

**FIFTH
EDITION**

THE TOWN CRIER



Edition 5 • Autumn 2013

Dear Fairtrade Town contact,

We hope you've enjoyed a nice summer and have managed to enjoy the sunny weather with some Fairtrade refreshments!

We've been busy working on plans for next year's Fairtrade Fortnight with a brand new concept and fresh ideas. We'll be revealing plans at the Supporter Conference in London on 5 October and hope that you can join us for what promises to be an informative and inspiring day. Please pass on the invitation to other supporters in your area.

The conference is a great place to share ideas and solutions to common challenges we face in campaigning for fairer trade. Another place is the brand new Fairtrade Towns case studies library on our website. Visit fairtrade.org.uk/towns to read about best practice from other groups, and if you have an idea or story you'd like to share, please let us know!

Read on for further updates, and we hope to see you on 5 October.

With best wishes

Adam, Anna, Adrienn and Johanna
(The Fairtrade Towns Team)

TOP NEWS FROM ACROSS THE NETWORK



Congratulations to: **Sudbury, Saltford, Lenzie, Balerno, Banchory, Lincoln and Dalgety Bay and Hillend, Galgate and Bromsgrove** who've recently achieved Fairtrade status – taking the total number of Fairtrade Towns in the UK to 572!



Campaigners and teachers in Ringwood collected a fantastic 612 petition signatures on our Make Food Fair petition. Warrington came second with just under 300 signatures. Maybe next time your group will be the petition champion?

Do you have some top news you'd like to share in the next edition? Please let us know through the contacts on page 8.





FOCUS ON: FAIRTRADE TOWN RENEWALS

Becoming a Fairtrade Town is an incredible achievement and represents a milestone on your area's Fairtrade journey, but is only the beginning! Every Fairtrade Town needs to renew its Fairtrade commitment by submitting a renewal application a year after receiving the award and then every two years subsequently. It's not just because we love paperwork, honest! It is important that the campaign continues to gain momentum, secure commitments from new organisations and increase understanding across the community.

The renewal process changed in 2011 to be more flexible – giving you the freedom to decide how to take your Fairtrade

campaigning further. Every Fairtrade Town is different, and the steering group are usually best placed to know what activities will have the greatest effect in their area, so if you feel like you'd like to campaign on Goal 2 and drive Fairtrade sales in your community, you can simply focus your action plan around it. And, if you feel that local businesses are already Fairtrade champions, you might want to focus on another goal or our Make Food Fair campaign. The choice is yours!

We recommend you focus on your aspirations and targets to put together an action plan, mapping out your next steps. Each renewal is assessed on this, so you don't need to spend time counting all of

the Fairtrade products on sale in every outlet. The action plan doesn't need to include every detail either, but should be something useful for you. So if you feel that the template renewal form doesn't work for you, just let us know. If you prefer to submit a timeline, mind map, report, table or even an Excel sheet, we can work something out.

You can check when your group is due to renew by emailing **volunteer.towns@fairtrade.org.uk**

Of course, we're always happy to provide ideas, as are other groups who have shared their action plans on our website at: **fairtrade.org.uk/renew**

THE HUMAN COST OF CHEAP TEA

Recent media coverage has highlighted urgent problems in the tea industry. *The Observer's* article about plantations in Assam in India illustrated how bad working conditions and severe poverty are linked to child labour and human trafficking.

There are 12 Fairtrade certified plantations in Assam which only sell an average of 10 per cent of their tea on Fairtrade terms. Even though they are able to sell this 10 per cent on better terms, the remaining 90 per cent is still sold through conventional trade.

With so little tea being sold on Fairtrade terms, it has been challenging for even the Fairtrade tea estates to move beyond the collective bargaining agreements that govern wages across the Assam tea sector. Despite this, Fairtrade has been able to deliver other benefits to tea workers such as improved contracts, overtime pay, maternity and sick leave pay, and pension arrangements. On top of this, additional Fairtrade premium

payments of US \$0.50 per kilo of tea sold goes into workers' own hands to invest as they wish – for example to help pay for children's education, healthcare or additional income generating projects.

To move beyond that level, we have to find ways that these tea estates can sell more on Fairtrade terms. Our recent study on tea in Malawi shows that the more the workers can sell on Fairtrade terms, the more the benefits accrue to the workers.

The change can only happen if more companies are willing to pay the Fairtrade price and premium for tea, but our continuous search for low prices on our shopping lists fuels the poverty level wages on tea plantations.



You can learn more about the human cost of cheap tea and what we are doing about it by visiting our blog: **fairtradeblog.tumblr.com**

CAMPAIGN UPDATE



fairtrade.org.uk/makefoodfair

MAKE FOOD FAIR



What's been happening with the Make Food Fair campaign?

During Fairtrade Fortnight we launched a new major campaign which aims to redress the injustices in our broken food system. It's a big challenge! The campaign will run until 2015.

You might have seen our famous Make Food Fair mini marchers who ended up travelling all over the UK to collect petition signatures. The mini marchers' mission was a real success – we collected over 15,000 signatures and teamed up with Oxfam and The Co-operative's 'Grow

Co-operatives' campaign which gave us a total of 75,000 signatures demanding that David Cameron champion smallholder farmers at the G8 summit. In response to our petition, Justine Greening MP, Secretary of State at DfID said that: *'The UK Government agrees with you and the signatories of your petition that a focus on smallholder farmers is appropriate and correct and is already committing considerable present and future funding to this sector.'*

Was our action successful? After the G8 it is clear that we have managed to move the debate forward and that

the government agrees that smallholder farmers are important, but we still need to push for plans which fully consider their needs and constraints. At the G8 summit, world leaders recognised the 'critical role played by smallholder farmers, especially women' in addressing food security and nutrition, but failed to agree on a plan which would address the needs of smallholder farmers along with our demands and the five point agenda.



It is definitely the beginning of a promising campaign, so stay tuned for further updates and calls to action as we continue to press for change that will Make Food Fair over the next year and beyond. You can find the latest news and policy updates on the campaign at: fairtrade.org.uk/makefoodfair and fairtradeblog.tumblr.com.

HOW THE EU FAILED TO STOP THE SUGAR RUSH

In April we launched an urgent call to action to Stop the Sugar Rush and asked you to send an email to MEP Paolo de Castro to demand that the EU honours its commitments to smallholder farmers in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries

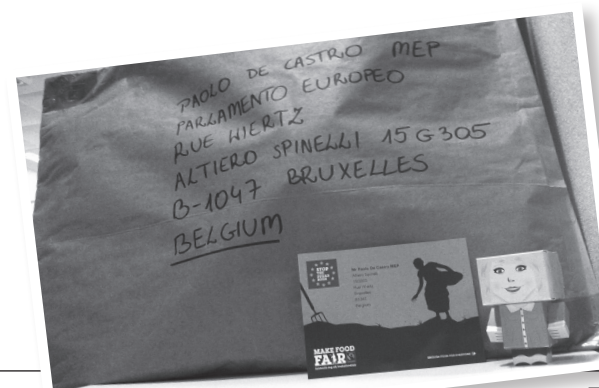
At the time the EU was debating changes to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform which would lift restrictions on domestically produced beet sugar and other sugar products which would effectively push sugar cane farmers and their families into poverty. We were delighted that over 1,700 Fairtrade supporters took action at short notice expressing their concern to MEPs.



We are shocked to tell you that on 26 June the EU and the UK abandoned their obligations to ACP smallholder sugar cane farmers. Despite the EU's statement that 'Most developing countries will continue to enjoy unlimited duty-free access to the EU market' the EU and UK has failed to address calculations that the premature ending of quotas will push 200,000 people in the developing world into poverty.

Michael Gidney, Executive Director of the Fairtrade Foundation says, *'In this decision the EU has wilfully disregarded the impact of the consequences on smallholder producers in developing countries. This is particularly disappointing in the wake of the recent G8 in Northern Ireland where the rhetoric stressed the importance of trade for ending poverty. Yet within weeks the EU is taking decisions which fundamentally threaten viable market access to the EU and UK for many developing country producers, affecting the livelihoods of 400,000 people. Sugar producers on family farms in ACP countries face a very difficult future because of this week's decision.'*

Even though the EU has failed to address the needs of sugar cane farmers in developing countries, we won't give up campaigning. We're working on next steps and will let you know in the next Town Crier how you can take further action to support these sugar farmers, and also ensure fair trade is pushed up the agenda in the European Parliament.



The Fairtrade Foundation and National Campaigner Committee invite you to:



SATURDAY 5 OCTOBER 2013

Find out more and register today at:
fairtrade.org.uk/supporterconference

INTERNATIONAL FAIR TRADE TOWNS CONFERENCES

Are you looking for a different conference experience, or to combine a holiday with fair trade campaigning? Hear inspiring speakers, and share ideas with campaigners from across the globe at the international Fair Trade Towns conference.

The 2013 conference is approaching very soon, 27-29 September in Oslo. Visit fairtradeoslo2013.com to register. Workshops will explore different aspects of

Fairtrade Town campaigning from schools, to public procurement, the campaign to make Seoul the largest Fair Trade City in the world, as well as issues such as the post 2015 Millennium Development Goals and bananas.

In 2014 the conference will take place in Kumamoto, Japan, 28-30 March. Kumamoto became the first Fair Trade Town in Asia in 2011 and will host the eighth international conference

(and first to take place outside Europe) with a theme of 'building fair and local socio-economies in the South and North'.

A limited number of travel subsidies are available to support UK attendees in attending, get in touch with us if you're interested.

In the meantime, you can connect with other Fair Trade Towns from across the world at fairtradetowns.org

ASK THE EXPERTS

Q: Who sets the standards for Fairtrade certification?

A: Fairtrade standards are set by Fairtrade International (formerly known as FLO) – the global umbrella body for Fairtrade. It's not always the most exciting topic, but can be useful information to respond to critics of Fairtrade, or better understand what lies behind the FAIRTRADE Mark.

The Standards Unit at Fairtrade International set and review standards for each Fairtrade product category, designing them to tackle poverty and empower farmers and workers in the poorest countries in the world.

There are three distinct types of standards to be met. Producer and trader standards, which define criteria producers and traders must meet; product standards, which are specific to the product being traded; and pricing, which sets the Fairtrade minimum prices and premium by product and location.

Core principles underpinning all standards relate to

social, economic and environmental development, plus preventing forced and child labour. However, different standards apply for small-scale farmers, and for workers in hired labour (plantation) situations. For small-scale farmers the underlying principles are their small-scale nature, equitable distribution of profits, and democratic decision making of the organisation. In hired labour situations the underlying principles are the management of Fairtrade Premium payments, freedom of association and collective bargaining and working conditions for workers. There is also separate provision for small-scale farmers who aren't yet democratically organised, with the assistance of an exporter or NGO.

Certification of producers against these standards is conducted by specialists though a separate, legally independent organisation called FLO-Cert ensuring independence and transparency. Full details of these processes, the minimum prices, and current standards reviews are available at fairtrade.net.

Other interesting facts about Fairtrade International:

- Harriet Lamb, our former Executive Director left the Fairtrade Foundation in 2011 to become Chief Executive of Fairtrade International
- Fairtrade International is 50 per cent owned and managed by farmers and workers through their seats on the Board of Directors
- Fairtrade International's website is a mine of information, including Fairtrade slideshare with accessible presentations. Visit slideshare.net/fairtrade
- The newest member of Fairtrade International is Fairtrade Eastern Africa, making Fairtrade products available to consumers in Kenya
- The Fairtrade Access Fund, set up to address finance needs of smallholder farmers with long term loans has so far distributed \$3.7m and expects to grow to \$25m by the end of 2013.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- **28-29 September 2013:**
International Fair Trade
Towns Conference,
Oslo, Norway*
- **5 October 2013:**
Fairtrade Supporter
Conference, London
- **20-27 October 2013:**
One World Week
- **2 November 2013:**
West Midlands regional
campaigner forum
- **24 February -
9 March 2014:**
FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT
2014
- **28-30 March 2014:**
International Fair Trade
Towns Conference,
Kumamoto, Japan*

*Would you like to link up with the global Fair Trade Town movement at the inspiring annual conference? We have some travel subsidies available to assist UK delegates so please get in touch.

CONTACT

Anna Misterska, Communities Campaigns Officer:
anna.misterska@fairtrade.org.uk • 020 7400 8568

Adam Gardner, Communities Campaigns Manager:
adam.gardner@fairtrade.org.uk • 020 7440 8552

Johanna Gustafsson and Adrienn Peterffy,
Fairtrade Towns Volunteers:
Volunteer.towns@fairtrade.org.uk • 020 7405 5942

Fairtrade Town Discussion Group:
groups.yahoo.com/group/FairtradeTown

Order resources:
online.fairtrade.org.uk • 020 7440 7676

fairtrade.org.uk
mail@fairtrade.org.uk

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

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