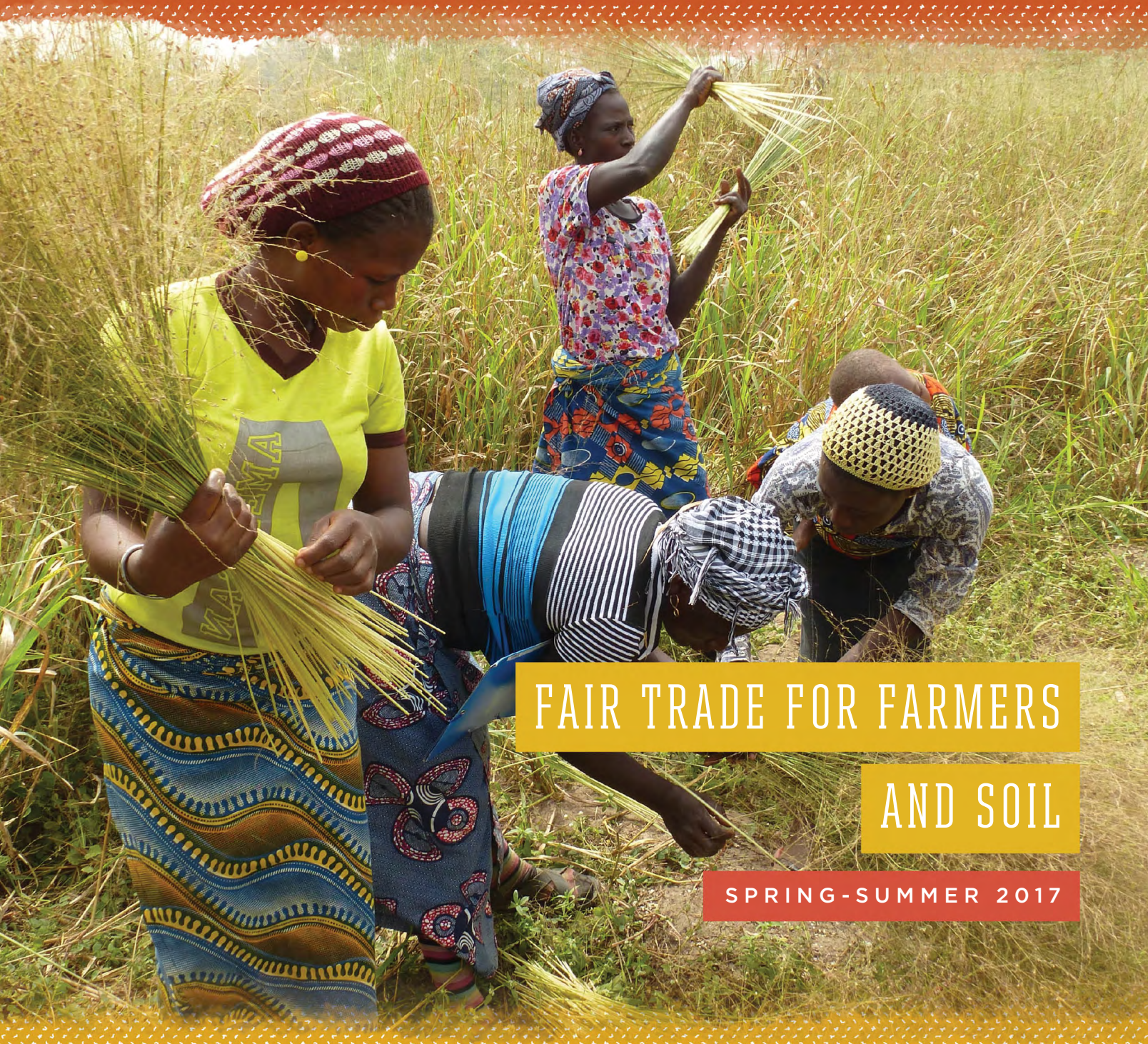


FREE PUBLICATION

# FOR A BETTER WORLD

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES FOR A JUST ECONOMY



FAIR TRADE FOR FARMERS

AND SOIL

SPRING-SUMMER 2017

A New Era at  
Sakuma Brothers Farms

Fair Cannabis  
— Coming Soon?

How Food Waste Fuels  
Climate Change



Fair World Project is a non-profit that advocates for fair trade policies that support small-scale farmers, artisans, and workers. We publish the perspectives of farmers, farmworkers, mission-driven business people, and activists working to build a better world.

#### WHY WE EXIST:

- Conscious consumers, armed with informed purchasing power, can create positive change and promote economic justice.
- Family-scale farmers and workers in both the Global South and Global North often face volatile prices, low wages and poor working conditions as a result of unfair trade policies and corporate practices. FWP promotes policy changes and market-based initiatives that address these systemic problems.
- Existing certifiers and membership organizations vary in their criteria and philosophy for qualification of products and brands certified to display eco-social labels or claims, such as fair trade. FWP educates organizations, retailers and consumers on the standards reflected in various certification schemes, and works to keep eco-social terms meaningful.

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#### TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!

Send letters to **Fair World Project** or email comments to: [editor@fairworldproject.org](mailto:editor@fairworldproject.org).  
*NOTE: Editorial team may shorten & edit correspondence for print & clarity.*



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#### COVER

Alaffia Grass Collectors, Helene PATAYO, Yawa AWADE, Hortance LOMOU, Nadege PATAYO, members of "Essorewa" Grass Collective, Kazaboua, Togo, December 2015  
Photo Credit: Prairie Rose Hyde

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

**W**e have a tough road ahead of us; sometimes it is difficult to see the light. Since President Trump's election in November, corporate policies that will harm farmers, workers, indigenous communities, immigrants and our planet have been pushed to the forefront of our national agenda, keeping me filled with fear and anxiety. I know I am not alone. I traveled to Washington, DC to join in the Women's March, along with hundreds of thousands of women, children and men, the day after Trump's inauguration. An estimated one in every one hundred people in this country joined the DC march or a sister march across the country, and many others marched around the world in solidarity.

I felt inspired for the first time since Trump's election. And I continue to be inspired as we put together this issue of *For A Better World*. My conviction grows stronger that together we will create a just economy in the end.

In this issue, we see that unions are alive and well. Because workers organized and consumers stood in solidarity, farmworkers in Washington state ended a four-year boycott and voted for the union Familias Unidas por la Justicia (FUJ) to represent them.

We have seen first-hand the impact climate change is having on farming communities around the world. Because these same farming communities are a major part of the answer to our climate crisis, we at Fair World Project have started an organization called Grow Ahead in order to generate funding for climate resiliency programs and farmer-to-farmer training. This new initiative allows individuals to fight this climate crisis along with farmers.

We also know that in order to increase the impact of fair trade on farmers we need to transform our public procurement policies to put small-scale regenerative organic farmers first, as our public institutions spend billions of dollars per year on products made under exploitative conditions. We learn how Canada is leading the way in changing public procurement policies to benefit small-scale farmers.

And finally, as the cannabis industry becomes legal state by state, we need to consider the workers who are harvesting this high-value crop. The Ethical Cannabis Alliance (ECA) is an initiative, introduced here in this issue, to ensure fair wages and working conditions in a rapidly changing regulatory climate.

As the dominant political and corporate agenda sells out people and the planet, these stories of inspiration and hope are needed now more than ever. We must protect the interests of rural farmers, workers, consumers and our planet against the tyranny of this destructive agenda.

**Trade Justice for All,**

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**



**ELIZABETH A. BENNETT**

Assistant Professor of International Affairs at Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon. Elizabeth writes about governance in ethical certifications.

Her recent books include *The Handbook of Research on Fair Trade* (2015, with Laura Reynolds) and *The Civic Imagination: Making a Difference in American Political Life* (2014).



**BEN LILLISTON**

Director of Corporate Strategies and Climate Change at the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP). Ben has worked as a researcher, writer and editor analyzing the intersection of trade, agriculture and climate policy for nearly two decades.



**RAMON TORRES**

President of Familias Unidas por la Justicia, an independent farmworker union of indigenous families located in Burlington, WA representing over 500 Triqui, Mixteco, and Spanish-speaking workers at Sakuma Bros. Berry Farm.



**SEAN McHUGH**

Founder and Executive Director of the Canadian Fair Trade Network (CFTN). Since 2011, Sean has focused on building a strong, organized social movement in Canada. He has overseen the expansion of numerous programs, helped lead four national conferences, and developed and grown the organization's biannual Fair Trade Magazine.



**DANNY WEEDEN**

CEO of Sakuma Brothers Farm.

# Contents

## FEATURES

- 06 Fair Trade for Farmers and Soil
- 08 The Hidden History Made at Sakuma Brothers Farms
- 10 Food Waste, Hunger and Climate Change
- 12 Fair Cannabis? The Need for Labor Protection in America's Fastest-Growing Agricultural Sector
- 14 Sustainable Public Procurement: An Understated and Effective Way to Grow Fair Trade
- 16 Trading Down: How Unfair Trade Hurts Farmers
- 18 Grow Ahead: Crowdfunding Climate Resilience
- 20 Who Grew Your Food?

## EVERY ISSUE

- 02 From the Director
- 04 News in Brief
- 05 Readers Speak
- 11 Just Economy Quiz
- 19 Reference Guide



PHOTO CREDIT: EQUAL EXCHANGE



## CADBURY DROPS FAIR TRADE

Cadbury announced that they will drop fair trade certification for all products, opting instead to pursue their own Cocoa Life program. They were the first mainstream company to adopt fair trade when the UK brand certified all of its dairy milk bars starting in 2009. Cadbury will maintain a relationship with Fairtrade International (FLO) who will audit their program, but fair trade standards will not be followed. Unlike Fairtrade, Cocoa Life lacks farmer representation, which marks a significant shift away from farmer empowerment and the basic principle of farmer engagement in a fair trade program intended to benefit them. Critics have also noted that a fair trade symbol recognizing the FLO-Cocoa Life partnership could mislead consumers into believing it is a farmer-assured program.



## TOGETHER WE CAN COOL THE PLANET!

There is a new tool to help educate people about agriculture and its role in climate change. La Via Campesina and GRAIN have collaborated on a comic book that examines how our industrial food system impacts the planet, and what we can do to change course. Their central tenet is “it is peasants and small-farmers, along with consumers who choose agroecological products from local markets, who hold the solution to the climate crisis.”

**To download the new tool, go to:**  
[www.tinyurl.com/CoolThePlanetComic](http://www.tinyurl.com/CoolThePlanetComic).



## INDIGENOUS MAYA WEAVERS ORGANIZE TO DEFEND CULTURAL RIGHTS

Hundreds of indigenous Maya women gathered in Guatemala City to present the government with a series of reforms aimed at protecting their intellectual property rights to their centuries-old weaving designs. This comes as traditional, often sacred, Maya designs are copied and sold throughout the world. As corporations profit, these women’s traditional designs are appropriated without their permission, undercutting their ability to earn a livelihood and disrespecting their traditions. Their proposed changes include defining collective intellectual property rights that could be held by communities, and requiring consultation before designs are used.

## 2016 Milestone Year for Raise-the-Wage Advocates

In February of 2016, under pressure from a ballot measure that would raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2021 statewide, Oregon lawmakers passed legislation increasing the minimum wage to \$14.50 in metro Portland, \$13.50 in smaller cities, and \$12.50 in rural communities, all by 2022. California and New York followed in April, with California going to \$15 statewide by 2022 except small businesses have until 2023; and New York going to \$15 in NYC by 2018 and \$15 by 2021 in surrounding suburbs, and \$12.50 by 2020 and eventually to \$15 on an indexed schedule in rural areas of the state. Then in November,

voters in Arizona, Colorado and Maine all approved ballot initiatives to raise the state minimum wage to \$12.00 per hour, and in Washington to \$13.50 per hour. Unfortunately, millions of low-wage workers in other states are left behind until their states take ballot action, or until the federal minimum wage, currently stuck at \$7.25 per hour, increases. In September of 2016, California’s governor signed a bill making California farmworkers the only farmworkers in the U.S. guaranteed to receive overtime pay after forty hours of work in a week; but farmworkers in forty-nine states continue to be denied entitlement to overtime pay.

## GRASSROOTS HALT

# Trans-Pacific Partnership

Years of organizing by activists has prevented the implementation of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a massive trade agreement between the U.S. and eleven other Pacific Rim countries. Dubbed “NAFTA on steroids,” analysis showed that it would have devastating effects on small-scale farmers, working families, public health and the environment. Years of awareness-raising and advocacy campaigns turned public and Congressional support largely against it. While President Obama had planned to ratify the deal before leaving office, neither the House nor Senate introduced the bill for a vote. Activists remain vigilant to ensure that the TPP is not reconsidered in Congress in some future form. Instead, they advocate for trade deals which protect human rights, address the climate crisis, and promote agroecology over conventional industrial agriculture.



## INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES CONFRONT DAKOTA ACCESS PIPELINE

Thousands of people from around the world mobilized in support of the Standing Rock Sioux, who set up a camp peacefully protecting their sacred water sources from the proposed Dakota Access Pipeline that would carry oil through their lands. “Our fight is not just about a pipeline project, it is about 500 years of colonization and oppression,” explained a coalition of indigenous organizations in a statement. In December of 2016, the water protectors received initial good news when the Army Corp of Engineers denied a needed permit. However, the Trump Administration has reversed course and those at Standing Rock are clear that the fight will continue until the proposed project is officially dead.

**To read the full statement by the coalition of indigenous organizations, go to: [www.HonorEarth.org/NoEviction](http://www.HonorEarth.org/NoEviction).**

## READERS SPEAK

### What kind of public investment would you like to see in our food system?

“ I would like to see our tax dollars go to farmers who are producing organic products and who also treat animals with dignity and respect, which means grass-fed and free-range. I do not want to subsidize big agriculture that uses GMOs, Roundup seeds or any other kinds of crap that are not healthy for our environment or consumers. It is time we got back to basics and not stand for the non-food that they are trying to push on people.”

— MARY K.

“ Most definitely, I want to see more money invested in regenerative agriculture, such as: Allan Savory’s Holistic Management which can rapidly sequester carbon; to develop fertile, nurturing soil; to preserve and restore moisture in areas when rain falls; and to grow the healthiest plants and animals including humans who eat them!

RUTH S.

“ The future of healthy nutrition lies in regenerative agriculture, agroforestry and increased education about the merits of these processes and the dangers of the toxins used in so many pesticides and fumigants. In addition, increased awareness of the potential risks of GMOs needs to be widely dispersed.

— WIN S.

“ I would like some of that money to go to independent scientists without any ties to whom they would be researching for food safety: be it chemical, genetically modified or soil health.

— KAREN C.

“ Our children and elders should have public food programs from regenerative agriculture for their sake and ours!

— SHIRLEY D.



## QUESTION FOR OUR NEXT ISSUE

Fair trade food has come a long way from being synonymous with coffee. Small-scale farmers now sell quinoa, chocolate, coconut oil, tea and more on fair trade terms. For our next issue of *For A Better World*, we want to know what your favorite recipes are using fair trade products. Please send us your favorites today!

**Email:** [info@fairworldproject.org](mailto:info@fairworldproject.org) with “Readers Speak” in the subject line.



# Fair Trade for Farmers and Soil

**This World Fair Trade Day, Celebrate with Us to Honor Small-Scale Regenerative Farmers**

**T**his World Fair Trade Day (May 13, 2017), we honor the hard work small-scale farmers do to tend the land. Small-scale organic farming and regenerative agricultural practices combat our climate crisis and help feed the world. Here are some stories showing just a few of the ways that fair trade producers and their brand partners are collaborating to grow ethical supply chains through regenerative organic agricultural methods, so they can produce products that we can all feel good about.

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## ALAFFIA

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Deforestation and climate change have had a devastating impact on West Africa's forests. That is why Alaffia launched their reforestation project in 2006. Since then, Alaffia product sales have funded the planting of 53,125 trees by Togolese farmers to help mitigate erosion and improve food security for their families. By joining forces with organizations such as the Global Shea Alliance, they are on track to expand their Reforestation Project to plant 250,000 seedlings over the next three years. Their mission is to "significantly and measurably improve shea tree populations and productivity, while protecting and improving the rights of women collectors to access shea kernels, trees and parklands."

This tree-planting project is part of a larger vision of growing sustainable communities. Alaffia's programs also include community-based trainings for rural farmers on the benefits of intercropping shade-adapted crops with shea trees, and on the impacts of reducing the cutting of shea trees for fuelwood or agricultural clearing. Instead, their Alternative Fuels Project offers resources for sustainable fuel alternatives, such as bio-gas and bio-oil, to reduce the demand for wood and charcoal.

**For more: [www.alaffia.com](http://www.alaffia.com)**

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## ALTER ECO

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Declining biodiversity, soil fertility and soil productivity are problems that the farmers of UNOCACE cooperative in Ecuador know all too well. That is why Alter Eco has brought together supply chain partners to fund a dynamic new agroforestry project that addresses these challenges from many angles.

In the first year alone, cacao farmers have rehabilitated nearly 200 acres of land, planting a diverse mix of cacao plants and trees for fruit and timber production, a total of 63,500 plants in all. By promoting the sustainable cultivation of traditional "Cacao Nacional de Aroma Fino" beans, an heirloom strain known for its quality, farmers have been able to increase their incomes.

There is a human side to the revitalization of those landscapes, too. Farmer-to-farmer trainings in agroforestry practices are engaging the next generation of farmers in the future of sustainable cacao and creating opportunities in their communities.

**For more: [www.alterecofoods.com](http://www.alterecofoods.com)**

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## DR. BRONNER'S

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Farmers in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh face many challenges to produce food and cash crops from increasingly degraded land hammered by climate change and low commodity prices. That is why Dr. Bronner's is partnering with farmers and the local group Creation Biotech to build the world's first organic and fair trade mint oil project. Funded by Dr. Bronner's, the project's fair trade fund and a donor grant, these farmers will soon implement a comprehensive regenerative agriculture program. While farmers already produce small-scale vermicompost, the next step is to develop a centralized composting facility, giving soils a boost while sequestering carbon.

They are also planting cover crops to protect the soil from erosion, and they are planting trees for wind breaks as well as fruit and nut production to feed the community.

Rounding out this regenerative approach, farmers will add nitrogen-fixing legumes like lentils, peas and beans to their intensive crop rotation schedule, some of which will be sold to partners in Germany at premium organic and fair trade prices.

Collaborations like these show how all parties in the supply chain can come together, building resilient communities, healthy soils and good food as they bring together fair trade and regenerative agriculture.

**For more: [www.drbronner.com](http://www.drbronner.com)**

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## EQUAL EXCHANGE

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Changing weather patterns and coffee leaf rust have been decimating yields for coffee farmers around the world. Yet the farmers of COMSA cooperative in Honduras have been getting to the root of the problem — literally — by investing in deep organic growing practices. They sum up their innovative approach to organic and biodynamic farming as “The 5Ms,” including organic Material, Microorganisms, Minerals, living Molecules and grey Matter.

The first four “Ms” are key to developing rich compost and organic fertilizers, the building blocks of healthy, living soils. The last “M,” grey Matter, represents what each farmer brings to the equation: their imaginative, creative problem-solving abilities that can take all of the above and transform them into a resilient, biodiverse farm.

Farmer-to-farmer trainings are a proven method to spread best practices, and that

is why Equal Exchange has brought COMSA together with other coffee cooperatives in their supply chain. Collaborative, farmer-led learning exchanges help foster the most important “M” in COMSA's recipe for organic farming, the grey Matter — instead of just recipes, they are able to share a mindset for growing a new generation of inspired, creative farmers who can work in concert with the plots that they tend. And that is truly regenerative agriculture!

**For more: [equalexchange.coop](http://equalexchange.coop)**

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## FARMER DIRECT CO-OP

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Members of Farmer Direct Co-op have been stewards of the land for generations, and some of their farms have been in the family for over a century. They grow oats, legumes, beans and oilseeds such as hemp, bringing together traditional cultivation with new research and tools.

Some Farmer Direct Co-op members integrate cattle into their farms as well, building nutrient-rich soils and creating additional sustainable revenue streams. Many members have intensive crop rotations planned, cycling each field through multiple species of green manure crops between the cash crops, all with the goal of cultivating rich soils that sequester carbon and support a bounty of crops.

**For more: [www.farmerdirect.coop](http://www.farmerdirect.coop)**

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## GUAYAKI

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Deforestation and land grabbing for cattle farming have severely reduced the sub-tropical rainforests of Paraguay and harmed the Aché Guayaki people who live there. Fighting back against decades of colonial violence and exploitation, the Kuetuvy community is cultivating mate in the understory of their forest reserve. Their goal is to earn a living in harmony with the rainforest instead of depleting it.

Guayaki has worked with the indigenous Aché Guayaki people to cultivate their mate and then purchase the harvest. They have also funded a nursery, growing organic mate seedlings to plant in the understory, as well

as native hardwood trees for reintroduction to the forest, regenerating the canopy and the sustainable crops underneath it.

Guayaki is also furthering their support of farmer-led regenerative agriculture by building a research center on a reserve near Misiones, Argentina. The Center for Life Regeneration will host workshops for local farmer-to-farmer trainings, as well as provide students and scientists from around the world with a site for field experience where they can see local agroecology and education systems in action.

**For more: [www.guayaki.com](http://www.guayaki.com)**

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## MAGGIE'S ORGANICS

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Conventional cotton is considered to be the world's “dirtiest” crop: it takes approximately one-third of a pound of synthetic fertilizer to produce the cotton for one shirt. Add to that the labor abuses throughout the supply chain, and the true cost of our clothing is astonishingly high.

But Maggie's Organics is taking a different approach. Every garment they sell is spun, cut and sewn under fair labor conditions, and all the cotton they buy is also fairly traded and organically grown by small-scale farmers. One of the benefits of organic cotton farming is that it helps build the soil to retain moisture, allowing cotton to thrive in less-than-hospitable conditions. Yet changing weather patterns have been taxing even on these hardy crops, and cotton farmers in Peru have been suffering from a long-term drought which has left fields so dry that what rain does fall runs right off.

Extreme times call for extreme measures, and that is why Maggie's is contributing to farmers' efforts to purchase emergency water reserves. In an industry where most companies cannot even be sure where their shirt was sewn, collaborations like this help to keep farmers on their land, even against extreme odds.

**For more: [www.maggiesorganics.com](http://www.maggiesorganics.com)**



## THE HIDDEN HISTORY MADE AT

# sakuma Brothers Farms

**H**istory was made on September 12, 2016 with the election of Familias Unidas por la Justicia (FUJ) to represent hand harvesters at Sakuma Brothers Farms in Washington state. FUJ is an independent union, one of only a handful of farmworker unions outside of California, the only state with a legal framework to oversee union elections and collective bargaining, and the first union to be led by indigenous Mixteco and Trique farmworkers from Mexico.

Hundreds of voters came to cast ballots at Sakuma Brothers Farms on that day. The paper ballots were hand counted before a small crowd including representatives of the farm and union as well as independent observers. The election itself and the formal recognition of the union, who won the vote 195–58, were historic.

But a quieter history was made even before that day. Just a week before the election, the farm and the union signed a legally binding Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlining the election process, agreements regarding public communication and conduct by both sides, and the contract negotiation process that would follow should FUJ win the election. Note that farmworkers are not covered by the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), the law covering union recognition and collective bargaining.

Creating a process took the better part of the summer and helped address concerns in a neutral and fair manner. For example, one of the non-union farmworkers raised concerns that he had seen a list of workers the union had. He was afraid they were counting workers who had never agreed to be union members. The mutually agreed on process covered such concerns, spelling out that the election would be by secret ballot and that eligibility criteria included the number of hours worked in the current season. Any lists, public statements for or against the union, or any previous commitments were

irrelevant. Only the vote cast at the election mattered.

Though FUJ won the election by a wide margin, it was not unanimous. Fifty-eight workers voted against the union, either because they preferred no representation or would have preferred different representation. In addition, some workers did not cast a vote at all, many because, as migrant workers, they had already left the farm for the season. However, even those who voted against the union now have a democratic voice within the union.

The process agreed on by both sides ensures that the election was fair and that both the union and the farm will remain committed and accountable to each worker, no matter their original vote. The agreement does not guarantee that there will be no problems or disagreements going forward, but it does ensure a process for resolving any conflicts and grievances fairly. Without boycotts, strikes and protests, news coming from the farm may be quieter now, but what is happening there continues to be historic and newsworthy.

We asked Ramon Torres, President of FUJ, and Danny Weeden, CEO of Sakuma Brothers Farms, to share their perspectives on the process, as well as their visions for the future. Both speak of struggles — Ramon of immigrant farmworkers and Danny of the economic precariousness of running a family farm — but both also speak to hope for a brighter future for the farm and the people it supports.

## A STORY OF FARMWORKER JUSTICE

by Ramon Torres

Familias Unidas por la Justicia (FUJ) came together to negotiate a contract with Sakuma Brothers Farms because we were facing many problems. Many of us are migrant workers, and our biggest needs are medical plans and good living conditions. Companies give us housing, but it is usually in bad condition.

We are not just pickers, we also have families. When people get older, they should not have to keep working in the fields. We want to give workers a pension plan and the chance to rest. When they get to be sixty-four years old, workers should receive a pension so that they can sustain themselves and not depend on hard farm labor.

Also, young people often start working at twelve years old to help their families pay rent and bills. We found out that the youth were only being paid



85% of adult wages. We think it is time to get the youth out of the fields and give them the option to study, at least until they are eighteen years old and can consciously decide what they want to do.

That is why we came together to form our own union. It is important to organize ourselves because we are farmworkers and specialists in what we do. And we clearly understand that the only ones that can lead us or govern us are farmworkers. Getting a union contract will improve our quality of life. It will give us the opportunity to get more involved in the community — and give us a voice.

One of the big milestones in our campaign came in 2014 when we organized and filed a class action wage theft lawsuit. Over 1,000 workers received back pay for the past three years. And thanks to this, there was evidence to go to the state supreme court and implement a state law granting that all workers in Washington state who are paid piece rate will now have a ten-minute paid rest break for every four hours worked. Si Se Puede!

Winning the election for FUJ to represent farmworkers on Sakuma Brothers Farms last September was an important step and an opportunity to work with people who have been invisible for a long time. It signifies that we will have independence. We won with 77% of the vote out of 253 workers there that day. We have nearly 700 members from different companies. As immigrants, we did not think this would be possible, but the most significant thing is that we are led by farmworkers.

Going forward, we want to help more workers from different farms to form their own independent unions and negotiate their own contracts. We do not want to represent all the workers, we just want to support them in forming their own unions. We are now working with some farms and organizing with other workers to decide the future role of FUJ in Washington state.

Beyond our region, the benefits of FUJ's victory can be seen, as other companies are now offering medical plans, vacation time and wages that are higher than the legal minimum. We have arrived at the conclusion that many farms can provide for their workers.

We also think that we need to work with small family farmers as well. We have much in common, since we all live in the same communities, and the current food system hurts all of us.

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## SAKUMA BROTHERS FARMS: A WAY FORWARD

by Danny Weeden

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Sakuma Brothers Farms is a fourth-generation family farm with a 100-year history. When I was hired to be Sakuma's CEO in early 2015, I was empowered to find a way to make the farm sustainable.

Farming has never been easy. It takes a lot of patience and persistence. Even in the best of times, it is impossible to farm without the right amount of sun, water and labor — and a fair amount of faith.

My first two summers with Sakuma have been the earliest and warmest on record in western Washington. As one of the few growers of late-season blueberries, Sakuma has benefitted from higher prices paid for our berries that ripen after the California and Oregon berry seasons. The longer and hotter summers have meant that our berries ripened while the lower-cost berries still flooded the market, with unprofitable results.

Like many farms across our nation, we have struggled with a shortage of workers to harvest our crops. Instead of relying on the H-2A Federal Guest Worker program, Sakuma has recruited from within the community by attracting qualified workers through good pay and a caring culture. In addition to good wages, we offer free housing for workers and their families who travel long distances to work in our harvest. Our employees have cited our housing as a major, positive factor in coming to work with us.

Prior to my arrival, Sakuma had become the focus of a movement to unionize by Familias Unidas por la Justicia (FUJ). Unlike most private workers in America who can unionize under the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), farmworkers are specifically excluded. And although secondary boycotts are prohibited by the NLRA, FUJ targeted our customer Driscoll's in an effort to force Sakuma to negotiate a union contract.

It was not easy to respond to FUJ's demands for a union contract. A statutory framework to implement such a process does not exist for farmworkers under federal or Washington state law. In search for a solution, and with the support of Driscoll's, we developed our own process that allowed our harvest workers to choose whether or not they wanted to be represented by a union.



PHOTO CREDIT: © David Bacon

Through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with FUJ, we were able to present our harvest workers with a transparent process to allow a secret ballot election. A vote was held last September, and the employees chose FUJ as their representative.

We are currently in the process of negotiating our first labor agreement with FUJ. While this is uncharted territory, I am hopeful that these negotiations will be productive and successful.

Despite our optimism and a new relationship with FUJ, we continue to face seemingly insurmountable challenges for survival as a family farm. God has presented us with a strategic opportunity, an opportunity to come together in caring and cooperation to find a solution. From this, I believe Sakuma has an opportunity to be one of the best farms in America. I intend to do everything possible to make that happen, and I pray it will.

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## A BRIGHTER FUTURE

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Hand harvesters at Sakuma Brothers Farms will start the 2017 season with a contract negotiated between farm management and elected union leaders. This is historic. But the process laid out to get there is just as historic, providing a model for other farms that wish to end labor disputes and determine what, if any, representation farmworkers want. The fact that the farmworker union and farm management came to an agreement on what makes a fair process is the true historic moment — and one that we hope will have ripple effects throughout the industry.

# Food Waste, Hunger and Climate Change



WRITTEN BY RYAN ZINN

As a child, you likely heard some variation of the cliché, “Eat all your food; there are starving people in the world.” While hunger remains one of humanity’s greatest challenges, the underlying causes are not as clear as one might think.

Shockingly, one-third of all food produced for human consumption worldwide is lost or wasted. In the underdeveloped world, upwards of 600 million tons of food are lost annually due to poor infrastructure, lack of access to food processing facilities, and unfair markets. In the United States, 33.5 million tons of food waste are sent to landfills each year. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) estimates that the direct cost to producers of food that goes to waste is currently \$750 billion annually, excluding the seafood industry.

Food waste and loss not only contribute to the global hunger crisis, with close to 800 million food-insecure people, but they account for a significant amount of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the form of methane. According to the FAO, “Without accounting for greenhouse gas emissions from land use change, the carbon footprint of food produced and not eaten is estimated at 4.4 gigatons (billion tons) of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent: as such, food waste ranks as the third top emitter after the U.S. and China.”

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), food waste in the United States accounts for approximately 17% of total methane emissions. And pound for pound, the comparative impact of methane on climate change has been twenty-five times greater than CO<sub>2</sub> over a 100-year period.

In the Global North, efforts are underway to reduce food waste at the consumer level by reducing portion sizes at restaurants, reforming food date labeling and educating consumers about

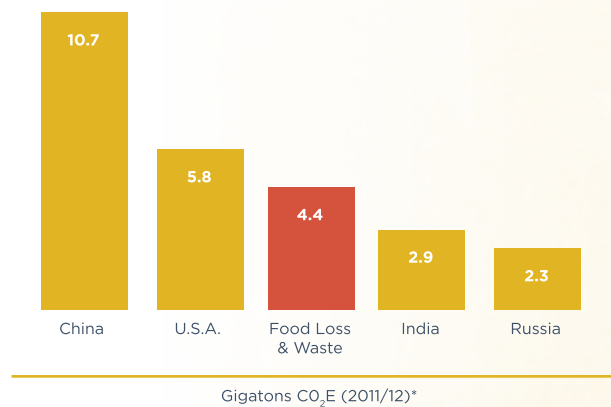
proper food storage. Additionally, retailers and manufacturers can drastically reduce food waste by adopting widely available best practices. In the underdeveloped world, where most of the food loss occurs closer to farms and local communities, significant positive impacts can be gained via inexpensive investments in regional markets, refrigeration and local transportation. Lastly, composting food waste and scraps (coffee grounds, banana peels, etc.) can not only reduce methane

emissions, but can return nutrients to the soil, close the nutrient cycle and even stimulate carbon sequestration. To have any impact, however, all these tactics and interventions must be institutionalized.

But, again, we should be clear about the true underlying causes of hunger. While addressing food waste and loss will reduce GHG emissions, it will not necessarily alleviate hunger. In fact, many countries that suffer from hunger, often also have food surpluses and/or export food abroad. At the global level, there is

actually an overproduction of food, with more than enough to feed an ever-growing population. As Frances Moore Lappé has remarked, “Hunger is not caused by a scarcity of food but [by] a scarcity of democracy.” Hunger, and food waste and loss, are symptoms of larger, structural issues, like debilitating national debts, unfair trade agreements and poverty. Indeed, addressing the root causes of hunger, food loss and climate change will require a radical transformation of the global food system.

## IF FOOD LOSS AND WASTE WERE ITS OWN COUNTRY, IT WOULD BE THE THIRD-LARGEST GREENHOUSE GAS EMITTER



Source: CAIT, 2015, FAO 2015. Food wastage footprint & climate change. Rome:FAO

# JUST ECONOMY QUIZ

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND LEARN A FEW FACTS!

**Q1** How many 90-pound boxes of oranges would a farmworker need to pick per hour to earn the minimum wage in Florida?

- A. 1/2 a box B. 2 boxes C. 5 boxes D. 9 boxes

**Q2** How many states and cities passed measures in 2016 to raise their minimum wage?

- A. 4 B. 21 C. 160 D. none

**Q3** 90% of the world's cocoa is produced on what size farm?

- A. Backyard plots with 1-2 trees  
B. Small farms that are 1-5 hectares (2.5-12 acres)  
C. Medium farms averaging 50 hectares (125 acres)  
D. Large plantations that are 500 hectares (1,300 acres) or more

**Q4** Which of the following has been an effect of NAFTA (the North American Free Trade Agreement)?

- A. On average, farmers in all participating countries doubled their incomes, with small-scale farmers benefiting the most from increased market opportunities.  
B. The majority of farmers have been free from competitive pressures to increase yields and have instead focused on increasing biodiversity and implementing sustainable agricultural practices.  
C. The average income for U.S. family farmers has plummeted; agricultural prices have decreased in Mexico; and Mexican farmers have called for a renegotiation of NAFTA's agricultural provisions.  
D. Because farming has become more profitable, the number of people whose livelihoods come from agriculture has approximately tripled in all participating countries.

**Q5** What percentage of the retail price of an average t-shirt produced in Bangladesh is used to pay the people who make it?

- A. Less than 1% B. 5% C. 10% D. 50%

**Q6** How likely are farmworkers to die of heat-related illnesses compared with the rest of the workforce?

- A. About half as likely, since they are used to working in extreme weather  
B. 10% more likely  
C. Twice as likely  
D. 20 times more likely

**Q7** Which of the following are key to an agroecological approach to farming systems?

- A. Democratic decision-making  
B. Environmental sustainability  
C. Justice for everyone in the food system  
D. All of the above

**Q8** What was the first fair trade coffee brand available to consumers in the United States?

- A. In 1986, Equal Exchange began importing fair trade coffee from Nicaragua via a Dutch roaster, despite an ongoing embargo.  
B. In 1990, Starbucks offered its first fair trade coffee blend — a mix of Sumatran dark roast and Kenyan medium roast.  
C. In 1994, Green Mountain Coffee responded to the implementation of NAFTA by marketing its first fair trade coffee from Mexico.  
D. In 1997, Nestle brought fair trade coffee to the U.S. for the first time, showcasing its fair trade Brazilian dark roast, already popular in Europe.

ANSWERS 1. D | 2. B | 3. B | 4. C | 5. A | 6. D | 7. D | 8. A

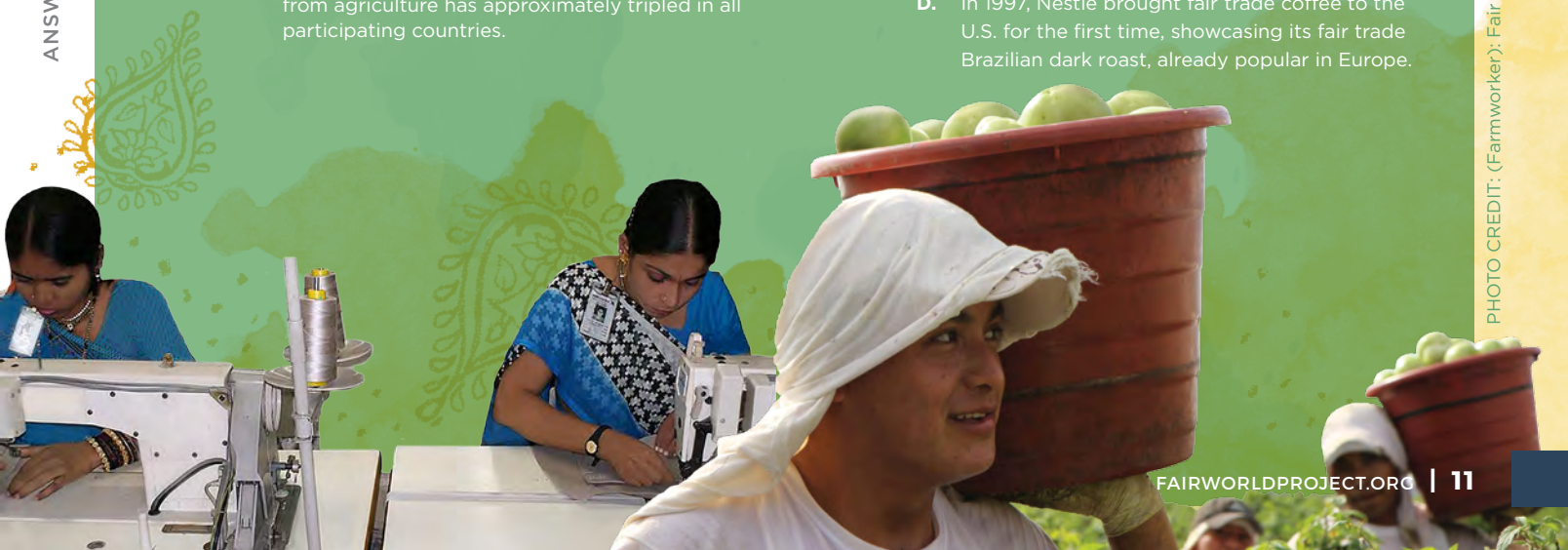


PHOTO CREDIT: (Farmworker): Fair Food Program, (Women at sewing machines): Llamtheboo, via Creative Commons.

# Fair Cannabis?

## The Need for Labor Protection in America's Fastest-Growing Agricultural Sector

WRITTEN BY ELIZABETH A. BENNETT

“We trimmed [cannabis] for three months without receiving pay. We were supposed to get paid at the end of every month. In November, it became really difficult for us because we were sleeping outside in tents, and it got cold. We were not sleeping well — our well-being was not cared for — and trimming is really hard on your body. [The farm owners] didn't respect my relationship. My girlfriend and I had been together for six years, but they told us we were lying and putting on a show. They were always flirting with us ... and stuff. I never want to see those guys again.”

For decades, workers have flocked to Northern California and Southern Oregon to help with the fall cannabis harvest. Some are migrants who include the crop on their seasonal tour. Others are driven by an interest in cannabis culture, or by the promise of lucrative pay for low-skilled work.<sup>1</sup> While some cannabis workers (or “trimmers”) have had pleasant, safe and profitable experiences, many, as described above, have not.

Although cannabis is illegal federally in the United States, individual states are increasingly exercising their authority to permit production, sale and use. Since 1996, when Californians voted to legalize medicinal marijuana, the sector has operated in both legal and black markets. Today, consumers can legally purchase recreational cannabis in Alaska,

Colorado, Washington and Oregon, and several more states (California, Maine,

Massachusetts and Nevada) have voted to legalize it and will permit sales soon. Yet, because only 20% of Americans live in states where recreational cannabis is currently legal, and some consumers prefer the lower prices of illegal cannabis, underground production persists.

Working on illegal cannabis farms (or indoor cannabis grows) puts workers at an especially great risk of abuse. Workers can be reticent to report abuse, and employers are motivated to ensure they do not. As a result, cannabis trimmers report pervasive wage theft, sexual harassment and assault, discrimination, unsafe housing and exploitative working conditions. Farm owners use threats and acts of violence to improve productivity, silence dissent and even hold workers hostage.

### DOES BUYING CANNABIS ON THE LEGAL MARKET ENSURE THAT WORKERS WERE FAIRLY TREATED?

No. Many labor protection laws have exemptions for farmworkers, and, as a result, they are among the most vulnerable workers in the American economy. On average, farmworkers earn about half of the living wage for

agricultural areas, and about 20,000 U.S. farmworkers experience acute pesticide poisoning each year.<sup>2</sup> Even legal crops are at times produced through labor exploitation.

With cannabis, the distinction between legal and illicit production is not always clear. For example, some producers may send better-quality product to the legal market, and lower-quality product to the black market. Trimmers may not be sure what they are getting into, as some typical “red flags,” such as paying workers in cash, are common. As one trimmer explained:

“I got pulled into being manager at an indoor grow [for the legal market]. The owner had a big cocaine problem and was going through a divorce. He was really unstable and didn't get the license [to grow legally]. It was a disaster ... one time, I got a chemical burn [from acid used to adjust the pH of water that was not stored properly]. He didn't even care ... he just made it a rule that we had to have shoes on — which of course I was doing! Now I have deep purple scars on my feet.”



PHOTO CREDIT: Eben Waggoner, courtesy of Yerba Buena

### CAN CONSUMERS “VOTE WITH THEIR DOLLARS” BY PURCHASING FAIR-LABELED CANNABIS?

Not quite yet. I checked with six fair labor labels, sustainability seals and food justice initiatives operating in the United States.<sup>3</sup> Most have not received queries from cannabis producers or consumers, and none currently have plans to expand into the cannabis sector.

Equitable Food Initiative (EFI), a newly formed NGO focused on fresh produce, stated that it is currently working to scale efforts within the fresh produce sector, and it would not expand to other segments of agriculture until it verifies that the label is having the desired impacts in produce. Sustainable Agriculture Network/Rainforest Alliance (SAN/RA) explained that, although their sustainability standards could be applied to the legal production of cannabis, and that a farm could be audited against those standards, they would not permit a cannabis farm to use their trademarked seal. This reflects a more general policy that prohibits use of their seal on cigarettes and coca leaves (although the production of tobacco could be audited). While each organization agreed that it is important to support agricultural workers in all sectors, none felt positioned to spearhead the effort. Although several cannabis-specific certification programs have emerged, none have adopted empowering labor standards or producer-inclusive standards-setting processes. The focus seems to be more on environmental impacts. The Cannabis Conservancy (TCC), for example, aims to eliminate harmful chemical inputs, reduce waste, improve energy efficiency and conserve water. Likewise, the Foundation of Cannabis Unified Standards (FOCUS) centers on public health, consumer safety and the environment. While TCC and FOCUS standards include typical international labor provisions, such as paying the minimum wage, neither raises the bar for farmworkers’ rights.

One label that does go further toward protecting workers is Clean Green. The most well-known label on the market, Clean Green also originated as an environmental initiative, but has since included some labor protections, such as the option for gender-separate sleeping and bathing quarters (which aim to reduce instances of sexual assault). Unfortunately, however, Clean Green’s governance structure and standards-setting process have not been inclusive of producers nor transparent to the public, two core features of a voluntary certification system.

## Legalization is not sufficient for ensuring workers’ rights.

### THE FUTURE OF FAIR CANNABIS?

There is a demand for ethically sourced cannabis. In Portland, Oregon, 28% of dispensaries report that customers frequently request “organic or socially responsible” marijuana, and another 53% say they experience this request occasionally. Knowing that legalization is not sufficient for ensuring workers’ rights, that existing certifiers are not stepping up, and that new cannabis certification programs are more focused on the environment, a group of Portland-based grassroots organizers are in the early stages of developing a multi-stakeholder standards-setting organization for the legal cannabis industry.

The Ethical Cannabis Alliance (ECA) aims to draw on lessons from existing domestic programs, such as Food Justice Certified and the Fair Food Program, as well as the fair trade movement in general, to develop a transparent, multi-stakeholder, third-party certification system. Will the ECA succeed in creating and promoting standards that improve conditions for cannabis workers? I hope so!

<sup>1</sup> Note that trimming is only low-skilled work if quality standards are low — which is often the case in the black market, where farms focus primarily on volume. Skilled trimming can actually add a great deal of value to the final product by improving quality and reducing waste.

<sup>2</sup> For more information about working conditions on farms, see the Fair World Project report “Justice in the Fields” (2016).

<sup>3</sup> These included the Agricultural Justice Project (Food Justice Certified), the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (Fair Food Program), Fair for Life (Ecocert), the Equitable Food Initiative (Responsibly Grown, Farmworker Assured label), Fair Trade USA (Fair Trade Certified), and the Sustainable Agriculture Network (Rainforest Alliance label).

sustainable

# Public Procurement:

An Understated and Effective Way to Grow Fair Trade



WRITTEN BY SEAN McHUGH

In recent years, sales of fair trade products have grown in leaps and bounds, especially in Europe where support from both consumers and governments has been strong. While this growth is encouraging, supply from producers in the Global South is well ahead of demand from consumers in the North. Large quantities of fair trade goods are not being sold on fair trade terms. For example, about two-thirds of fair trade coffee is sold to conventional buyers or local markets, where producers generally get far less. Because of this lag, fair trade producers miss out on the full benefits of fair trade.

How do we close this gap? We do it by building demand. If consumers in the North request and buy fair trade products, fair trade producers can sell more of their goods on fair trade terms and receive the maximum benefits of the system. These benefits include a guaranteed minimum price and an additional premium, as well as the opportunity to decide how to invest that premium. It is a practical way to change the world for the better.

How do we build demand? One way is through public procurement. Public institutions buy a lot of stuff — billions of dollars' worth, in fact. Through this purchasing power, governments and public institutions have an opportunity to drive positive change. This is known as “sustainable public procurement.”

## WHAT IS SUSTAINABLE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT?

According to the United Nations (UN), sustainable public procurement is a “process whereby public organizations meet their needs for goods, services, works and utilities in a way that achieves value for money on a whole lifecycle basis in terms of generating benefits not only to the organization, but also to society and the economy, while significantly reducing negative impacts on the environment.”

## GROWING FAIR TRADE AND MORE

With sustainable public procurement, public institutions can increase the demand for sustainable products, support environmental, social and ethical practices, and contribute to sustainable global development. Furthermore, by developing sustainable procurement policies, procurement managers can align their work with the UN’s 2030 Agenda and support its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to build a future of prosperity and dignity for all (see sidebar).

By purchasing sustainably sourced goods, governments can lead by example and deliver key policy objectives by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving resource efficiency and supporting recycling. From an economic perspective, sustainable public procurement can generate income, reduce costs and support the transfer of skills and technology. When aligned with established fair trade certifications, sustainable public procurement can reduce poverty, support trade equality and promote respect for core labor standards.

Public spending, which accounts for an average of 12% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in developed countries and up to 30% in developing countries, wields enormous purchasing power. Shifting that spending toward more sustainable goods and services can help drive markets in the direction of innovation and sustainability, thereby enabling the transition to a green and fair economy.

## MAKING IT HAPPEN

While public institutions, local authorities and governments at all levels can and should incorporate fair trade products into their sustainable purchasing practices, it is difficult to know where to start. Here are three steps to put a sustainable public procurement policy in place, which includes sourcing fair trade goods, at an institution or government:

- **Create the Policy:** Introduce a fair trade public procurement policy that effectively communicates the sustainable procurement objectives to the public, staff and suppliers.
- **Implement the Policy:** Mandate the use of fair trade products in all offices and managed food service outlets. Public festivals, fairs and other local initiatives or events should be considered as well. This mandate should contain commitments to specific fair trade products and timelines.
- **Educate:** State how the commitment to fair trade will be enforced and how relevant staff will be given appropriate training.

Furthermore, the public institution or government should take the following measures to maintain a high level of integrity in its sustainable public procurement policy:

- Create a local sustainable procurement taskforce that includes experts on fair trade, international social justice, local employment, local economic development, the environment, the climate and procurement. Take a holistic approach in developing a sustainable procurement policy.
- Partner with local fair trade actors (producers, organizations and civil society) to organize awareness-raising and capacity-building initiatives which encourage and assist procurers with including fair trade criteria in their procurement process.
- Join networks that promote sustainable public procurement to stay up to date on examples of best practices and policy initiatives that support sustainable procurement and fair trade.

### SUSTAINABLE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT AND FAIR TRADE PROGRAMS

Programs such as Fair Trade Towns, Campuses, Schools and others should exist to engage with the public, the business sector, and different levels of government and various public institutions. The core objective of these programs is promoting fair trade and sustainable public procurement.

In Canada, we are engaging our federal government directly. Our Fair Trade Town groups have worked with various municipal governments, and our student groups have partnered with universities and colleges across our nation. We have seen policies adopted with real results (see footer).

We are seeing fair trade brands replacing non-fair trade options, and a considerable volume of product is now being sold through governments and institutions. This impacts local businesses and, most importantly, the producers and cooperatives from whom they purchase.

### CONCLUSION

Sustainable public procurement aligns the power of government purchasing with recognized and effective efforts to address climate change and end global poverty. By adopting sustainable public procurement policies, public institutions, local authorities and various levels of government can take the lead and create meaningful and lasting change both locally and globally. It is a way to boost demand for fair trade products so that producers in the Global South can access the full benefits of a system they have worked so hard to build.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are designed to eliminate global poverty and address climate change. The SDGs ambitiously build on the previous Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and aim to see nations working together under the banner of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's oft-quoted assertion, "There is no Plan B because we do not have Planet B."

Of seventeen total SDGs, fair trade directly relates to the following ones:



NO POVERTY



ZERO HUNGER



GENDER EQUALITY



DECENT WORK



INDUSTRY, INNOVATION & INFRASTRUCTURE



REDUCED INEQUALITIES



RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION & PRODUCTION



CLIMATE CHANGE



PEACE & JUSTICE



PARTNERSHIPS



UNITED NATIONS

### CANADIAN INSTITUTIONS LEADING THE WAY

- **Simon Fraser University (SFU)**  
From May of 2015 to May of 2016, SFU sold over 18,000 pounds of fair trade certified coffee through its dining service locations.
- **University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC)**  
In 2016, UNBC's student union coffee shop sold over 20,978 cups of fair trade certified coffee and 6,600 cups of fair trade certified tea.
- **McGill University**  
In 2015, McGill sold \$237,274 of fair trade coffee, tea, chocolate, bananas and cocoa.  
McGill launched its own fair trade certified coffee blend, Roddick Roast. The beans come from a cooperative of 1,091 organic and fair trade certified farmers in Chiapas, Mexico.
- **Ethical Bean**  
In 2016, Vancouver-based coffee roaster Ethical Bean provided 22,890 pounds of organic and fair trade certified coffee to three of Canada's Fair Trade Campuses.

## TRADING DOWN:

# How Unfair Trade Hurts Farmers

WRITTEN BY BEN LILLISTON

United States farm incomes, following sinking crop prices, sharply declined in 2016 for the third year in a row. <sup>1</sup>Prices for wheat and corn are currently at ten-year lows, and in many cases U.S. farmers are paid below the cost of production for what they produce. <sup>2</sup> While these low prices hurt U.S. farmers, when the crops are exported by global grain companies, the collateral damage is felt by farmers around the world.

There are strong signs that the harmful practice of agricultural dumping (exporting crops at below their cost of production) is already occurring. A new analysis by the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP) finds that export dumping by U.S.-based agribusiness onto international markets has increased dramatically in the last few years. The latest data indicates that in 2015 the dumping of wheat was at 33% below the cost of production, soybeans at 11%, corn at 14% and rice at 2%. Most government and industry projections show low prices continuing in 2017.

The effect of agricultural dumping on farmers outside the U.S., particularly those in developing countries, can be devastating. In our increasingly globalized world, farmers not only operate within their local market, but also within the international market. The U.S. exports around 20% of the agricultural commodities it produces, over \$130 billion worth in 2015, to over 100 countries. When a surge of under-priced imported food hits, it can push farmers out of business — contributing to the long-term global trend of rural depopulation. Agricultural dumping undermines local production, infrastructure for local food systems, and local economies. While cheap imports may provide consumers with

some benefits in the short-term, reliance on international markets also makes countries more vulnerable to the volatility of those markets. For example, when agricultural prices spiked in 2007-2008, countries dependent on imported food were hit the hardest.

The practice of agricultural dumping today can be

traced back to three big policy decisions in the mid-1990s. The domino effect of those decisions helps to explain why the U.S. produces so much corn, soy, wheat and rice, often much more than what is needed, to the detriment of farmers in the U.S. and around the world.

First, in 1994, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) between the U.S., Canada and Mexico came into effect. The agreement aggressively reduced agricultural tariffs in each country, seeking to build a North American market. The result was a wave of under-priced U.S. corn dumped into Mexico, pushing an estimated two million Mexican farmers off the land. NAFTA has served as the template for all ensuing U.S. free trade agreements.

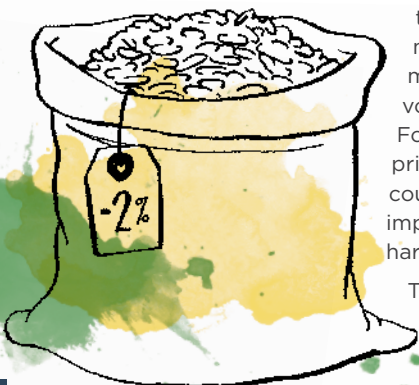
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## Agricultural dumping undermines local production, infrastructure for local food systems, and local economies.

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Second, in 1995, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and its Agreement on Agriculture came into being. The WTO set overarching trade rules for more than 160 countries around the world, primarily through obligations to lower tariffs. While the WTO did establish arcane rules on the types of programs and subsidies countries use to support farmers, it notably did not address agricultural dumping and its threat to farmers and food security.

Third, in 1996, Congress passed what was known as the Freedom to Farm Bill, which provided the final nail in the coffin of long-standing farm programs that helped manage supply and ensure fair prices for farmers. Farm programs coming out of the New





Deal era linked price floors to ensure farmers received a fair return, with the use of supply management tools, to help manage the volatile nature of farm production from year to year. But agribusiness did not like the government meddling in farm production or prices, and for decades it has steadily worked to erode those programs, urging farmers to produce more and “get big or get out.” The 1996 Farm Bill was the final step in a relentless push by agribusiness to get farmers to produce ever more to feed the companies’ hunger for global markets.

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## Low prices for farmers and agricultural dumping onto international markets are not acts of God.

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The most recent Farm Bill (passed in 2014), despite undergoing a series of reforms, retains its focus on producing crops and meat for global markets. It places no limits on production, rewards farms of larger size, and incentivizes the production of commodity crops. While the type of farm subsidies in the Farm Bill has evolved over the last several decades, transitioning from direct subsidies based on acreage to now different forms of revenue insurance linked to farm income, the intent to provide farmers with a safety net when the market drops is largely the same. The recent collapse in crop prices, however, has exposed weaknesses in the current Farm Bill. Some farm groups have called for an early intervention because current farm policy fails to adequately protect farmers experiencing consecutive years of low prices.

NAFTA, the formation of the WTO, and U.S. farm policy were all driven by the interests of global agribusiness, and it is those companies that have benefitted tremendously. Those companies, which operate in both developed and developing countries, include the four big commodity traders who have dominated international markets for decades (Cargill, ADM, Bunge and Louis Dreyfus) and the big meat companies (including JBS, Tyson’s and Smithfield) who depend on cheap animal feed.

Increasing disruptions of global agricultural supply chains linked to climate change should drive a new sense of urgency to fix agricultural and trade policy. Countries need to adapt their agricultural production to a changing climate, support

farmers in the field, and strengthen their own food systems, including the use of food reserves (retaining food in times of plenty for times of scarcity). Low prices for farmers and agricultural dumping onto international markets are not acts of God. They reflect deliberate policy decisions, and we can make different decisions for the future.

First, President Trump promised to reform NAFTA. Based on the corporate and financial connections and backgrounds of his Cabinet members, though, it is unlikely that the impacts of agricultural dumping on farmers will be at the top of his administration’s NAFTA priorities. Civil society organizations in the U.S., Mexico and Canada are already organizing around positive reforms of NAFTA that would stop agricultural dumping, support fair wages and enable climate action. To support these efforts, connect with the Citizens Trade Campaign, a strong coalition of family farm, labor, environmental, health and faith organizations, by going to: [www.CitizensTrade.org](http://www.CitizensTrade.org).

Second, we need to reform the Farm Bill to focus more on fair prices for farmers, while integrating environmental sustainability and climate resilience. The National Family Farm Coalition (NFFC) is an alliance of more than twenty organizations around the country working for substantial Farm Bill reform. To connect with the NFFC and their Farm Bill campaign, go to: [www.nffc.net](http://www.nffc.net).

Farmers and eaters can benefit from more stable and resilient markets for agriculture in the future — but we will first have to undo the damaging policies of the past.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information, go to: <https://tinyurl.com/USFarmIncomes>

<sup>2</sup> For more information, go to: <https://tinyurl.com/10YearLows>



# GROW AHEAD

## CROWDFUNDING CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Industrial agriculture and food production is a major contributor to climate change, and the small-scale farmers whose regenerative practices our future relies on are bearing the brunt of the impacts. In recent years, these farmers have experienced increasing pest pressure, decreasing yields and a quickly-changing landscape — all of which are threatening their livelihoods. Considering that small-scale farmers feed the majority of the developing world, the implications are serious. Agroecological strategies for combating climate change and feeding hungry communities, such as using cover crops and compost to boost soil organic matter and fertility, must be a global priority, scaling up and out in coming years.

Despite the serious threat that climate change poses to humanity in general, and to small-scale farmers in particular, proven solutions like small-scale regenerative agriculture receive little government or market support and safeguards. Supporting and developing small-scale regenerative farming, however, will require significant resources, research and funding.

Experience has shown that farmers around the world learn best from their peers. Emerging from Central America in the 1970s, the “Farmer-to-Farmer” movement has fueled the training of thousands of peasant farmers by facilitating the exchange of practical

experiences and best practices.

This movement is based upon community empowerment, traditional knowledge, and local innovation and cooperation.

In 2015, Fair World Project (FWP) collaborated with the Latin American and Caribbean Network of Fair Trade Small Producers (CLAC) in a contest soliciting small-scale farmer groups to share their experiences and best practices in confronting climate change in their communities. Experience has shown that small-scale farmers are the most cost-effective vehicle for scaling out agroecological practices. Small-scale farmer organizations have the potential to quickly and effectively implement cost-effective climate-resilient tactics, while simultaneously multiplying their experience and organizational impact.

Farmer submissions demonstrated impressive steps taken by these organizations to adjust to the growing challenge of climate change, by diversifying farms, promoting on-farm innovation, and improving soil fertility, among other practices.

To read more about this project, see the official CLAC report, “Climate Change: Voices of Small Producers,” at: [tinyurl.com/CLACReport](http://tinyurl.com/CLACReport).

Building on this success, FWP will be incorporating “Grow Ahead” into its programming. Grow Ahead is the first online consumer finance platform that allows individuals and organizations to donate or extend loans directly to smallholder farmer organizations around the world in order to support farmer resiliency.

For the first time, individual consumers can forge an intimate link with front-

line farmer organizations, directly funding farmer initiatives and supporting the global effort to address climate change on the farm.

Small-scale farmer organizations in the developing world are historically under-resourced, with limited access to the capital needed to grow their organizations beyond their day-to-day needs. Grow Ahead intends to bridge the resource and funding gap, acting as a launch pad for larger, regional agroecological development campaigns that go beyond individual commodities and focus on whole farm systems.

Moving forward, Grow Ahead and FWP will focus on:

- Facilitating a revolving loan program for farmer-developed resiliency projects, such as soil conservation and yield-boosting compost operations.
- Raising funds for annual regional Farmer-to-Farmer exchanges. These exchanges will facilitate farm leaders’ ability to share successes and resources. They will also produce written and multimedia resources, encapsulating farmer experiences and “takeaways” to share with other farmers.
- Providing funds and resources for farm leader “multiplier” agroecology scholarships. Grow Ahead will raise funds earmarked specifically to provide scholarships for farm leaders and trainers to attend farmer-centric agroecology schools.

**TO LEARN MORE, & TO LOAN OR DONATE FUNDS, GO TO: [www.GrowAhead.org](http://www.GrowAhead.org).**













# REFERENCE GUIDE TO FAIR TRADE AND WORKER WELFARE PROGRAMS

## KEY ELEMENTS OF CREDIBLE PROGRAMS IN THE UNITED STATES

This guide differentiates program claims to help people match their purchasing practices to their values.

Fair Trade Membership	Fair Trade Certification	Factory & Farm Worker Welfare Certification
Organization evaluates fair trade commitment and practice of companies against its membership criteria. No systematic verification of conditions along the value chain.	3rd party certifiers field-inspect growing and processing, possibly trading operations and compare performance against a set of fair trade standards	
Fair Trade Membership and Certification Principles		Factory & Farm Worker Welfare Principles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small-scale Producer Focus</li> <li>• Long-Term Direct Trading Relationships</li> <li>• Payment of Fair Prices</li> <li>• No Child, Forced or Otherwise Exploited Labor</li> <li>• Workplace Non-Discrimination, Gender Equity and Freedom of Association</li> </ul> <p><i>These are the principles of fair trade for traditional South to North trading. A similar set of principles have been adopted for North to North trading in the U.S. for farmers, and are considered solidarity programs.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Democratic &amp; Transparent Organizations</li> <li>• Safe Working Conditions &amp; Reasonable Work Hours</li> <li>• Investment in Community Development Projects</li> <li>• Environmental Sustainability</li> <li>• Traceability and Transparency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion of International Labor Organization (ILO) Core Conventions</li> <li>• Freedom of Association</li> <li>• Improving Wages</li> <li>• No Forced, Child or Otherwise Exploited Labor</li> <li>• Workplace Free of Discrimination, Abuse and Harassment</li> <li>• Safe and Healthy Workplace</li> <li>• Reasonable Working Hours</li> <li>• Clear and Adequate Grievance Mechanisms with No Retaliation</li> <li>• No Termination Without Just Cause</li> </ul> <p>Though Fairtrade America, Fair for Life and Fair Trade USA may have different levels of credible factory &amp; farmworker welfare programs they are misleadingly labeling products complying with their program as fair trade.</p>

Organization	Membership	Certification (Third Party Inspection)	Fair Trade & Solidarity Program	Factory & Farm Worker Welfare Program	Domestic Program	Overall Analysis
	N/A	✔	✔	✔	✔	<b>Agricultural Justice Project (AJP)</b> , is a solidarity program setting standards for Food Justice Certified, with strong requirements for buyer/farmer and farmer/worker relationships for U.S. farms of all sizes, focusing on empowering farmers to negotiate a fair price with buyers and empowering farmworkers to negotiate fair wages and employment conditions.
	✔	N/A	✔	✔	✔	<b>Domestic Fair Trade Association (DFTA)</b> is a North America based solidarity membership organization that brings together all sectors of the domestic agriculture system to advocate for social justice. DFTA evaluates the labels of domestic eco-social certifiers; it has not developed any product labels of its own.
	N/A	✔	N/A	✔	✔	<b>The Fair Food Program (FFP)</b> sets and oversees standards to improve conditions and pay for farmworkers. Starting with farmworkers on tomato fields in Florida, FFP has developed a successful monitoring and accountability program to address abuses and increase wages.
	N/A	✔	N/A	✔	✔	<b>The Equitable Food Initiative (EFI)</b> sets and oversees standards for their Responsibly Grown. Farmworker Assured label for food safety and farmworker justice with farmworker involvement in monitoring and a focus on improved wages; the program does not include collective bargaining.
	N/A	✔	✔	✔	N/A	<b>Fairtrade America</b> is the U.S. fair trade labeling member of Fairtrade International, a strong standard setter for organized small producers in the Global South. Its factory & farmworker welfare standards include collective bargaining and benchmarks for living wages, though would more accurately be termed Fair Labor.
	N/A	✔	✔	✔	N/A	<b>Fair for Life (FFL)</b> is a fair trade labeling program developed by the Institute for Marketecology and now held by Eco-cert. FFL has strong eligibility requirements with a focus on marginalized producers and workers. Its farmworker welfare standards include living wage and democratically administered premiums, though would more accurately be termed Fair Labor.
	✔	N/A	✔	N/A	N/A	<b>Fair Trade Federation (FTF)</b> is a North America based fair trade membership organization exclusively for brands and retailers dedicated to fair trade for all products and practices; FTF allows their membership logo to appear on products signifying membership, though they do not audit supply chains.
	N/A	✔	✘	✔	✘	<b>Fair Trade USA (FTUSA)</b> is a standard setter that has attempted to expand the fair trade model into new areas (for example the United States) and sectors (for example seafood). Its hired labor standards include health and safety requirements and a democratically administered premium, but lack collective bargaining and living wage requirements. Its apparel standards do not include all steps of the supply chain and only one piece of the very complex supply chain could be certified, however the product still uses the certification logo.  <small>For food ingredients. Not considered a credible certification for their apparel and home good standards.</small>
	N/A	✔	✔	N/A	N/A	<b>FUNDEPPO</b> is the standard setter for the only farmer-led fair trade certification, the Small Producer Symbol (SPP), which has strong requirements for eligibility and farmer empowerment. The program does not address farms with significant hired labor.
	✔	✔	✔	N/A	N/A	<b>World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO)</b> is a global fair trade membership organization requiring strong internal control systems, peer review, and external audits to guarantee members comply with fair trade principles throughout all of their supply chains. Members may use the WFTO guarantee label.

# WHO GREW YOUR FOOD?

**20,000**  
U.S. farmworkers  
are victims of acute  
**PESTICIDE  
POISONING**

**1,000,000** people are victims of  
**PESTICIDE POISONING**  
with **300,000**  
**ENDING IN DEATH**  
(Annually)

**PESTICIDE  
EXPOSURE**  
leads to higher rates of  
**BIRTH DEFECTS**  
in farmworker children

*Farm work is one of the most dangerous jobs in the world*

*The tragedy of exploitation in the fields not only denies millions worldwide their fundamental human rights, it is a vulnerability to the sustainability of our food system*

Farmworkers are  
**20x**  
more likely to  
**DIE FROM**  
**HEAT-RELATED CAUSES**  
than the rest of the U.S. workforce

Farmworkers  
are excluded  
**LABOR** **LAW S**  
in the U.S.  
from many

that protect other workers

**\$11.34<sup>HR</sup>**  
Average Wage of  
the U.S. Farmworker

**\$20-30<sup>HR</sup>**  
Average Living Wage  
in Agricultural Areas

Farmworkers in Florida need to pick **9**



**90 LB**

boxes of oranges an hour just to make

**MINIMUM WAGE**

Workers would need to double that  
to earn \$15/hour

*Our report takes a look at these conditions and the role of policy, farmworker organizations, and farmworker justice certification labels in improving conditions.*

FOR SOURCES AND TO SEE THE FULL REPORT:

***FairWorldProject.org/Campaigns/Farmworker-Justice***