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# MEDIA GUIDE

**SPREADING THE FAIRTRADE MESSAGE:  
WORKING WITH THE MEDIA**



**THE POWER  
OF YOU**

# GETTING STARTED

Working with the local media is one of the best ways of helping spread the message about your campaign and what you are trying to achieve. Your main tool for working with press is the press release, but before you get onto that, you need to consider the media value of what you're planning, and what kind of media coverage you'd like to see.

## YOU WILL NEED:

### NOVELTY:

The media are always interested in innovative events or significant achievements – anything that's a bit different and unique will attract more attention, whether you're hosting a Fairtrade coffee morning decked out in a giant banana costume, welcoming a Fairtrade producer to your town or inviting your local MP to a Fairtrade tea dance.

### CREATIVITY:

How can your event/activity stand out among hundreds of others journalists receive information about? Remember quirky stunts make the best stories for local media.

### SIGHTS AND SOUNDS:

Think visually – pictures are as important as words, so make sure you have a good photographer on hand. If you're hoping to get radio coverage, make sure you have a spokesperson who is happy to speak to the journalists.

### LOGISTICS:

For every single media interview you do, you need to make sure you have all the logistics in place: do you have a spokesperson who can be contacted at any time? Have you made sure your contact details are on the press release and you can get hold of your spokesperson easily? Will there be someone at the event tasked with meeting any journalists who have been invited?

**ONCE YOU HAVE ALL OF THAT, YOU CAN WRITE YOUR PRESS RELEASE!**

**PRESS!**



# PRESS RELEASE

The press release is what a journalist receives to tell them the story. It must be short, snappy and factual – and if it's written well, can greatly increase your chance of getting media coverage, and even be used directly in the paper if journalists are busy.

## THE LAYOUT:

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / EMBARGOED UNTIL...**

### HEADLINE

Your headline should say what the story is about. It should be short and snappy, and in bold type at the top of the page

### OPENING PARAGRAPH

You need to cover the five Ws in your opening paragraph...

**WHO WHERE WHAT WHY WHEN**

for example...

Fairtrade Bolton will be attempting to break the banana-eating World Record at Bolton Town Hall on Monday 4 April, to raise awareness of the problems facing banana producers.

A group of Fairtrade campaigners from Aberdeen held a tea dance with a difference on Saturday, where they welcomed a visiting tea producer from Malawi, and their local MP, during Fairtrade Fortnight.



## MAIN BODY AND QUOTES

The main body of the release should then run in clearly separated paragraphs, including more information on your event and at least one quote from someone involved.

Your paragraphs should run in order of importance – make sure the most important information is towards the top of the release, with any additional information further down. Remember, while it's best to keep press releases to a page in length, you don't want to miss anything out either – you're essentially telling a story – make sure you give the details.

Quotes should always be from the most relevant person involved. It should be no more than a couple of short paragraphs at most, and should add something more to the information already given. Remember to always include the person's name and title.



## KEY FACTS

It's easy to get carried away with making sure your press release reads nicely, then realising you've forgotten some key facts. Make sure you include some key statistics if you have them – journalists will find them easy to use, and you can even put them in bullet points if it reads better.



## ENDS

It's always worth adding this at the end of your release



## CONTACT DETAILS AND NOTES TO EDITORS

Contact details are one of the most important parts of a release! Including a contact number and email means journalists can get in touch if they want more information on any aspect of your story. Notes to Editors is your final chance, in an endnote, to give any more information that may be useful, for example website links and background information.



You can view some press releases under the Press Office pages of our website.

## SENDING YOUR RELEASE

The best way to get your release noticed is to send it via email into the newsdesk, or, if you have a good relationship with one of the reporters, to them directly.

You can also call the newspaper and ask to speak to one of the reporters directly, tell them what you want to send in and what it's about briefly, and they will let you know the best person to send it to.

It's best to send your release to a newspaper a week in advance of when you'd ideally like it to appear – remember to 'embargo' it if you don't want it to be printed before a certain time. Also bear in mind the newspaper's deadlines – it's not a good idea to call about a press release when the journalists are on deadline, so instead check when their deadline is first, or, if you're not sure, call in the morning when they're less likely to be rushing to file copy.

You can follow up your release the next day with a phone call, to make sure someone at the newspaper has seen it.

If you want a photographer to come along to your event, it's best to give at least two weeks' notice. Often regional papers work with very few photographers who have tight schedules, so the earlier the better in order to get your event into their planning diary.

## LETTERS TO EDITORS

The Letters to Editors page is often a great way to inform people about your campaign. You can write a letter in response to something you've seen in that publication, or you can voice your opinion about something that's happened locally or internationally.



- Be opinionated, but conveying the campaign message
- Be short and interesting – keep your letter to less than 300 words
- Include a contact name and address
- Reference what your letter is in response to.



Just as you send your release to print media, if you're interested in getting local radio coverage, and have a willing spokesperson, you should send it there too.



### YOU SHOULD:

- Email your release in the body of the email with a paragraph at the top repeating the contact details and highlighting the potential interview opportunities
- Make sure you have a willing, articulate and animated spokesperson available – they should be involved heavily with the campaign and make it local.

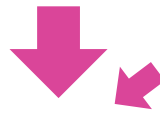
### REMEMBER:

- **Be prepared.** Remember the five Ws and have three key messages you'd like to get across – have these jotted down so you can refer to them in your interview
- **Be confident.** Presenters won't be trying to trip you up – they'll want to get the best from the interview too
- **Talk local.** If you're talking to a local station, then talk about what you're doing in that area
- **Be simple.** You get one chance to say what you want on radio, which means listeners only get one chance to hear it. If you use too much jargon, it will be more difficult for them to hear what your key messages are
- **Be punctual.** Always arrive 30 minutes early for a radio interview.



Social media is one of the strongest tools you can have as a local campaigner.

You can find out more information, tips and advice on using social media to your advantage by downloading our social media guide, 'Powering up your campaign with social media', from [www.fairtrade.org.uk/socialmediaguide](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/socialmediaguide)



### TOP TIPS

- Journalists are always interested in local news stories – remember that your story is interesting and you are giving them the opportunity to cover it!
- Journalists are busy; they don't have the time to chat away on the phone so make sure you get your point across clearly and quickly
- Try and get to know a reporter who covers your area and build a relationship with them
- Remember, it's ok to tell the journalists beforehand that you're not the chief executive of Fairtrade, and therefore if they have questions which aren't about your local campaign they will have to contact the Fairtrade Foundation press office.



## HOW WE CAN HELP YOU

The media team at the Fairtrade Foundation can help with the following:

- 1. Media lists** – contact details for media in your area
- 2. Checking press releases** – you can send any press releases to [media@fairtrade.org.uk](mailto:media@fairtrade.org.uk)
- 3. Tweeting about what you're doing** – send us your release and we'll tell over 70,000 Twitter followers about what you have planned/have achieved
- 4. Putting your release on our website** – unfortunately we can't put every release on our website, but we're always on the lookout for good local stories so let us know what you're doing and it might be posted at [www.fairtrade.org.uk](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk)
- 5. Images** – if your local paper needs an image to showcase Fairtrade, let us know and we can provide one

## HOW YOU CAN HELP US

- We want to know your stories. We are always looking for interesting stories about the campaigners behind Fairtrade – whether you support Fairtrade after experiencing a life-changing event, you changed your career to make a difference, or you spend every weekend in a banana costume to support Fairtrade – we want to know. If you have a story you think we'd be interested in, get in touch!
- There are times when you may be contacted by a reporter or researcher and the call should be directed on to the media team at the Fairtrade Foundation. These calls could be about a national event, an issue or problem with the Fairtrade system, a crisis situation or a media appeal. In those instances, or whenever you feel that you could do with support from the media team, please contact us on the numbers/emails given below.



# QUESTIONS, QUESTIONS

Fairtrade is a system we all strive to work hard for and are proud of. So if you're asked the ins-and-outs of how we work, there's no need to panic. Below are some questions you might get asked, and how you might answer them...



## Do I pay extra for Fairtrade certified products?

Whenever the FAIRTRADE Mark appears on a product, it means the farmer has received an agreed minimum price for his work, as well as an added social premium for his community. The final price of the product, however, is agreed between the retailer and the manufacturer, and that means that sometimes it can cost a little more to take into account the fairer price the farmer is being paid, while other times the retailer accounts for some of that cost.



## Does Fairtrade really work?

The FAIRTRADE Mark ensures farmers and workers across the developing world receive a fair price for the products they produce and the work they do. It also means they get a bit extra – the Fairtrade Premium – to invest into the future of their communities, business or health and wellbeing. Fairtrade empowers farmers and workers trade their way out of poverty, diversify and grow their own businesses.



## Is there a reason Fairtrade doesn't certify British farmers?

The FAIRTRADE Mark was established specifically to support the most disadvantaged producers in the developing world, by using trade as a tool for sustainable development. While we recognise farmers in the UK face many of the same problems, Fairtrade's expertise is with ensuring those in developing countries are helped to tackle poverty through trade.



## Should we be buying Fairtrade, or buying local?

Fairtrade isn't in competition with local produce. We would encourage anyone who can buy locally from a sustainable source to do so, and, as most Fairtrade products are from commodities you can't produce in the UK, if you can't buy local, buy Fairtrade.

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## KEY POINTS

For up-to-date facts and figures on Fairtrade, visit [http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/press\\_office/facts\\_figures](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/press_office/facts_figures)

### The Fairtrade Foundation media team

The media team at the Fairtrade Foundation is always happy to support local media campaigns, and can be reached between 9am and 6pm Monday – Friday:

020 7440 7692

[media@fairtrade.org.uk](mailto:media@fairtrade.org.uk)

Twitter: @FairtradeUKNews

### Take inspiration from good media work across Fairtrade towns here:

[www.fairtrade.org.uk/casestudies](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/casestudies)

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