIRTRADE PRODUCTS AS GOOD AS MY FAVOURITE BRANDS?**

Take a closer look, some of your favourite products may already be Fairtrade! The Fairtrade Premium often enables farmers to improve their quality and become more economically stable, reliable suppliers. In 2014, small producer organisations spent 37 percent of their Fairtrade Premium on investments to support productivity or quality.



### **IS BUYING FAIRTRADE PRODUCTS A GOOD IDEA GIVEN CONCERNS ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE?**

Producers must meet environmental standards as part of certification. Producers are required to work to protect the natural environment and make environmental protection a part of farm management. They are also encouraged to minimise the use of energy, especially from non-renewable sources.

When you choose Fairtrade, you're offering farmers and workers a way to invest in making their communities more secure through the Fairtrade Premium. They are able to choose to set up projects which help them tackle the effects of climate change, which their lifestyles have done so little to cause. These could include planting trees to shade crops, irrigation projects or changing to drought-resistant crops.





For example, coffee farmers in Costa Rica have used the Fairtrade Premium to replant trees to prevent soil erosion and have invested in environmentally friendly ovens, fuelled by recycled coffee hulls and the dried shells of macadamia nuts. This means that they no longer need to cut forest trees and so can preserve the rainforest and the oxygen it produces.

Climate change hits the poorest in developing countries hardest. This includes people whose livelihoods depend on agriculture. Through the Fairtrade Premium farmers and workers have a little extra to use when harvests fail.

Get the answers to more  
FAQs at [fairtrade.org.uk/  
what-is-fairtrade/faqs](https://fairtrade.org.uk/what-is-fairtrade/faqs)



## WHAT FAIRTRADE MEANS TO FARMERS AND WORKERS

### **The impact of Fairtrade on date farmers in Tunisia**

More than 1.5 million farmers and workers in 74 countries across Africa, Asia and Latin America are part of Fairtrade. Fairtrade in the Middle East is a small but growing producer base, as the case of dates in Tunisia shows.

The Groupement de Développement de l'Agriculture Biodynamique (GDABD) is based in Hazoua, the last small town in Tunisia before the Algerian border. The area around Hazoua is desert, with very little vegetation, interspersed with salt lakes. In the summer months of July-August, temperatures in this area can climb to 45-50°C. The group is made up of 60 farmers, who each have an average of one hectare of date palms, arranged in symmetrical blocks near the town.





**“I’D LIKE TO SEE THE AMOUNTS SOLD AS FAIRTRADE GROW TO A LEVEL WHERE WE CAN DELIVER A LOT MORE IMPACT, THE IMPACT THAT WE DREAM OF.”**

**Saidi Bobaker**

The date palms work to fight desertification, creating oases in the desert. Date palms are planted near deep wells, with channels running alongside each plot. The water is heavily salinated and is pumped back into the desert once used. Farmers in the area are piloting the use of drip irrigation. Using two small water fountains next to each tree can deliver more targeted use of water. Now there are hundreds of different varieties of hydrophytic (salt-loving) flowers, shrubs, grasses, bushes and small trees. A range of wild seeds has been sown, including a number of varieties that people remembered from decades before that had stopped growing in that area.

The farmers have worked to receive organic and biodynamic certifications to help them add value and get a higher price for their dates. However, finding a market to sell their dates is still an ongoing challenge for the group. Selling more dates on Fairtrade terms will result in increased Fairtrade Premium, enabling them to continue investing in their land and community.

Using Fairtrade dates at times of celebration and breaking fast is a great way to support farmers and workers, in the knowledge that you are choosing products that change lives.

**“WE ARE VERY HAPPY WITH FAIRTRADE BECAUSE IT HAS DELIVERED REAL BENEFITS TO US. HOWEVER THEY ARE ONLY SMALL VOLUMES, AND IT IS NOT VERY BIG AT THE MOMENT. I HOPE IT DEVELOPS MORE. FAIRTRADE HELPS TO PROTECT THE INTERESTS OF THE FARMERS, WITH THE MINIMUM PRICES. PSYCHOLOGICALLY THEY FEEL MORE PROTECTED, THAT THERE ARE PEOPLE ON THEIR SIDE WHEN THERE ARE UNFAIR POWERS IN THE WAY THE MARKET WORKS.”**

**Salah ben Amara**





## BECOMING A FAIRTRADE MOSQUE

Becoming a Fairtrade Mosque shows a commitment to a more just world. It's a great way to let your community know that your mosque is taking a stand for farmers and workers in developing countries. A hadith narrated by Bukhari states that the Prophet (pbuh) said: **'Allah shows mercy to a man who is kind when he sells, when he buys and when he makes a claim.'**

It is important for Muslims to be fair sellers and consumers, treating one another with respect. Taking the next step and raising awareness of Fairtrade in your community is a vital part of the ongoing battle to make trade fair. Every mosque that signs up receives a certificate to display, telling people that you have made a commitment to Fairtrade.





By using Fairtrade products and learning more about our power as citizens and consumers we can perform our religious duty and make a real difference to the lives of our brothers and sisters in developing countries.

There are three simple steps to becoming a Fairtrade Mosque:

- 1** Serve Fairtrade tea and coffee for all meetings and events
- 2** Use other Fairtrade products such as sugar, biscuits and fruit
- 3** Promote Fairtrade during Fairtrade Fortnight and through events, worship and other activities during the year



## TAKING FAIRTRADE INTO THE COMMUNITY

**There are lots of ways to involve your community with Fairtrade, big and small.**

### FAIRTRADE TOWNS

There are Fairtrade Towns all over the UK, working to raise awareness of Fairtrade values and products. A Fairtrade Town is declared after achieving five goals and proving that Fairtrade is a strong part of the community. These campaigns are run by groups of volunteers, organised into steering groups or committees, who put on events, lobby politicians and work with other groups to promote Fairtrade. To find out whether there is a group in your area, contact us at **[volunteer.towns@fairtrade.org.uk](mailto:volunteer.towns@fairtrade.org.uk)**



### FAIRTRADE SCHOOLS

Learning about Fairtrade can be great fun and becoming a Fairtrade School means joining a worldwide movement. Teaching about Fairtrade fits different curriculum areas, particularly geography and PSHE. There are three steps in the Fairtrade Schools journey: FairAware, FairActive and FairAchiever, each step developing learners' understanding and building on a range of skills from teamwork to persuasive writing. Find resources and materials for all ages at **[schools.fairtrade.org.uk](http://schools.fairtrade.org.uk)**





## FAIRTRADE PLACES OF WORSHIP

Mosques, churches, synagogues and temples can all work towards Fairtrade status, showing their commitment to fairness, justice and equality. Fairtrade values and principles can be incorporated into worship, events and discussion, whether it's in your own establishment or within wider interfaith networks. Find out more at [fairtrade.org.uk/faiths](https://fairtrade.org.uk/faiths)

## FAIRTRADE WORKPLACES OF WORLD CHANGERS

Places of work can make a huge difference to farmers and workers by switching to Fairtrade tea, coffee and sugar. From call centres to solicitors, hairdressers to factories, any workplace can register to become a Workplace of World Changers and make a difference. Go to [fairtrade.org.uk/work](https://fairtrade.org.uk/work)



# ACTIVITIES IN YOUR MOSQUE

**There are many ways you can get people in your community or mosque involved with Fairtrade...**

- Celebrate Fairtrade Fortnight! Usually in late February/early March, it's a time for Fairtrade supporters to join together to make some noise about Fairtrade.
- Hold a Friday sermon on Fairtrade using the khutbah template.
- Give your halaqah a Fairtrade theme.
- Organise an interfaith Fairtrade event or gathering.
- Ask your mosque's community to gather signatures for Fairtrade petitions or engage with a campaign.
- Host a Fairtrade producer and facilitate their engagement with the community.



- Involve local Islamic schools and institutions.
- If your mosque has madrassas, include Fairtrade in the syllabus.
- Facilitate Fairtrade workshops in local mosques, schools and institutions.
- Promote Fairtrade products at specific times of the year eg dates during Ramadan.
- Team up with your local Fairtrade Town by inviting them to hold a meeting or event at the mosque.
- Set up a stall in your mosque or Islamic centre selling Fairtrade goodies.
- Display posters and other resources in your mosque or Islamic centre to help raise awareness and spread the word.
- Engage with a local university I-Soc.
- Invite a group of enthusiastic young people to form a Fairtrade committee who can lead on organising events.
- Use particular dates in the calendar to promote Fairtrade.
- Hold a blind tasting session to explore the different products.

# FURTHER INFORMATION



Resources are available from the Fairtrade Foundation – check out the online shop at **[shop.fairtrade.org.uk](https://shop.fairtrade.org.uk)** or digital materials at **[fairtrade.org.uk/en/resources-library](https://fairtrade.org.uk/en/resources-library)**



## FAIRTRADE AND RAMADAN

During Ramadan, Muslims take time to consider justice, fairness and ethical principles while fasting during daylight. Thoughts of food and the experience of those who produced it are also central, meaning that Fairtrade is particularly relevant. Why not break your fast with dates, hold an ethical Iftar meal and encourage the people in your community to think more carefully about where the products they consume come from and how fair they are.

**fairtrade.org.uk**

**Fairtrade Foundation, 3rd Floor, Ibex House,  
42-47 Minories, London, EC3N 1DY**

**Tel: +44 (0) 20 7405 5942 Email: [mail@fairtrade.org.uk](mailto:mail@fairtrade.org.uk)**

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