

THE TOWN CRIER

EIGHTH
EDITION



Edition 8 • Autumn 2014

Dear Fairtrade Town contact,

Autumn is an exciting time for campaigning as we continue to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the FAIRTRADE Mark, launch the second phase of Make Bananas Fair and reveal the theme for 2015's Fairtrade Fortnight. We've enjoyed hearing all about your innovative ideas for the future at the regional conferences and can't wait to see them in your renewal applications.

The success of the Fairtrade Towns movement and availability of Fairtrade products in stores doesn't mean the fight is over. Our new campaigns call for retailers to increase their pledges and make an even bigger difference to the lives of farmers and workers.

Your work within communities to engage local people with Fairtrade is vital in building networks of empowered consumers who are conscious of their buying power. Resources to help you get started and plan your activities are available on the website.

As always, Town Crier is sent to you as the contact for your Fairtrade Town steering group. An electronic version is available at fairtrade.org.uk/towns to share with others. If you are no longer the appropriate recipient of Town Crier, please get in touch and let us know.

With best wishes,

Adam, Rachael, Hajra and Joseph
(The Fairtrade Towns Team)

TOP NEWS FROM ACROSS THE NETWORK



Campaigners, retailers and politicians attended **Fair Future**, an event to celebrate the achievements and challenges faced over two decades of the FAIRTRADE Mark.



Congratulations to **High Wycombe, Hart** and **Stonehaven** which all received Fairtrade Town status within the past few months, taking the total number of Fairtrade Towns to 597!

Who will be the 600th Fairtrade Town...?

Don't forget to share your top news with us in the next edition – contact details are on page 8.





FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT IS COMING

You'll find everything you need to get your community involved at fairtrade.org.uk/fortnight

We've come so far...



78%
AWARENESS OF
THE FAIRTRADE
MARK

£26M
FAIRTRADE
PREMIUM
DELIVERED TO
PRODUCERS FROM
UK SALES ALONE

But still a long way
to go...



£35.93
AVERAGE
ANNUAL
HOUSEHOLD
SPEND ON
FAIRTRADE
PRODUCTS

1.2%
COCOA GLOBALLY
TRADED ON
FAIRTRADE
TERMS

We've come so far since the first Fortnight in 1995, from educating the public on why they should choose Fairtrade to increasing sales on Fairtrade terms for marginalised producers.

But we know there's still a long way to go to make all trade fair – even in the most popular Fairtrade categories such as coffee and chocolate.

Next year, we'll be celebrating the impact of Fairtrade, doing all we can to encourage more people to choose products that change lives.

By telling the stories of producers in fresh and compelling ways, we want to

make sure shoppers know the power they have to make a difference and that businesses know they can and need to stock products that change lives.

We're focusing on a few core products – cocoa, sugar, and tea – with new materials, case studies and a brand new 15-minute film that will be available for Fairtrade Fortnight.

If you haven't already, please read the Fairtrade Fortnight 2015 Action Guide – available at fairtrade.org.uk/fortnight – for more stories and ideas about how you and your community can help take Fairtrade forward next Fortnight.

**CAMPAIGN
LAUNCH**

MAKE BANANAS FAIRTRADE

We launched our Make Bananas Fair campaign during Fairtrade Fortnight 2014 to put the challenges facing banana farmers and workers on the agenda for Government and retailers.

Despite the overwhelming response from campaigners and consumers, bitter price battles between the UK's biggest supermarkets continue to squeeze the supply chain, trapping many farmers and workers in poverty.

The FAIRTRADE Mark is the only independent assurance that the bananas you buy have been grown by someone who has been paid a fair price designed to cover their costs of production, and an extra amount of money (the Fairtrade Premium) to invest in improving their farm and community. Asda and Tesco are the two biggest banana sellers in the UK, supplying nearly half of the bananas we purchase. However, less than 10% of their bananas are sold on Fairtrade terms.



Both retailers are currently negotiating their banana contracts. By acting quickly, we have the chance to convince them to switch to 100% Fairtrade and help protect thousands of banana farmers and workers worldwide.

Help us to continue the campaign by sending a message to your local Asda or Tesco store to switch to Fairtrade at fairtrade.org.uk/bananas



TELL ASDA AND TESCO TO GO FAIRTRADE AND ENSURE THAT SOME OF THE MOST VULNERABLE FARMERS AND WORKERS ARE PAID A FAIR PRICE FOR THE NATION'S FAVOURITE FRUIT

THE BIG BANANA TOUR

We're taking to the streets and bringing the demand for fair bananas directly to stores throughout November. Two giant inflatable bananas, each a whopping five metres in length, will tour Fairtrade Towns across the country with photo opportunities outside key branches of Asda and Tesco.

You may remember that we asked you to keep your banana suits safe in the last edition of The Town Crier – this is your chance to step inside them once again, take up your inflatable bananas and head down to Asda or Tesco. Template letters to stores and press releases will be available for your steering group to send out in advance, cause a splash and get your campaign in the press!

**Do you want the giant banana to visit your town?
Get in touch at mail@fairtrade.org.uk for more information.**

SPOTLIGHT: FAIRTRADE CANE SUGAR



Fairtrade cane sugar is an essential ingredient for many of us in the UK. Whether you bake with it, add it to hot drinks or sprinkle it on your porridge, it has been a huge success story. Today, over 40% of the sugar sold in the UK is Fairtrade – and it is an ingredient in some of our favourite sweet treats from Divine chocolate to Traidcraft biscuits.

Hundreds of thousands of sugar cane smallholders, workers and their communities in developing countries have long made a living from selling to the UK and European Union (EU).

In 2013, almost £6 million of Fairtrade Premium was delivered to smallholders from the sale of Fairtrade sugar to the UK alone.

However, both Fairtrade sales and wider sales of cane sugar are now under severe threat in the UK and the EU. This means livelihoods are at risk – sugar cane farmers and their communities urgently need your support.

The gap between EU production of beet sugar – grown from a root crop – and overall EU consumption has traditionally provided a market opportunity for sugar cane smallholders in some African, Caribbean and Pacific countries. But due to changes in the rules about the amount of beet sugar that EU companies can produce, that gap could disappear from 2017.

In 2012, the Department for International Development warned that these changes would push 200,000 into poverty. Millions more would be exposed to world prices and become vulnerable as a result. Competition from the big EU sugar companies has already become very fierce as they battle for business.

This year we have already seen an incredible 30% drop

in the price of sugar paid by big users such as soft drinks companies and other big business. These price drops eventually make their way back to the sugar cane farmer.

Ruberra's story opposite is one repeated in countries across the world in communities that have relied on exports to the EU. In countries such as Guyana, Fiji, Jamaica, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland and Zambia, Fairtrade smallholders' futures are looking very uncertain. There will be many more in other African, Caribbean and Pacific countries that are equally precarious.

The Fairtrade Premium that smallholders receive as a result of sales of Fairtrade sugar have never been needed more.

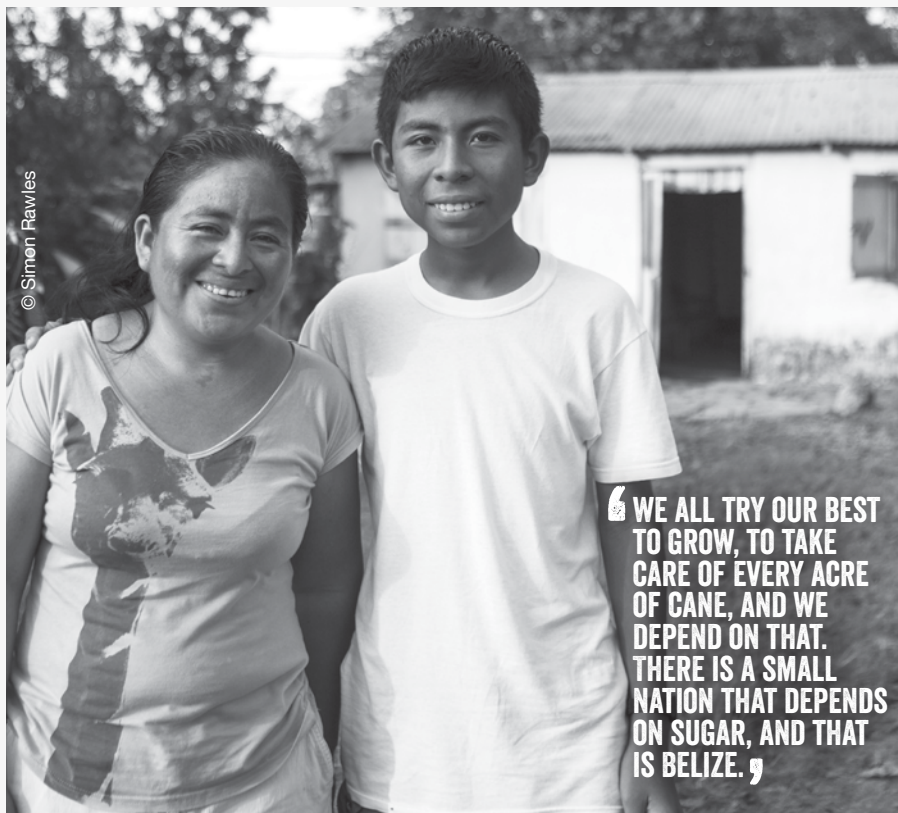
So next time you're baking a cake or sweetening your coffee, choose Fairtrade sugar.



¹Department for International Development, LMC International; ODI.
The Impact of EU Sugar Policy Reform on Developing Countries.
LMC International, Oxford, UK/ODI, London, UK (2012) Section 5, p58



© Simon Rawles



‘WE ALL TRY OUR BEST TO GROW, TO TAKE CARE OF EVERY ACRE OF CANE, AND WE DEPEND ON THAT. THERE IS A SMALL NATION THAT DEPENDS ON SUGAR, AND THAT IS BELIZE.’

PRODUCER FOCUS: THE LIVES BEHIND PACKETS OF SUGAR

Generations of smallholder farmers in Belize have been exporting to the UK since the sugar industry was set up by the British in the 1950s. Almost the entire Belizean crop is exported to the UK and Portugal and these farmers would suffer greatly without these markets. There are around 5,300 Fairtrade certified farmers in Belize and an estimated 50,000 people are reliant on sugar for an income.

The Fairtrade Foundation visited Belize earlier this year and met Ruberra Figueroa, a smallholder farmer and 33-year-old single mother of three. She supplements her farming income by baking sweet bread and selling it to the local community. Ruberra brilliantly summed up the pride the farmers of Belize take in their work and the reliance on sugar cane farming:

‘Belize and Fairtrade has a better quality of sugar because we depend on our sugar and we all try our best to grow, to take care of every acre of cane, and we depend on that. There is a small nation that depends on sugar, and that is Belize.’

FOCUS ON: POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT



Left: Fair Trade campaigners at the FT Advocacy Breakfast; Above: Chair Linda McAvan MEP with Nyagoy Nyong'o (Executive Director of Fairtrade Africa) and Sergi Corbalán (Executive Director of the Fair Trade Advocacy Office).
© Fair Trade Advocacy Office 2014

If you want to push your campaign even further, engaging with MPs and MEPs can be a valuable way of connecting your town with policy issues that affect Fairtrade farmers and workers. Building these relationships will give your requests more weight when it comes to lobbying on specific campaign issues or gaining support for initiatives such as street signs or public procurement.

Tips for creating and maintaining these contacts can be found at www.fairtrade.org.uk/vote4ft. Please let us know when you have met your local representative and keep us updated on the progression of your relationship!

A Fair Trade Advocacy Breakfast was held in the European Parliament in Brussels on 8 October 2014, bringing together politicians and activists from all over Europe. Hosted by Linda McAvan MEP, Chair of the Fair Trade Working Group, the event was an opportunity for members of the Fair Trade movement to meet and lobby longstanding and newly elected MEPs.

Members were encouraged to join the Fair Trade Working Group at the European Parliament and engage on a variety of issues from local authority support for Fairtrade to policies to address imbalances of power in supply chains.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Contact your MEP representative and let them know about the strong support for Fairtrade in your area.

Invite your MEP or MP to attend your local event, raise a question at the European Parliament or give their public support to a Fairtrade campaign.

Read up on issues affected by EU policy such as changes in common agricultural policy reform in sugar to use in your conversations with MEPs.



REGIONAL SUPPORTER CONFERENCES

Over 500 people attended regional supporter conferences held in seven towns to celebrate 20 years of the FAIRTRADE Mark. Each highlighted the achievements during that time and looked forward to challenges and opportunities ahead.

High-profile producer representatives attended including Abhishek Jani, CEO of Fairtrade India, and Chief Adam Tampuri, Chair of Fairtrade Africa's board.

Regional conferences will be held in South East England, West Midlands, Wales and Yorkshire next summer and autumn. Keep an eye on newsletters for information.



Campaigners at the East England conference. © Fairtrade Luton

INTERNATIONAL FAIRTRADE TOWNS

Bristol will host the 9th International Fair Trade Towns Conference on 4 and 5 July 2015 when up to 400 delegates will explore the theme 'Fair Trade for Sustainability'.

Demonstrating the strong relationship between Fair Trade and the green agenda, some of the key leaders in the movement, along with a Fairtrade gold miner from Africa, will provide new insights into how Fair Trade works to protect the

environment. This includes support provided to farmers to adapt to the effects of climate change and develop sustainable farming methods, with analysis of the post-2015 UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Bristol will be celebrating its 10th year as a Fairtrade City! Delegates will have the chance to explore beautiful surroundings and take part in Make Sunday Special, a monthly celebration of art, music and street food.



Full details of the Conference and booking details can be found at bristolfairtrade.org.uk

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

10 November:

Make Bananas
Fairtrade launches

3–5 July 2015:

International Fair Trade
Towns conference, Bristol

2015

23 February

–8 March 2015:

Fairtrade Fortnight

October 2015:

Our National Supporter
Conference is back!

Summer and Autumn 2015:

Regional Supporter Conferences in Wales,
South East England, West Midlands and Yorkshire

CONTACT

Rachael Sweet, Communities Campaigns Officer:

rachael.sweet@fairtrade.org.uk 020 7440 8568

Adam Gardner, Communities Campaigns Manager:

adam.gardner@fairtrade.org.uk 020 7440 8552

Hajra Williams and Joseph Dempster,

Fairtrade Towns Volunteers:

Volunteer.towns@fairtrade.org.uk 020 7405 5942

Fairtrade Towns Discussion Group:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FairtradeTown>

Order resources:

shop.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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