FOR A BETTER WORLD

ISSUES & CHALLENGES FOR A JUST ECONOMY

THIS IS A FREE PUBLICATION

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BUILDING A JUST ECONOMY FROM THE GROUND UP

REFERENCE GUIDE TO FAIR TRADE CERTIFICATION & MEMBERSHIP ORGANIZATIONS

Fair trade certifiers and membership organizations all agree on these basic fair trade principles:

- ✓ Long-term direct trading relationships
- ✓ Prompt payment of fair prices and wages
- ✓ No child, forced or otherwise exploited labor
- ✓ Workplace non-discrimination, gender equity and freedom of association
- ✓ Safe working conditions and reasonable work hours
- ✓ Investment in community development projects
- ✓ Environmental sustainability
- ✓ Traceability and transparency

Fair trade validation systems can be grouped into two major categories. The table shows their main attributes and several prominent examples.

3rd Party Inspection & Certification	3rd party certifiers field-inspect growing and processing, possibly trading operations and compare performance against a set of fair trade standards.	Fairtrade America; IMO's Fair for Life; FUNDEPPO's Small Producer Symbol; Agricultural Justice Project *FWP does not recognize FTUSA as a credible fair trade certifier
Membership Organizations	Organization evaluates fair trade commitment and practice of companies against its membership criteria. No systematic verification of conditions along the value chain.	Fair Trade Federation (FTF); World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO); Domestic Fair Trade Association; Cooperative Coffees

This chart summarizes the logos of several certification programs and membership organizations. A product sold by a company that is a member of a fair trade membership organization may not have gone through third-party certification; conversely, a product certified as "fair trade" under a certification program does not mean that the company that produces the certified product is a dedicated fair trade company.

We acknowledge that other socially responsible systems are available. While they certify for many of the same standards, they do not embody all fair trade principles.

*Fair World Project (FWP) no longer recognizes Fair Trade USA (FTUSA) as a credible fair trade label. For small producer organizations (i.e. traditional fair trade producers), FTUSA recognizes the Fairtrade International (FLO) standards and has not developed their own. In this case, we believe that brands should work with FLO directly. For other standards, such as farmworkers on large farms and unorganized producers, FTUSA has developed their own standards, but has ignored repeated requests to dialogue with the larger movement to address serious concerns, for example concerns from small coffee producers that opening up fair trade to large coffee farms will have a detrimental effect on their own operations.

For more information on Fair Trade Certifiers and Membership Organizations visit www.fairworldproject.org

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Cosmic Egg Studios is an eco-friendly design firm that services many like-minded companies in this industry.

Letter from the Director

In today's shifting landscape, technology is forging ahead even while it creates problems for farmers, workers and citizens worldwide. In this issue of For A Better World, we learn from Friends of the Earth's Dana Perls about synthetic biology (synbio) vanilla and its potential to displace thousands of vanilla farmers in Mexico. Paul Towers from Pesticide Action Network examines the dwindling populations of butterflies and bees due to the industrial agricultural's dependency on genetically engineered seed and chemical inputs. Ariel Vegosen shares with us her journey to India where she talks with Vandana Shiva about Monsanto and the harsh realities that Indian GMO farmers face.

We are trying to solve many of the problems we have created with market-based solutions that are often limited and can be harmful if not thoughtfully implemented. For example, Brewing Justice author, Dan Jaffee, highlights how fair trade certification systems that are open to plantation owners are undermining small-scale farmers, the very beneficiaries whom fair trade was intended to support. Sarah Besky, author of The Darjeeling Distinction, similarly describes how fair trade certification undermines guaranteed rights for workers on tea plantations in India. We, Fair World Project, break down Fair Trade USA's new apparel certification program, which claims to protect workers in cut-and-sew factories, yet does not mandate that the cotton or the other factories along the supply chain be certified, duping consumers into thinking they are supporting a garment that was ethically made, even though most of the supply chain has not actually been audited. Colette Cosner describes the Domestic Fair Trade Association's work to evaluate market-based initiatives in the U.S. and Canada.

It is clear that we need to focus more on policy transformation and to support committed brands that are using business as a catalyst to create a just economy. Contributions from Saru Jayaraman on raising the minimum wage for restaurant workers, and from Kat Schuett on Guayaki's commitment to empowering indigenous communities, show us a way forward.

To a day when all trade is just,

Dana Geffner

Dana Geffner
Executive Director

Distribute Fair World Project's For A Better World

"For a Better World" is a free semi-annual publication that features articles from a variety of perspectives, including farmers, farm workers, consumers and committed fair trade brands. FWP helps consumers decipher fair trade certification schemes and is an excellent educational resource. Distribute "For a Better World" for free at your business or organization. **Order now by visiting our website at: www.fairworldproject.org**

Letter to the Editor

Tell Us What You Think. We would like to hear your thoughts.
Send letters to: **Fair World Project** - PO Box 42322, Portland, OR 97242
or **email comments to editor@fairworldproject.org**. Include your full name, address, daytime phone and email. The editorial team may shorten and edit correspondence for clarity.

About Fair World Project

Mission:

Fair World Project (FWP) seeks to protect the use of the term "fair trade" in the marketplace, expand markets for authentic fair trade, educate consumers about key issues in trade and agriculture, advocate for policies leading to a just economy, and facilitate collaborative relationships to create true system change.

Why FWP Exists:

- 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.

Goals:

- To contribute to the movement to build a just economy that benefits and empowers all people especially those traditionally marginalized in our current system, including family-scale farmers, small-scale artisans, and food and apparel workers,
- To educate consumers, retailers, manufacturers and marketers regarding:
  - The standards, criteria, and possible fair-washing behind claims of fairness and justice on products they produce, sell and/or consume, including understanding the benefits and limitations of third-party verifications,
  - The ways government and international trade policies support or inhibit a just economy,
  - Key issues, theories, initiatives, policies, and campaigns related to fair trade, family-scale farmers globally, labor justice, sweat-free apparel, and trade and agriculture policy.
- To pressure companies to: improve sourcing and labor practices by obtaining fair trade, fair labor or other appropriate certification for major supply chains; make only authentic eco-social market claims; and support public policies that benefit small-scale producers and workers,
- To promote certification labels, membership organizations, companies, and brands that further progress toward a just economy,
- To facilitate dialogue among and between movements working towards a just economy,
- To advocate for a better world by: educating and inspiring individuals and organizations through our twice-yearly free publication; providing educational resources and workshops for consumers, retailers, and brands; and collaborating with other organizations with similar values.

LEARN MORE

For more Information on Fair World Project please visit: www.fairworldproject.org

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News In Brief

Root Capital Donation

This past World Fair Trade Day the National Cooperative Grocery Association (NCGA) matched donations from Alaffia, Dr. Bronner's, and Equal Exchange and generated $8724 for Root Capital, (www.root-capital.org), a non-profit social investment fund that is pioneering finance for grass- roots businesses in rural areas of developing countries. Thank you NCGA, Alaffia, Dr. Bronner's and Equal Exchange.

New Fair Trade Research Sparks Coordinated Response from Producers, Traders and Advocates

A new research report, Fair Trade Employment and Poverty Reduction in Ethiopia and Uganda (FTEPR), found that wage laborers in Ethiopia and Uganda were no better off on fair trade farms or plantations than on non-fair trade operations. In response, forty-one organizations and ninety-eight individuals representing producers, traders and advocates issued a statement acknowledging that fair trade, and especially fair trade certification, are not perfect solutions, but they do represent a powerful economic model of transforming policies and markets to level the playing field for small-scale producers. Where committed traders work in solidarity with organized producers, communities have already benefited from fair trade. Learn more and read the statement at: http://www.fairworldproject.org/fair-trade-news/in-the-news/.

United Students for Fair Trade Launch Banana Campaign

During the 2013-14 academic year, United Students for Fair Trade (USFT) focused attention on opposing free trade agreements and promoting fair trade as an alternative model through its "Topple the TPP" campaign. While maintaining a trade policy campaign component, for the 2014-15 academic year, the student network will also add a banana campaign to highlight the economic, environmental and political conditions of the production and trade of this popular fruit that is often sold below the cost of production. To get involved in either campaign, or to connect your campus fair trade activities to this national network, visit their Web site at: http:/www.usft.org.

Appalling Conditions for Children Working in U.S. Tobacco Fields, According to New Report

In May of 2014, Human Rights Watch (HRW) released a report called Tobacco's Hidden Children: Hazardous Child Labor in U.S. Tobacco Farming, documenting conditions for children on tobacco farms in North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia. Based on interviews with children ages seven to seventeen, the researchers found evidence of widespread nicotine poisoning from working in the fields, as well as long hours, low pay and additional dangerous conditions, such as excessive heat exposure without sufficient breaks. In response, HRW has started a petition to tobacco companies to prohibit child labor in their fields. Read the report and sign the petition at: http:/www.hrw.org/reports/2014/05/14/tobacco-s-hidden-children.

New Report Shows Small-Scale Farmers Productive but in Danger Due to Land Grabbing

A new report by GRAIN has revealed that small-scale farmers have access to less than 25% of the world's farmland, a proportion that is shrinking through land consolidation (or land grabbing) by corporations and investors. With this land, they feed 70% of the world's population and are often more productive than large-scale farms. The report concludes that we need to put more land back into the hands of small-scale farmers to ensure enough food is grown and distributed, especially among the world's poor. Read the report at: http://www.grain.org/article/entries/4952-media-release-hungry-for-land.

New FWP Video Highlights Differences Between Fair Trade and Free Trade

The U.S. government continues to negotiate free trade policies that will harm farmers, working families, consumers and the environment. The most notable are the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), an agreement with eleven other countries from the Pacific Rim, and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), also known as the Transatlantic Free Trade Agreement (TAFTA), an agreement with the European Union. These agreements depend on the ability of Congress to pass a Fast Track bill, allowing the President to proceed without a full Congressional vote. Though the first Fast Track bill introduced in early 2014 was easily killed before a vote, some members of Congress are working to continue re-introducing different versions of this bill until it passes. To help consumers better understand the effects of free trade policies, why we should oppose Fast Track bills in any form, and the alternative vision of trade held by the fair trade movement, Fair World Project has created a video titled Free Trade vs. Fair Trade. Watch the video at: http://www.fairworldproject.org/overview/fair-trade/fair-world-project-presents-free-trade-vs-fair-trade/.

Report Shows Small-Scale Farmers Key to Addressing Climate Change

A new report by Food Tank, relying on UN Food and Agriculture Organization research and data, shows that smallholders and family farmers around the world are already implementing farming techniques that protect biodiversity, contribute to good nutrition and mitigate the effects of climate change. The report also notes that if 10,000 small- and medium-size farms converted to organic, sustainable production, they could sequester enough carbon to equal the effect of taking one million cars off the road. Read the report at: http://www.foodtank.com/news/2014/03/release-food-tank-by-the-numbers-family-farming-report.

FWP Launches New Tool Evaluating Company Claims of Fairness and Sustainability

Equal Exchange, Just Us! Coffee Roasters, Just Coffee Co-op and Peace Coffee are the only coffee roasters to receive five out of a possible five stars on our new coffee roaster industry analysis. Counter Culture was the highest-scoring "direct trade" roaster, with three stars, and Caribou rated highest among the large coffee chains we evaluated. How did your favorite coffee roaster rate? To find out, visit our brand analysis tool at: http://fairworldproject.org/overview/brand-analysis/coffee/.

For more FWP News: fairworldproject.org/newsroundup

Pesticides, the Lynchpin of Industrial Ag

Contributing Writer
Paul Towers

What do bees and butterflies have in common?

More than you would think; they are the "canaries in the coal mine" of an industrial food system that is out of control. Their dwindling populations speak to the failures of a system heavily dependent upon genetically engineered (GE) seeds and chemical inputs that do not ultimately serve farmers, consumers or the vital pollinators we rely on for our food.

Since the 1940s, pesticide use (be they herbicides, insecticides, fungicides or something else) has increased dramatically, as a handful of pesticide corporations have grown and consolidated, swallowing up seed companies in the process. And those on the front lines of exposure — pollinators and people — are showing just how harmful this heavily industrialized food and farming system can be.

Farmers who have adopted these chemicals got caught on a "pesticide treadmill," forced to use more and more hazardous chemicals to control insects and weeds that developed resistance to previous chemicals. The introduction of GE crops, designed to survive high doses of the pesticides that chemical companies sell, has supercharged this dynamic. As "superbugs" and "superweeds" have developed, farmers have been forced to use more pesticides just to maintain crop losses at the same rates — thus stuck in high gear on the treadmill. Today, more than sixty-one million acres of farmland are infested with weeds resistant to Monsanto's Roundup, the most widely used GE seed and herbicide combination.

2,4-D is an antiquated and drift- prone pesticide that is linked to cancer and reproductive harm — and children are especially susceptible to it.

Farmers are now largely beholden to six pesticide corporations — the "Big Six," including BASF, Bayer, Dow, DuPont Pioneer, Monsanto and Syngenta — for most of their seed and chemical inputs. Since the 1990s, the Big Six have gone on a buying spree, gobbling up genetic engineering technologies, in addition to ever-increasing percentages of the pesticide and seed markets. These corporations now control 76% of the global pesticide market and 60% of the global seed market. And, increasingly, they are cross-licensing GE seeds and pesticides in order to maintain market control.

Evidence of this industry consolidation could not be more clear. As resistance to Roundup continues to grow, farmers are scrambling to find a replacement, and companies are scrambling to sell them one — but there are no adequate solutions currently available on the market.

Harms of Genetic Engineering

GE crops designed to withstand more and more pesticide use are the corporations' perfect vehicle to boost their bottom lines, even if they are not long-term solutions for our food system. And while Roundup-ready crops are proving to lead to unintended consequences, like massive increases in the use of Roundup and the creation of superweeds, these corporations are poised to bring more of the same flawed GE seeds into the market.

Dow, for instance, is promoting its 2,4-D-resistant seeds as the next generation "solution" with its Enlist products. While these crops are still pending USDA approval, the agency has signaled that it will likely allow them into the marketplace. Bad news. 2,4-D is an antiquated and drift-prone pesticide that is linked to cancer and reproductive harm — and children are especially susceptible to it. Not only that, but it also poses significant harm to any other broadleaf crop nearby, since it can drift and damage those crops, threatening neighboring farmers' livelihoods.

Margot McMillen, a farmer and leader with the Missouri Rural Crisis Center and National Family Farm Coalition, described the damage that she experienced with her grapes from 2,4-D drift this way: "When we first noticed the damage — the strangely cupped leaves, then the withering and the leaves that look like onion skin — I went into denial." As with Roundup, over-spraying 2,4-D will create resistant weeds in a short period of time, but not before Dow has made billions of dollars poisoning our food, water and bodies in the process.

A System Out of Balance

The impacts of the explosive growth of GE crops and pesticide use are evident, as populations of monarch butterflies are disappearing from across the American Midwest. In the early 1990s, one billion monarch butterflies made the pilgrimage from the U.S. Great Plains to Mexico. Now, only thirty-three million — less than 4% — are making that migration. The growth in vast monocultures of pesticide-tolerant corn and soy has meant the destruction of milkweed, the butterflies' traditional feeding source as they migrate across the country; there is simply not enough food now to support them.

Photo credit: Jeff Anderson | Beekeepers from Minnesota checking their hives for potential losses

Photo credit: dmaroscar/iStock: A farmworker picking carrots in California's Central Valley

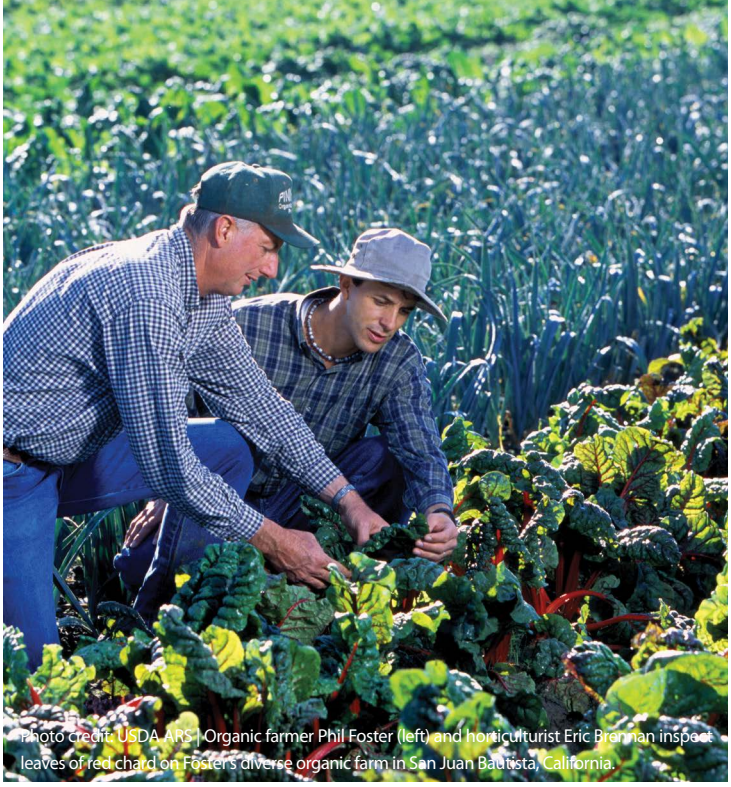


Photo credit: USDA ARS | Organic farmer Phil Foster (left) and horticulturist Eric Brennan inspect leaves of red chard on Foster's diverse organic farm in San Juan Bautista, California.

In the early 1990s, one billion monarch butterflies made the pilgrimage from the U.S. Great Plains to Mexico. Now, only thirty-three million —, less than 4% —, are making that migration.

Declining bee populations are also a symptom of a system out of balance, propelling the food system into even greater trouble. In 2006, beekeepers began reporting unprecedented, large die-offs of bees, and each year since, they have lost on average one-third of their bees. Not only are these vital pollinators responsible for one in three bites of food we eat, but the estimated value of their pollination services in the U.S. farm economy is $19 billion.

Bee population losses are linked to a new type of "systemic pesticide" that now coats the seeds of a majority of U.S. commodity crops, including most of our corn and much of our soy and cotton. Systemic pesticides are absorbed through a plant's vascular system and expressed through every plant part possible — including in the pollen and nectar where bees encounter them. On top of the problems caused by disease and the lack of healthy food sources (similar to butterflies), bees are also dying from both outright pesticide exposure and from consistent, low-dose exposure which compromises their immune systems — the straw that breaks their backs.

Direct Exposure

Our food system also relies heavily on a labor force of talented farmworkers for harvest. The continued use of pesticides in specialty agriculture ensures that these workers are being routinely exposed to harmful chemicals. Workers encounter pesticides all over the place: in the fields where they work, often near their homes and communities, in the air they breathe and the water they drink, on the food they eat, and on their clothes and shoes.

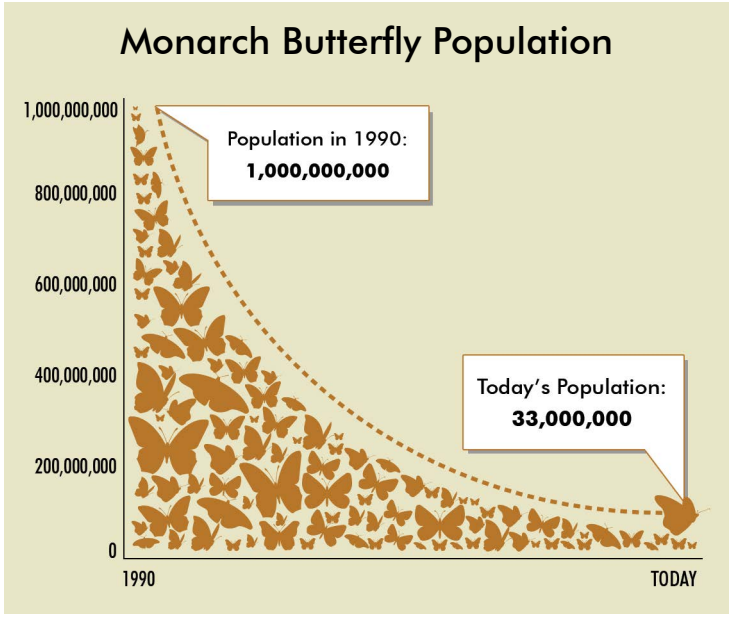
The widespread use of antiquated insecticides like chlorpyrifos is increasingly linked to impacts on worker health and learning disabilities, and these chemicals are in use from the corn fields of Iowa to the citrus groves of Florida to the Salad Bowl of California. When one is taken off the market, another one is simply introduced, and the threat to workers does not change.

A Better Path

The good news is that there is a better path forward, and it is already working around the globe. We do not have to beat the Big Six directly — we just need to demonstrate and support the better alternatives. Agroecological methods that support healthy soils, pollinator habitats, public health and local economies remain the most successful, sustainable and resilient in the end.

Study after study demonstrates that small-scale and organic farmers can provide enough food to feed the world. The United Nations- and World Bank-sponsored International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD), with over 400 scientists, including a Pesticide Action Network (PAN) senior scientist, found that knowledge-intensive agroecological practices are much better at actually feeding the world than chemical-intensive industrial monocropping.

Along the way, programs like the Agricultural Justice Project and Equitable Farming Initiative will help us get there, giving retailers and consumers the standards needed to purchase food that is fair and healthy — so that, in the end, we can all live in a sustainable, healthy, socially just world where such labels are unnecessary.



GMOs 2.0: Synthetic Biology and its Threats to Small-Scale Farmers and Fair Trade

Contributing Writer
Dana Perls

A new generation of flavors, fragrances and oils are entering many of our favorite foods, cosmetics and staple household products, produced via a new, extreme form of genetic engineering known as "synthetic biology" or "synbio." Similar to GMOs, these ingredients stray far from fair trade principles. They are being falsely marketed as "natural" and "sustainable," but are neither, and they pose threats to the livelihoods of small-scale farmers across the world.

So, what is synthetic biology? It is a term that refers to a set of genetic engineering approaches to artificially construct genetic material such as DNA in order to create entirely new forms of life or attempt to "reprogram" existing organisms, such as yeast and algae.

Synbio vanilla, the first major synbio ingredient to enter our food supply, is made in a lab with synthetic DNA and reprogrammed, synbio yeast that feed on sugar. It could be in your ice cream, yogurt and other foods by the end of this year. Synbio vanilla, like all synbio products, is virtually unregulated and is not required to be labeled or undergo independent health or environmental assessment.

The misleading "natural" label will make it hard for consumers to know if they are supporting small-scale, sustainable vanilla farmers or synbio companies. It also means that companies that previously sourced vanilla from small-scale farmers may choose to source the less expensive synbio vanilla, reducing demand and the price farmers receive for truly natural vanilla.

Vanilla is the second-most expensive flavor and fragrance in the world, after saffron. Its high price is due to extremely labor intensive cultivation and harvesting practices. The harvesting of the seedpods, which are found in tropical rainforests, requires specialized knowledge of the vanilla plant, knowledge that is passed down between generations of farmers. Currently, more than 200,000 small-scale family farmers in rainforests across the Global South produce natural vanilla beans.

Alejandrino Garcia Castaño, age 23, comes from a lineage of vanilla farmers. He is a graduate of the Intercultural University of Veracruz in Mexico and works at the Center for Indigenous Arts in Veracruz. He lives in his indigenous hometown, Totonacapan, which, according to his cultural history, is said to be the origin of vanilla.

"300 years ago, the communities of Totonacapan were amongst the first to establish a relationship with the vanilla orchid," explains Alejandrino. Natural vanilla is now produced and harvested by farmers in rainforests in Madagascar, Mexico and across Southeast Asia. "Everything in our region relates to vanilla. Its cultivation symbolizes many things: the history of our indigenous community, our ancient knowledge and traditions, the protection of biodiversity, and the use of low-impact technologies to harvest the delicate plant," he adds.

The process of vanilla cultivation is complicated and unique. Natural vanilla comes from the cured seedpod of the vanilla orchid. "The vanilla orchid flowers only one day of the year. When it opens, the communities in Totonacapan work together to pollinate the flowers completely by hand. It is an ancient tradition; the children learn, the elders teach."

For Alejandrino, vanilla cultivation and forest preservation are intrinsically linked. Without the natural vanilla market adding economic value to the rainforest, it may be displaced by competing agricultural markets such as soy, palm oil, corn and sugar. "The caretakers of vanilla are the caretakers of the forests. If your economies and cultures (of technology) destroy vanilla, the forests will suffer the consequences, too," explains Alejandrino.

Synbio vanilla is also a threat to biodiversity because of its dependence on sugar for production. Whereas natural vanilla is grown with few, if any, chemical inputs by a diversity of small-scale farmers, sugarcane plantations are renowned for slave labor-like working conditions, heavy pesticide use, water-intensive cultivation and a dependency on fossil fuels. The increased demand for sugar could result in the destruction of biodiversity hotspots for more sugarcane production, including Brazil's fragile and biodiverse Cerrado, as well as tropical forests in Latin America, Africa and Southeast Asia.

These problems will be exacerbated as this and other synbio applications scale up to meet increasing demand and replace current production of truly natural flavors, fragrances and oils. Other products in the pipeline include synbio coconut oil substitute, stevia, saffron and ginseng.

Earlier this year, Ecover, Method's parent company and a leader in green cleaning, announced that it had introduced a synbio algal oil into its detergents, making it the first "eco-friendly" company to admit its use of synbio ingredients. This new ingredient is made by synbio algae that exist nowhere in nature, but Method and Ecover will continue to label their products as "natural" and "sustainable."

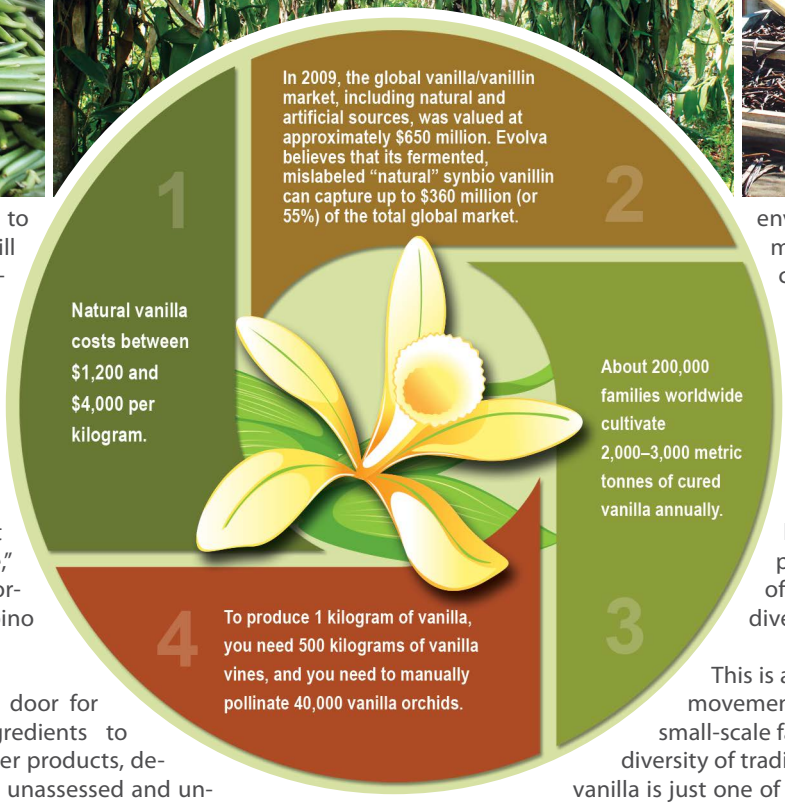
Ecover claims that synbio algal oil will be an "environmentally-friendly, renewable alternative" to palm kernel oil. But while palm oil is a leading cause of deforestation, there is too little knowledge about synbio for it to be rubberstamped as a sustainable alternative. We cannot afford false solutions to real ecological problems.

What do we know? Solazyme, the company producing the synbio algal oil, raises its engineered algae on glucose from sugarcane and dextrose from corn, two of the world's major biofuel commodities primarily produced via chemical-intensive industrial agriculture. The algal oil is synthetically engineered to maximize its concentration of lauric acid, a compound naturally found in palm and coconut oils. But rather than replace the palm

oil industry, which can respond to market changes, this algal oil will likely replace higher-value commodities like coconut oil, impacting approximately 3.5 million small-scale coconut farmers in the Philippines, the world's leading producer of coconuts. Two-thirds of the Philippines' coconut farms are owner-operated, providing farmers with sustainable incomes and livelihoods. Coconut trees, known as the "trees of life," are not only economically important, they are integral parts of Filipino culture and traditions.

Ecover's actions could open the door for other experimental synbio ingredients to sneak into our foods and consumer products, despite being virtually unregulated, unassessed and unsustainably dependent on incalculable amounts of sugar. "To put a 'natural' label on synbio products is a dishonest act which will unleash devastation on small-scale farmers who cultivate the real plants, caring for real people and real forests," warns Alejandrino. "We have fought to maintain our dignity as producers in a competitive market. We want to continue in a way that will not sacrifice the world's forests, soils, identities and traditions."

Until there is strong regulatory oversight, precautionary independent environmental and health assessment, and full transparency concerning the impacts of these synbio ingredients and their required feedstocks, they should not be allowed on the market. We do not have enough information to know that, once scaled up, synbio ingredients will not exacerbate the current unsustainable exploitation of land, labor and life. We need choices which support — not displace — hundreds of thousands of farmers and their diversity of real crops.



This is a critical moment for the fair trade movement to strengthen its support of small-scale farmers, their local products, and a diversity of traditions and cultures. "We know that vanilla is just one of many crops that are under attack by (synthetic biology) technology," says Alejandrino. "We need help; just like the vanilla orchid needs the whole community's hands in order to multiply, so do we in order to preserve a healthy future."

To learn more about synthetic biology, or to get involved, visit www.nosynbio.org and www.synbiowatch.org.

Photo Credits: Francois Bernard

Synbio Ingredients in the Pipeline

Vanilla Flavoring: Synbio vanilla will set the precedent for all other synbio ingredients. While its marketers want to call this synbio vanilla "natural," it is anything but natural. It is made using computer-synthesized DNA in sugar-fed yeast. Synbio vanilla may be used in beverages, foods, lotions, etc.

Coconut Oil: Unilever, the world's third-largest consumer products company, is partnering with a biotech company to produce a synbio oil that could replace coconut oil. The oil is mostly geared for personal care products, but it is not limited to that. It will be produced by algae that are reprogrammed with computer-synthesized DNA.

Saffron: Saffron is the world's most expensive spice, and it is also one of the most challenging to produce. Iran produces more than 90% of the world's saffron today. Synbio researchers hope to create this popular ingredient using synbio yeast fermentation.

Other Ingredients: Ginseng and Patchouli

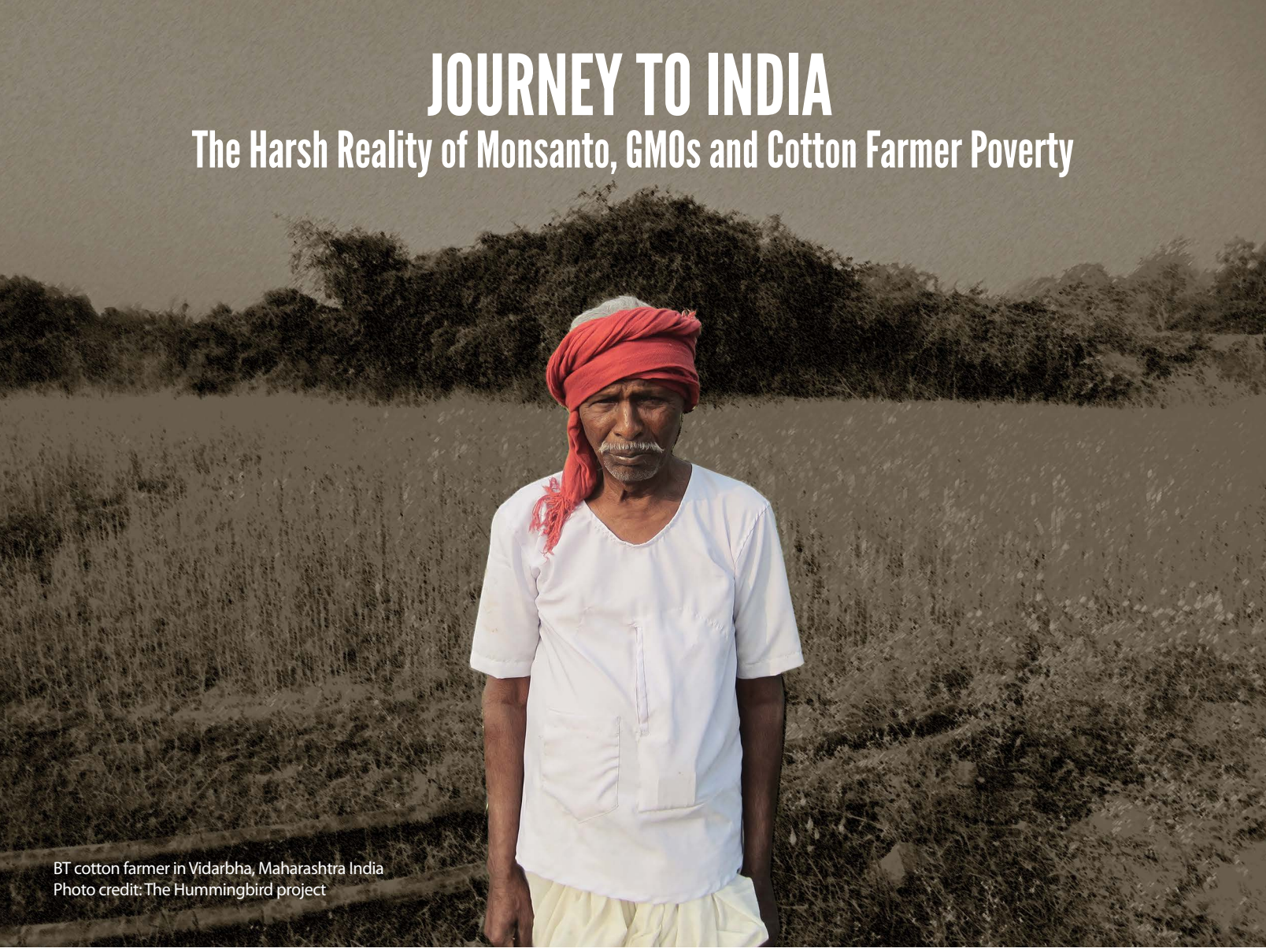
What We Do Not Yet Know

Synbio is an extreme form of genetic engineering, and even though synbio ingredients are lining up to enter the market, we still do not understand the risks. Before these ingredients fill our foods and personal care products, we need to know:

- What are the short- and long-term impacts that new DNA and related organisms will have on other plants, animals, people and water?
- What are the social and economic impacts on the people across the world whose livelihoods depend on producing the natural crops being replaced?
- What are the environmental impacts of growing enough sugar or biomass to feed the synbio yeast? Or of having enough fresh water to grow the algae?
- How will the FDA evaluate the safety of these new synbio ingredients, and how will they be regulated?

JOURNEY TO INDIA

The Harsh Reality of Monsanto, GMOs and Cotton Farmer Poverty



BT cotton farmer in Vidarbha, Maharashtra India
Photo credit: The Hummingbird project

Contributing Writer

By Ariel Vegosen, with an interview of Dr. Vandana Shiva

India — home of multi-colored saris; many languages; pollution; slums; traffic that seems to obey no laws; crowded markets filled with fruits and vegetables grown locally, like eggplant, bananas and neem, plus spices that foreigners deem exotic and long for; beautiful temples; ringing bells; the holy Ganges river; samosas, chutney and aloo tikki chaat; monkeys; Gandhian nonviolence; and 1.27 billion people.

India is also the home of a growing environmental battle between corporations like Monsanto and small-scale farmers. For many generations, the tradition in India was for farmers to save their seeds, grow organically and honor plants like neem, which is considered sacred in Hindu culture. Over the last thirty years, however, farming has changed: more pesticides are being used, and, according to a 2012 India Ink New York Times article, 95% of the cotton being grown is genetically modified, farmers are losing their lands to big agriculture corporations, the rate of cotton farmer suicide is increasing, and many of the local sacred plants are in jeopardy of being patented and genetically modified.

At Navdanya Farm and Bija Vidyapeeth (School of the Seed/Earth University) near Dehardun, the capital city of the state of Uttarakhand in the northern part of India, I had the opportunity to work with, learn from and interview the powerful scientist, environmental activist and founder of Navdanya, Dr. Vandana Shiva. Navdanya was birthed as a response to the growing violence that was happening to the land and the people in the Indian food industry.

"Companies like Monsanto are turning farmers' self-reliance regarding seeds into a dependency on purchasing seeds. Here is how it happens: Monsanto tells a farmer that his seeds are primitive and he should give them up, calling this transaction "seed replacement," so that it sounds more scientific. Monsanto will even pay the farmer to give up his seeds. The farmer thinks he can give up his seeds because his neighbor will surely have them. The farmer does not realize that Monsanto has done the same thing to everyone in 100 villages across the region, so as a result there are now no seeds available, and farmers are forced to buy them from Monsanto," says Dr. Shiva.

This is one reason why the vast majority of cotton grown in India is now genetically engineered. The other is that Monsanto either owns or, through licensing agreements, controls all of the cottonseed companies in India. In addition, intellectual property protection, globalization and pressure on public budgets in India have shifted the balance of plant

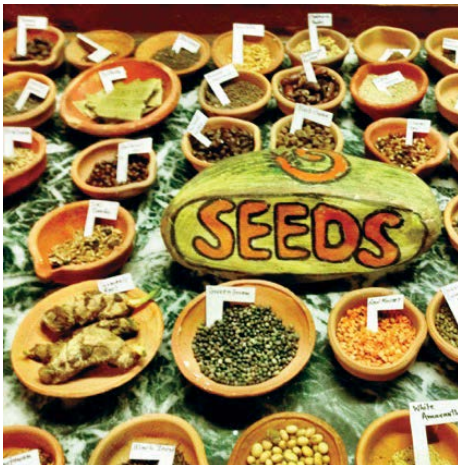
breeding activity from the public to the private sector. "There are only three sources of seed supply — the farmers themselves, some small private companies and the public sector. When it comes to cotton, Monsanto has knocked out all three and become the only supplier, and it is selling BT cotton," explains Dr. Shiva.

BT cotton is a genetically modified variety of cotton that produces an insecticide. BT cottonseeds are expensive and lose vigor after one generation, requiring farmers to buy new stock every year. Before BT cotton took over, farmers could save their seeds and did not need to purchase new stock every year. Currently, India is the number-two exporter of cotton in the world, meaning most of the cotton we use is thus GMO. Yet many of the farmers growing this cotton cannot even afford to buy cotton clothes for their own family.

Small cotton farmers caught facing insurmountable debt are committing suicide at alarming rates. Their debt is caused by a combination of factors. In addition to Monsanto's expensive GMO seeds and the chemical pesticides needed to control pests that formerly were not a problem, other factors include free-market policies that result in global price volatility and routinely push prices below the costs of production, unfair U.S. subsidies for American cotton farmers that further depress global prices, and predatory practices by local money lenders. These farmers are leaving behind families stuck with the harsh reality of poverty and sorrow.

Cotton is not the only plant in India that Monsanto and other big agriculture/chemical companies have an interest in. There have been many attempts to patent, genetically engineer and mass-market neem, bananas, wheat, rice and brinjal (eggplant), too. Dr. Shiva and other activists, through the Navdanya network, have successfully thwarted patents on neem, basmati rice, brinjal and wheat. Currently, Navdanya is working hard to protect India's bananas. On May Day in 2013, along with numerous other organizations, Navdanya launched India's "No to GMO Bananas Campaign." While not the largest exporter of bananas, India is the largest producer of bananas in the world, which means corporations like Monsanto see India's bananas as the next potential GMO crop to mass export.

"'Swaraj' is the idea of freedom. I have a very humble thought: the seeds must be saved and the seeds must be free. Navdanya is based on the philosophy of Earth Democracy, which is based on the reality that we are in community with the earth; in India, there was no divide between humans and nature until corporations started owning the commons. There are aspects of life, which every common law — dating back to Roman times — has said must stay in the commons, meaning owned by the public. Water, air, parks, forests, pastures, drainage systems — these are the commons that have now become commodities. These commons — like the seeds, our life force — are being bought by monopolies and patented," says Dr. Shiva.



Navdanya and Dr. Shiva serve as a beacon of hope throughout India. Over the past two decades, Navdanya has helped set up 111 community seed banks across the country; trained over 500,000 farmers in seed sovereignty, food sovereignty and sustainable agriculture; and helped set up the largest direct marketing fair trade and organic network in the country. Navdanya is rejuvenating indigenous knowledge and culture, creating awareness about the hazards of genetic engineering, defending people's knowledge from biopiracy, and securing food rights. Navdanya Farms has its own seed bank and organic farm, spread over forty-five acres of land. So far, Navdanya has successfully conserved more than 5,000 crop varieties, including 3,000 varieties of rice, 150 varieties of wheat, 150 varieties of rajma (kidney beans), fifteen varieties of millet, and several varieties of pulses, vegetables and medicinal plants.

The impact of Dr. Shiva's work, and that of countless other tireless activists in India and worldwide, to counter GMOs bolsters the hopes of the next generation, and politicians are taking notice. While I was at Navdanya Farms, Prince Charles came to visit, and I had the opportunity to talk with him about the negative impacts of GMOs in both the U.S. and India. He acknowledged that the increasing rate of small cotton farmer suicides was being caused in part by the expenses and difficulties associated with Monsanto's GMO cotton.

Along with Navdanya, there are many organizations in India doing excellent work on environmental rights. Some of these organizations include: the Hummingbird Project, which focuses on training farmers, students and officials on using organic methods, cultivating a living soil, growing healthy food and capturing renewable energy; and the Rights of Nature movement, whose goal is the recognition that trees, oceans, animals and mountains all have rights and deserve to be honored, just as human beings do.

Web sites for more information:

Navdanya
http://www.navdanya.org/

Hummingbird Project
http://www.hummingbirdproject.org/

The Rights of Nature
http://therightsofnature.org/

Photos (top to bottom):

BT cotton farmer in Vidarbha, Maharashtra India
Photo credit: The Hummingbird project

A cotton farmer growing GMO cotton in Vidarbha, Maharashtra, India.
Photo credit: The Hummingbird Project

Contributing Writer, Ariel Vegosen meeting Prince Charles
Photo credit: Rae Abileah

Writer/Activist Rae Abileah, founder of Schumacher College Satish Kumar, Dr. Vandana Shiva, Professor Dr. Madhu Suri Prakash, contributing writer Ariel Vegosen at Gandhi, Globalization, and Earth Democracy training at Navdanya Farms

Seeds saved at Navdanya Farm Seed bank
Photo credit: Rae Abileah

FAIR TRADE USA'S APPAREL PROGRAM SHORTS FAIRNESS IN THE SUPPLY CHAIN

Contributing Writer
Fair World Project

Fair Trade USA (FTUSA) recently finalized a "fair trade" apparel program, and Patagonia soon after announced the launch of a "fair trade" yoga line implementing it. This should all be good news to an organization like ours that advocates for fair trade in the marketplace, but unfortunately it is not.

To provide context for why this program is unacceptable, it is important to know that cotton farmers in the Global South are some of the most marginalized farmers in the world. Impoverished cotton farmers in Mali, Benin, Burkino Faso and Chad have been recognized internationally as victims of trade injustice. According to the Environmental Working Group, U.S. cotton subsidies, which totaled $32.9 billion from 1995–2012, artificially enable American cotton farmers to undercut prices from the Global South. This is just one example of global policies working against small-scale farmers in more marginalized regions.

Small-scale cotton farmers in the Global South, organized into cooperatives, exemplify the central tenants of the fair trade movement, including empowering marginalized producers to compete in a global market, to obtain fair prices and to build sustainable communities.

Unfortunately, Patagonia's "fair trade" yoga line, slated for release in the fall of 2014, will not contain any fair trade cotton from certified fair trade farmers, though the cotton will be organic. Patagonia has chosen the option to certify only the very last stage of production, the cut-and-sew factory. This option, set forth by FTUSA and adopted by Patagonia, completely disregards all preceding stages of apparel production (spinning, ginning, etc.). Farmers, the very core of fair trade, are excluded from fair trade benefits, as are workers at other stages of production.

But what is most troubling is that FTUSA developed this option of factory certification, even though they are not labor experts, nor did they include labor experts in the final development stages. In fact, after FTUSA completed its initial exploratory outreach, a group of labor organizations wrote a letter critiquing the program and asking that it not go forward.

There is no doubt that apparel factories globally need to improve. The Rana Plaza disaster in April of 2013, in which over 1,100 workers in Bangladesh were killed in a factory building collapse, highlighted the dangerous working conditions that most apparel factory workers face today. Workers in this industry also face notoriously low wages, exacerbated by widespread practices such as wage theft.

There are many organizations, whose expertise lies in the realm of labor justice and workers' rights, addressing these problems. FTUSA's own feasibility study notes that many existing factory audit programs already guarantee basic labor standards, but what is missing — and what is in fact the most important next step — is forming and supporting democratic worker organizations in the form of worker-owned cooperatives, labor unions and other worker associations. Yet the final published standards make only two references to democratic organization, both in reference to the fair trade committee, a committee tasked primarily with distributing a financial fair trade premium that participating companies pay. A fair trade committee is not a substitute for democratically organized and empowered workers, and a cash premium is not a substitute for paying workers a living wage. To the second point, FTUSA's own apparel pilot report notes that these premiums add up to just $35 annually per worker on average. It was naiveté at best, or perhaps arrogance, that led FTUSA to believe that they could sweep in with no factory experience and create "fair trade" factories. And it is not surprising that their factory program fails to empower or even benefit workers.

Fairtrade International, the largest global fair trade labeling network, has concluded that apparel made with fair trade cotton should not carry a full fair trade seal, as that would be disingenuous given the current state of factory production. In contrast, FTUSA has decided that it is okay for apparel to carry a fair trade label when only their own inadequate factory standards are upheld — and only at one factory of many in a single supply chain. Though they justify this decision because the word "factory" accompanies the seal on such apparel, the facts remain: cotton fibers contained in a piece of apparel carrying FTUSA's seal may come from farmers in Africa who cannot afford to feed their families, or from farmers in the U.S. who are growing genetically modified cotton and benefiting from U.S. cotton subsidies; workers at other factories in the supply chain may in fact be exploited; and workers at the certified factory are not truly empowered.

There is a very real risk that the label will mislead consumers into believing that they are making an ethical purchase that supports producers, even when most of the people involved in the production remain impoverished, un-empowered and outside of the fair trade system. Once a company gains the fair trade label, they then have little incentive to improve conditions across the rest of their supply chain. Therefore, rather than being a step in the right direction, this type of program misleads consumers, while stunting real progress — and in that way, it is worse than having no fair trade apparel at all.

Though Patagonia is generally regarded as a relatively ethical apparel brand, the next big brand to come along may use FTUSA's weak standards to certify a single product line in order to gain a good reputation for its association with "fair trade."

If there is hope to be found in the apparel sector, it is in the increasing awareness of consumers who will demand better policies from governments and brands, in pioneering companies who consider their entire supply chain for all products offered, and in the progress made by labor rights leaders. Indeed, it is not to be found in FTUSA's current "fair trade" apparel program.

WHAT IS THE HUMAN COST OF YOUR APPAREL?

CUTTING AND SEWING

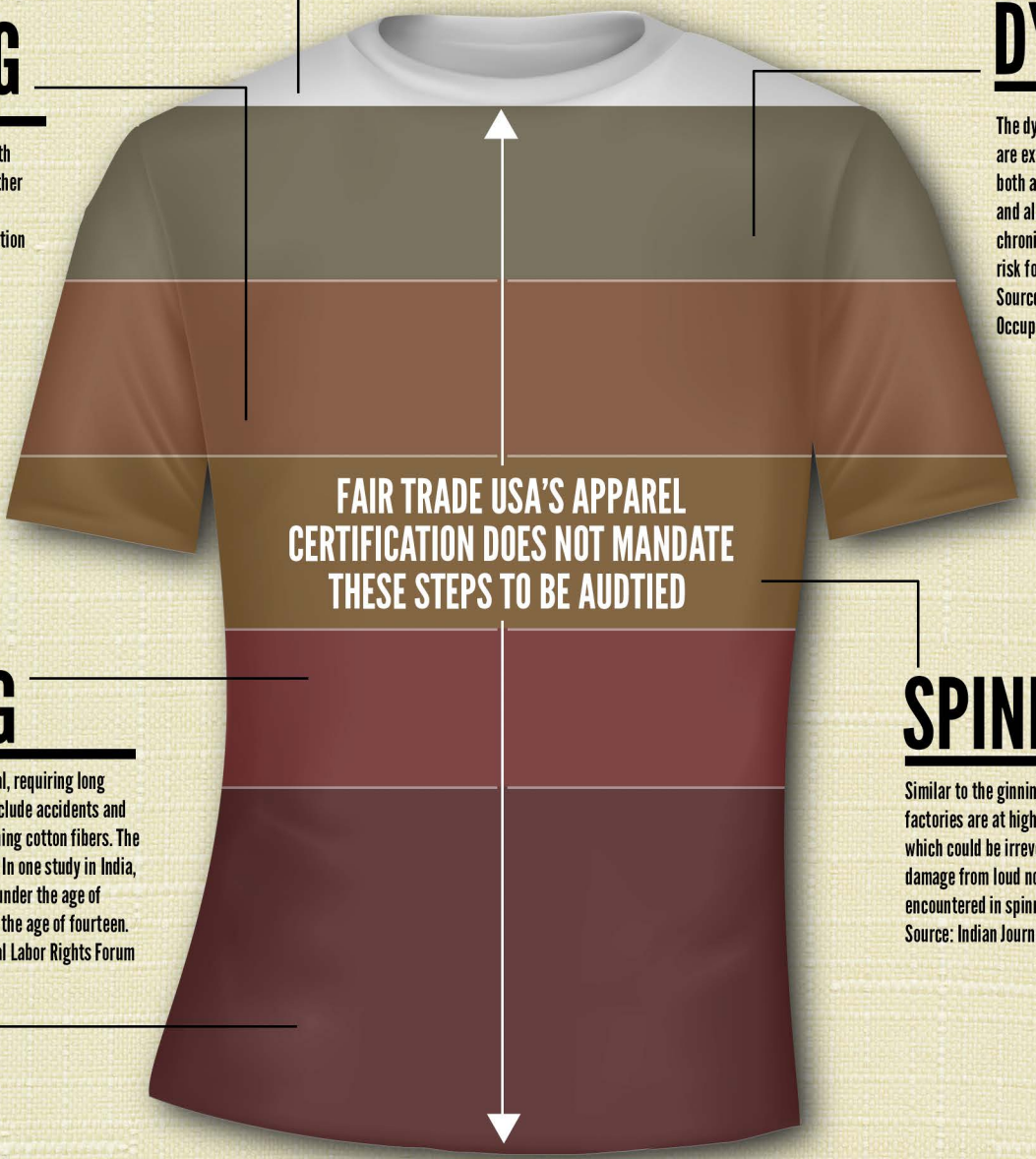
Undercover reporters in Bangladesh recently found evidence of physical abuse and forced labor of children, forced overtime and unsafe conditions for adults, and workers trained by managers to lie about working conditions to inspectors. Source: The Guardian

WEAVING OR KNITTING

Factory weavers face similar health and safety concerns to those in other factories. In addition, the industrialization and mass production of cloth is threatening traditional artisan hand weavers' livelihoods.

DYING

The dyes used in the garment industry are extremely toxic, and workers risk both acute responses, such as asthma and allergic reactions, as well as chronic conditions such as increased risk for some cancers.
Source: ILO Encyclopedia of Occupational Health and Safety



GINNING

Cotton ginning jobs are seasonal, requiring long shifts at low wages. Dangers include accidents and respiratory disease from breathing cotton fibers. The incidence of child labor is high. In one study in India, nearly half of all workers were under the age of eighteen, and many were under the age of fourteen.
Source: Prayas and International Labor Rights Forum

SPINNING

Similar to the ginning stage, workers in spinning factories are at high risk for respiratory disease, which could be irreversible. Accidents, ear damage from loud noise, and fires are other risks encountered in spinning factories.
Source: Indian Journal of Fiber & Textile Research

HARVESTING WHY COTTON SHOULD BE ORGANIC AND FAIR TRADE!

Cotton is grown on less than 3% of farmland, yet uses 16% of the world's insecticides and is the second-most insecticide-laden crop grown.
Source: The Deadly Chemicals in Cotton, Environmental Justice Foundation, in collaboration with the Pesticide Action Network

On average, 90% of U.S. cotton is genetically engineered.
Source: Organic Trade Association and IBID

Insecticides are designed to affect the nervous and reproductive systems of insects, which are similar to both animals and people. This makes insecticides the most hazardous pesticide to human health, causing a wide range of both acute and chronic conditions, behavioral changes, increased risk of cancer and death.
Source: The Deadly Chemicals in Cotton, Environmental Justice Foundation, in collaboration with the Pesticide Action Network

Aldicarb, cotton's second-best-selling insecticide and the most acutely poisonous to humans, can kill a man with just one drop absorbed through the skin, yet it is still used in twenty-five countries and the U.S., where sixteen states have reported it in their groundwater.
Source: The Deadly Chemicals in Cotton, Environmental Justice Foundation, in collaboration with the Pesticide Action Network

IS THERE ROOM FOR PLANTATIONS IN FAIR TRADE?

Contributing Writer
Daniel Jaffee

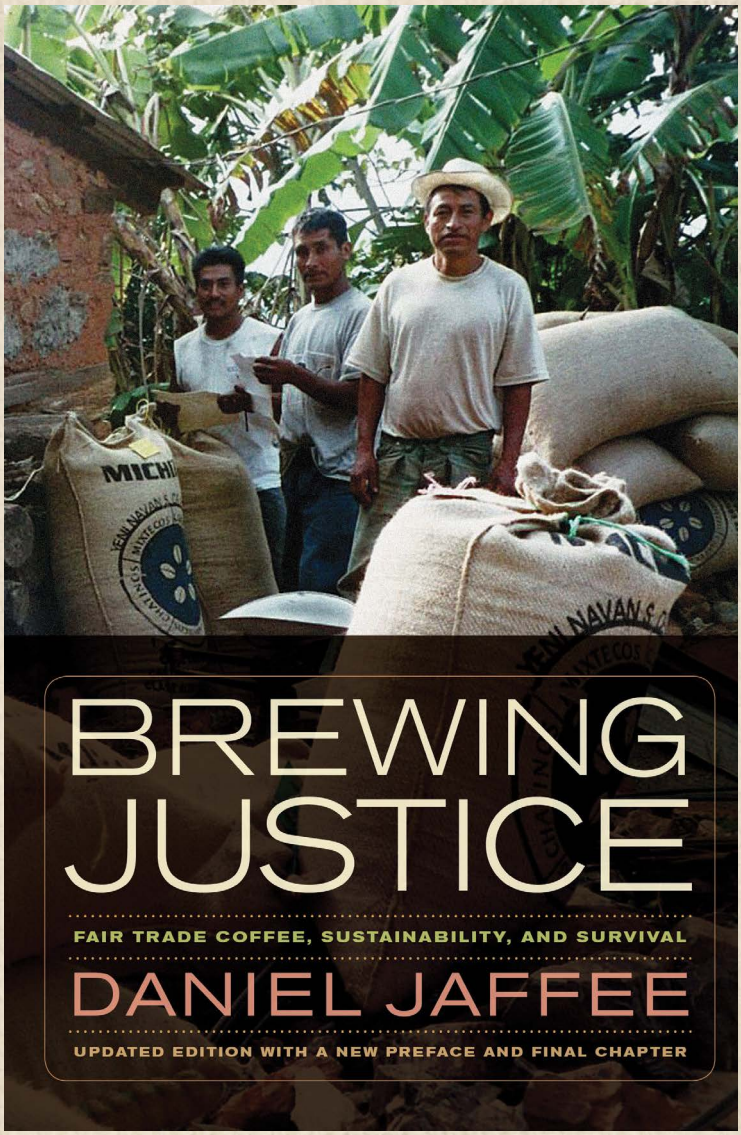
When the certifier Fair Trade USA (FTUSA) announced in 2011 that it would split from the international fair trade system and create its own certification scheme, the fair trade movement erupted in controversy. Arguing that it was wrong to exclude hired laborers from the benefits of fair trade, FTUSA's new standards for the first time permit the unlimited certification of all crops from agribusiness plantations, including coffee. However, largely missing from the rhetoric on both sides of this move was a deeper discussion of the significance of agribusiness plantations. What is their structural relationship to the peasant smallholders who have been at the center of fair trade since its inception? Is there room within fair trade for both small producers and plantations?

The "hired labor" form of fair trade was originally intended as a minor supplement to small-farmer production in crops such as tea and bananas. As the international certifier FLO (now Fairtrade International, or FTI) and TransFair USA (now FTUSA) expanded the range of certified products from plantations, however, they also began to argue that this was an opportunity to reform labor practices in the plantation sector.

What does "fair trade" mean in the context of plantations? The hired labor standards of both FTUSA and FTI require companies to pay national minimum wages (but not a living wage), allow workers to organize (but not guarantee the presence of independent labor unions), and pay fair trade premiums into funds administered by worker-management "joint bodies." As of 2012, there were 187,500 hired laborers in fair trade globally, an increase of 46% since 2008. Despite this growth, plantations accounted for only 10% of total fair trade sales in 2012. One reason is that the international standards of FTI still prohibit the certification of several key crops from plantations —including coffee, cacao, sugar, cotton, honey and rice — in order to protect small producers growing these crops. Importantly, these six crops together represent fully 76% of total global fair trade sales.

For this reason, the economic stakes around expanding hired labor certification into these crops are very high. They represent a lucrative market for large corporate food firms, who would prefer to receive fair trade certification for their existing supply chains relying on monocrop plantations, rather than having to source them from small-farmer cooperatives. In the U.S., with FTUSA's departure from the FTI system, their wishes have now been granted.

While academic research shows that access to fair trade markets often generates real and even significant social and economic benefits for small producers, the story is different for the hired labor model. The academic literature on the social impact of fair trade on plantations, with a few exceptions, indicates that financial benefits to workers are minimal and sometimes nonexistent, that certifiers do not monitor labor conditions effectively, that "joint bodies" are often unrepresentative and problematic, and that management frequently impedes labor organizing.



Crucially, the expansion of fair trade certification into plantations is not being driven by labor unions or labor rights organizations, but rather by large coffee roasters and other retailers, including grocery chains anxious to offer more variety and volume of certified products under their store brands.

In order to evaluate the appropriateness of designating plantation production as "fair," it is important to examine the forces pushing small producers around the world off of their lands. Sociologist Philip McMichael writes that "commercial agriculture and habitat degradation routinely expel peasants … from rural livelihoods." This process of depeasantization creates a vulnerable wage-dependent labor force in rural areas and fuels migration from the countryside to cities across the global South. The structural adjustment policies mandated by the World Bank and IMF promote monoculture, export-oriented agriculture as the only development strategy for indebted nations. "Free trade" policies also contribute to this dispossession. Finally, the growth of plantations is a manifestation of the "global land grab" — the dramatic increase since 2007 in the purchase and long-term leasing of land in the global South to grow monocultures of food and biofuel crops, almost always without consulting the inhabitants. This land — at least 100 million acres to date — is being acquired for extremely low prices by hedge and equity funds, investment banks and some national governments. As a result, millions of peasant farmers are being displaced from their lands and homes.

Viewing fair trade certification of plantations in this broader context helps to illuminate how it affects the small producers whom fair

trade was created to benefit. Even if FTUSA and FTI only granted certification to plantations with the best labor policies, they would still be ratifying a production model that directly competes against small producers. According to FTI statistics, across all crops, the existing small-producer organizations are only able to sell 31% of their harvests at fair trade prices, due to insufficient demand. Yet large corporate buyers prefer to buy from large-scale producers whenever possible. Under these conditions, to certify plantation crops as "fair trade" undermines the livelihoods of organized small producers of the same crops, who are made more vulnerable by the growth of these very export-oriented plantations. In his book *Land Grabbing*, Stefano Liberti quotes an investment fund manager, speaking at an elite land investor conference, who tells attendees "There's no point trying to fool ourselves. Large-scale agricultural businesses take land, water and markets from small farmers. We're going to sell our products at a lower price, and we're going to compete with small family farmers."

To be clear, the point is not that plantation agriculture is not in dire need of strict regulation and reform of its labor and environmental practices. Quite the contrary: conditions on plantations are often highly abusive. However, a fair trade system whose foundational goal is to create greater social and economic justice for marginalized small producers cannot simultaneously be the vehicle for placing a stamp of approval on slightly less-exploitative practices by agribusiness corporations and local elites. Independent unions and strong public regulation are vital to curtailing labor rights abuses in agribusiness, and a separate certification for plantation products could also be a useful option. However, the same fair trade seal used to protect democratically organized small producers, and to make that clear to consumers, is not the appropriate tool to accomplish this goal.

U.S. consumers who want to know that their fair trade purchases are supporting small producers now have both new challenges and new options. With FTUSA's departure from the FTI system, there is no longer any way to know whether its certified products come from plantations or democratically organized farmers. The Fairtrade America seal, which applies the standards of its parent FTI, at least ensures that several major crops come exclusively from small producers. Finally, the new Small Producers' Symbol (SPP) is placed only on goods from small-producer organizations.

Despite the conflicts that have shaken the movement and split the certification system, the fair trade model continues to help sustain organized small producers and their communities across the Global South. Yet there is more need than ever for truly fair trade.

Parts of this article are excerpted from the 2014 updated edition of Daniel Jaffee's book, Brewing Justice, with permission from the University of California Press.

FAIR TRADE RECENT RESEARCH ROUND-UP

The Darjeeling Distinction: Labor and Justice on Fair Trade Tea Plantations in India
by Sarah Besky, 2014

Sarah Besky lived and worked with tea plantation laborers in Darjeeling, and she evaluates the ability of three different movements — fair trade, geographic indication and state independence — to bring justice to tea pickers. She argues that none of these movements adequately accounts for the perceptions and needs of the workers themselves. Because local laws require plantations to provide workers with provisions such as housing, in some cases fair trade duplicates government requirements, and in others it can even undermine them. She notes that worker rights should be guaranteed by governments and should not be an optional market incentive.

> FWP Conclusion: In the specific context of tea plantations in Darjeeling, fair trade certification is not the right tool to bring justice to plantation workers.

Brewing Justice: Fair Trade Coffee, Sustainability and Survival
by Daniel Jaffee, updated edition, 2014

Daniel Jaffee lived and worked with coffee farmers in Oaxaca, Mexico, and his original 2007 book followed the lives of organic and fair trade coffee farmers there, as well as provided context for the fair trade movement through extensive interviews and analysis. His updated version analyzes changes within the movement over the past seven years and makes further recommendations for strengthening it.

> FWP Conclusion: Among the indigenous farmers in Oaxaca represented in this book, fair trade did have measurable positive outcomes. But the fair trade movement has a long way to go to fully achieve its goals, and including plantations in the fair trade model goes against its original intent to support small-scale farmers.

Fair Trade, Employment and Poverty Reduction in Ethiopia and Uganda
by Christopher Cramer, Deborah Johnston, Carlos Oya and John Sender, 2014

This research found that wage laborers in Uganda and Ethiopia, on both fair trade plantations and fair trade small-scale farms, were not any better off in terms of pay and working conditions than those on non-certified farms.

> FWP Conclusion: The report contributes greatly to the visibility of wage laborers in fair trade, and it hints at what appears to be backed up anecdotally also — that fair trade is most successful when it involves long-term relationships with committed buyers throughout the supply chain and does not rely on certification to bring about change.

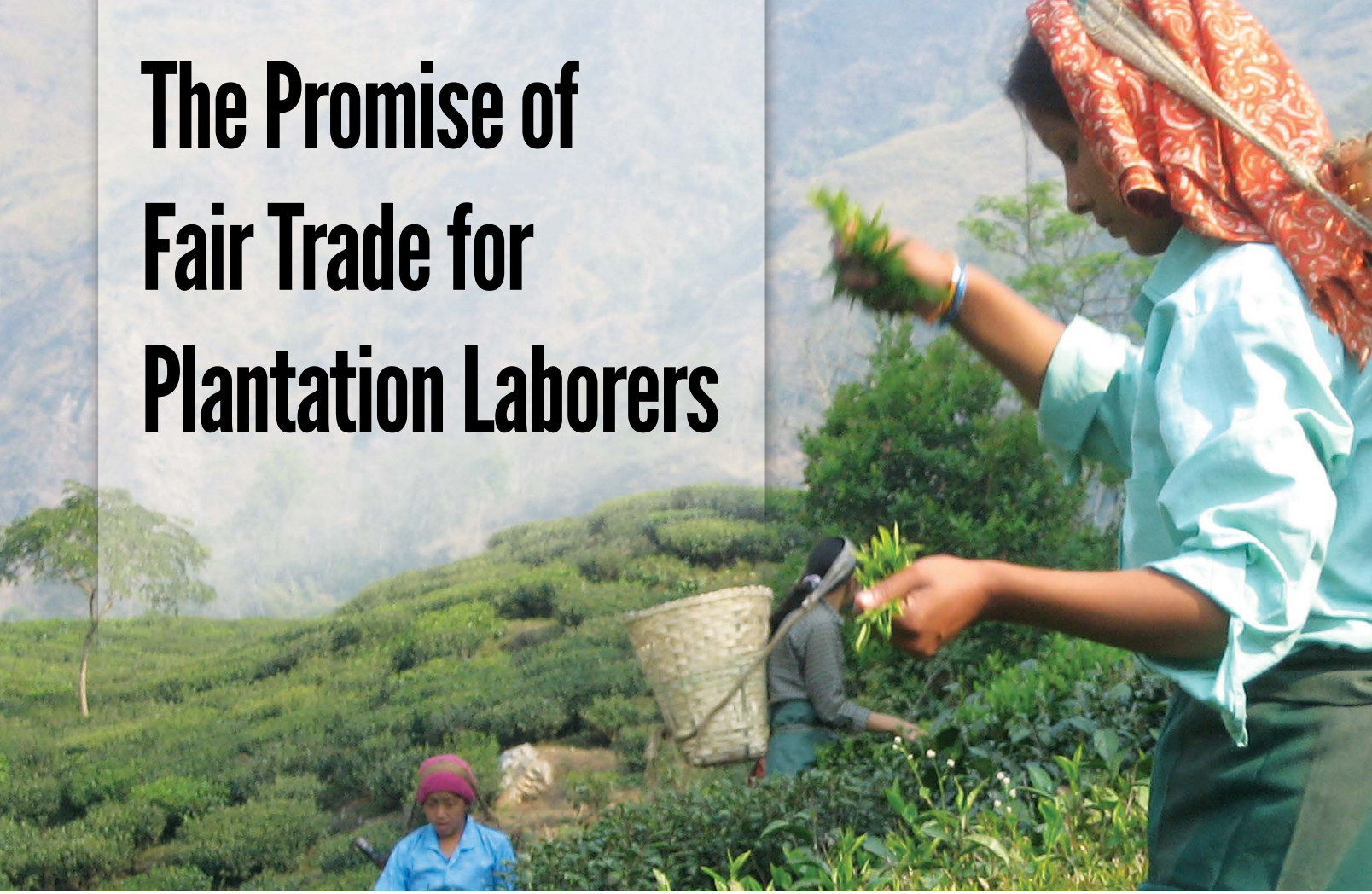
The Fair Trade Scandal: Marketing Poverty to Benefit the Rich
by Ndongo Samba Sylla, 2014

Ndongo Samba Sylla's research concludes that only 3% of the money spent on fair trade products in rich countries actually makes it back to producers — and that money does little to lift people out of poverty, especially in the poorest countries.

> FWP Conclusion: The marketing rhetoric of major certifiers and large multinational companies has become too distant from the on-the-ground fair trade movement. It is time to re-emphasize the need for both policy transformation and authentic, market-based initiatives focused on solidarity.

FWP Overall Analysis in Light of Recent Research: Fair trade certification is not the right tool for plantations, and expectations of certification in general should be reviewed and improved; this is particularly the case as larger corporate players enter the movement. However, where farmers and brands have remained committed to the principles of fair trade and to building meaningful relationships, fair trade is still working well.

The Promise of Fair Trade for Plantation Laborers



In "The Power of the Consumer," a short film released by Fair Trade USA, the project of fair trade is translated directly as one of individual purchasing power. Paul Rice, the charismatic CEO of Fair Trade USA narrates:

"We're facing such huge global challenges today: poverty, climate change, environmental degradation ... We feel so powerless in our lives in the face of these huge global problems and the old approaches, where there is government intervention, government legislation, or international development aid and charity ... They're not working fast enough, so we have to harness the power of the market, and we have to get consumers involved."[1]

Contributing Writer

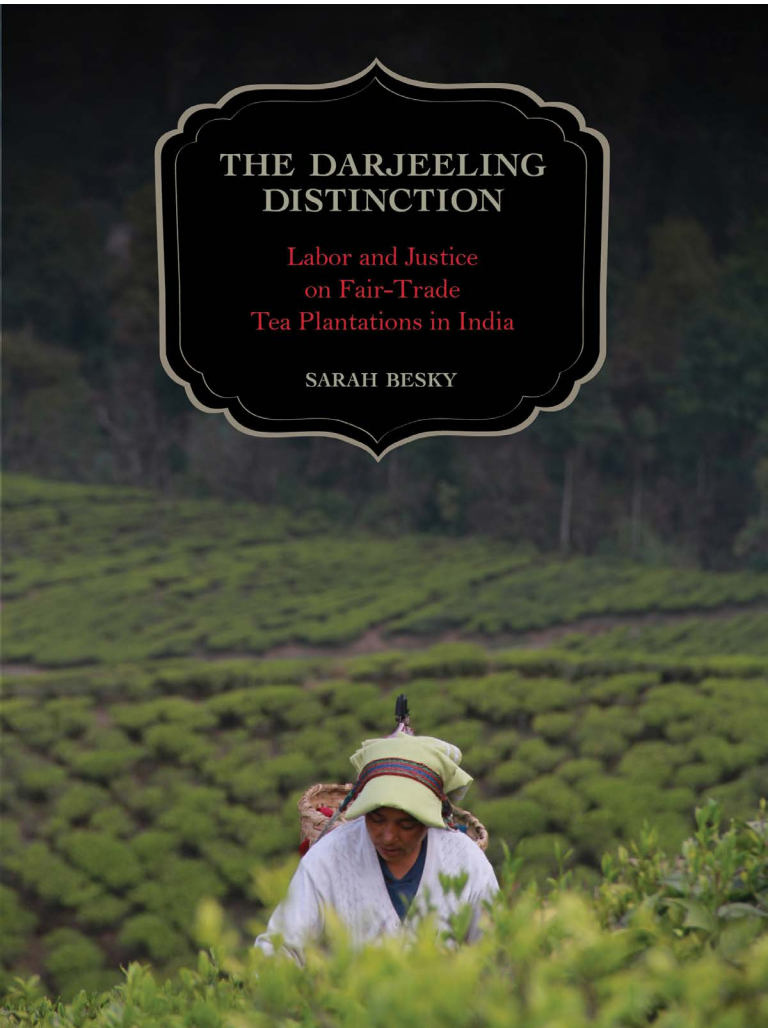
Sarah Besky

Social justice for agricultural laborers far away from the aisles of the Bay-area grocery stores in which this film was shot is possible and attainable through market mechanisms and individual consumer action. Governments, laws and international development agencies have failed agricultural workers. Individual consumers, according to Fair Trade USA's logic, must step in — and step around — these institutions in order to actualize change. In public pronouncements and private conversations, fair traders echo these sentiments that state institutions have "failed" or are otherwise "corrupt."

In this model, justice comes about when "involved consumers" can freely and conscientiously trade with people who provide the goods and services they want, unfettered by corrupt or inefficient regulations. Governments have little interest in satisfying consumers' desires for food that is "good," either in taste or in conditions of production. Fair trade logic assumes that by permitting more consumers to make more "free" choices to direct their dollars to the makers of "good" food, consumer desires and producer needs will both be met. Importantly, fair trade envisions justice as voluntary. The consumers to whom Rice addresses his message make the choice to buy "good" food.

In the case of Darjeeling tea plantations, where I have conducted fieldwork as a cultural anthropologist since 2006, fair traders' dismissal of the state's role in ensuring agricultural justice is profoundly misguided. As many of the readers of this magazine know, fair trade certification encompasses diverse agricultural contexts — from the coffee cooperatives of Central America, to which many contemporary fair traders trace their activist roots as solidarity workers, to the post-colonial tea plantations of South Asia and Africa. There is much debate over the ethics and efficacy of the extension of fair trade to plantations, and I and others continue to be actively engaged in that debate, but fair trade at any scale or location continues to be depicted as an "alternative" to conventional trade. And this alternative can include producers of any crop, from anywhere in the world.

Photo Caption:
A plantation laborer on a fair trade certified plantation in Darjeeling.



Sarah Besky's research was specific to Fairtrade Certified tea plantations and how certification effects the workers on these plantations.

Owners of fair trade-certified tea plantations in India are not motivated only by their personal desires to conserve the environment and ensure the well-being of laborers. The provision of the basic social and environmental goods that fair trade organizations and advocates see themselves as underwriting are, in fact, already mandated by Indian labor law. The government of then-newly independent India enacted the Plantations Labour Act (PLA) in 1951 to protect workers from mistreatment at the hands of plantation owners. This legislation was driven in part by the active presence of labor unions in Darjeeling, Assam, the Dooars and Kerala, independent India's major tea-growing regions. The PLA's tenets also drew upon wartime best practices established by the Indian Tea Association. Today, the PLA continues to guarantee plantation workers' social welfare, mandating that owners provide workers with housing, health care, food rations, firewood and schooling. The PLA makes a plantation's moral economy — the reciprocal relationships between labor, management and the plantation landscape — into a matter of state concern.

During the period of my fieldwork, many planters sought to "update" what they saw as "irrelevant" sections of the PLA, namely the aforementioned social welfare clauses. Many owners saw these provisions as "social costs" that they were unfairly expected to pay. Members of the Darjeeling Tea Association (DTA), the plantation owners' industry organization, lobbied the central government to rewrite the PLA so that they would no longer have to bear these costs. Owners contended that workers should provide these things for themselves.

As DTA members fought against paying "social costs," they also sought fair trade certification in order to open new markets for their tea. In a stinging paradox, owners gained the attention of fair trade certifiers because of their adherence to the PLA, even as they foresaw fair trade programs as a method for justifying the very same law's rollback or repeal. Fair trade certification was an effective and lucrative means of reaching U.S. and European markets. With its promise of higher prices, it provided, at worst, a means for subsidizing the social costs of the PLA and, at best, a reason for doing away with the PLA altogether.

Fair trade plantations and marketers alike contend that fair trade premiums adequately provide workers with basic necessities. Fair trade "success stories" — stories about workers' lives improving, thanks to the premiums provided by certification — appear frequently in Web sites and other promotional materials. Descriptions on fair trade tea boxes and retail Web sites make lofty claims about how fair trade has provided pharmacies, money to finance weddings and funerals for laborers' families, additional housing and roads — all of which India's PLA already mandates.

So, what is fair trade doing for Darjeeling tea plantation workers? That is a complicated question, but the short answer is: probably not what the packaging and marketing materials describe. Even wages on Indian plantations are set through state-regulated wage agreements, and fair trade cannot affect workers' monetary earnings either. If anything, a movement as broad and powerful as fair trade should work with state institutions governing labor, trade and agriculture instead of promoting a placeless, one-size-fits-all model of justice.

The above is excerpted from Besky's book, The Darjeeling Distinction: Labor and Justice on Fair Trade Tea Plantations in India, published by the University of California Press in 2014.

[1] http://fairtradeusa.org/what-is-fair-trade [YouTube video, accessed 1/23/2013].

POLICY REFORM CORNER

Serving Up Change to the Restaurant Industry

Contributing Writer

By Saru Jayaraman

The federal "tipped minimum wage" for restaurant workers is $2.13 an hour. What that means is that in the United States of America, if you have a job in which you rely on tips for a living — for instance, as a server or busser in a restaurant — employers are required by law to pay you just $2.13 an hour. The rest of the difference between $2.13 and the standard minimum wage you presumably make up for with tips. But if you do not earn enough in tips, good luck trying to get your boss to fork over the difference. More than 60% of low-wage workers have been victims of "wage theft," in which employers do not pay the wages due, and tipped workers are most likely to be subject to this practice.

According to The Economic Policy Institute, low-wage workers are also literally robbed more often than banks, gas stations and convenience stores combined. That is in addition to the injustice inherent in the minimum wage law itself — the federal tipped minimum wage of $2.13 an hour has not been raised one single penny since 1991.

Wages are only one of the problems facing America's low-wage restaurant workers. Almost 90% of them do not have access to paid sick days, which is not only bad for those workers and their families but also for the other workers and customers in restaurants. Who wants to eat food cooked by someone who has the flu or worse? Moreover, many restaurant workers face sexual harassment and discrimination on the job — including in the handing out of promotions, which research has shown go disproportionately to the white people working in restaurants. Combined with sub-minimum wages and wage theft, it is clear that as hard as restaurant workers across the country work to put delicious meals on our tables, the portrait of their working conditions is horribly dark.

There is another way. Restaurants that have chosen to take the higher road and fix their unjust pay and employee practices have found that they have lower turnover rates and higher customer satisfaction. In fact, better business practices in the restaurant industry can reduce employee turnover by almost half. Meanwhile, raising the minimum wage does not hurt economic growth but instead, if anything, appears to have a positive effect. The seven states that have already abolished the sub-minimum wage — Alaska, California, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, Oregon and Washington — have seen above-average employment growth. In addition, per capita restaurant sales increase as the tipped minimum wage increases. Raising the minimum wage is not just good for restaurant workers, it is good for restaurant owners, customers and our entire economy.

That is what Peter Ellis, who owns the restaurant El Fuego in Philadelphia, recently went to Washington, DC to personally tell members of Congress — that raising the minimum wage is good for restaurant workers and business owners like himself. "Two of my workers are single mothers, and if their kids' daycares are closed for a day so that they can't go into work, they shouldn't be punished by not making a salary for that day," said Ellis. "I have a wife and a kid, and I know that if my kid's daycare is closed, I can go home, no problem, but other people can't just because of their circumstances, and that's not fair." Instead, Ellis is part of a growing movement of employers who know that good wages and good labor practices make for good business.

Sometimes the right thing to do is not the easy thing to do. But not in this case. Finally increasing the federal sub-minimum wage, thus giving all tipped workers a much-needed, well-deserved and long-withheld raise, will help thousands of American families escape desperate poverty while putting more cash into the hands of consumers who will spend it, rather than allowing fast-food chain CEOs to just hoard it. Plus, everyone in America benefits from restaurants that are healthy and sustainable, in every sense of the word.

It doesn't have to be this way...

What would happen if we raised the federal minimum wage to $10.10 for all workers?

700,000
tipped workers would be lifted out of poverty (over half would be workers of color)

+

$12.7 billion
more wages every year and more spending to boost the economy and create jobs

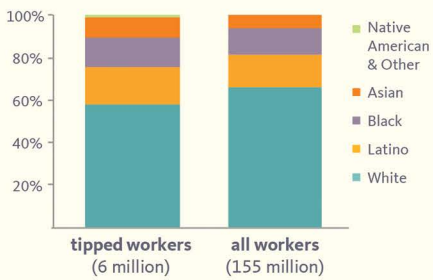
GROW THE ECONOMY

Raise the wages of tipped workers!

Who are tipped workers?

- ***2 in 3*** are women
- Most are restaurant workers (mainly servers)
- Half are 30 years old or older
- ***1 in 3*** are parents and ***1 in 6*** of those rely on free lunches to feed their children
- ***1 in 7*** rely on food stamps

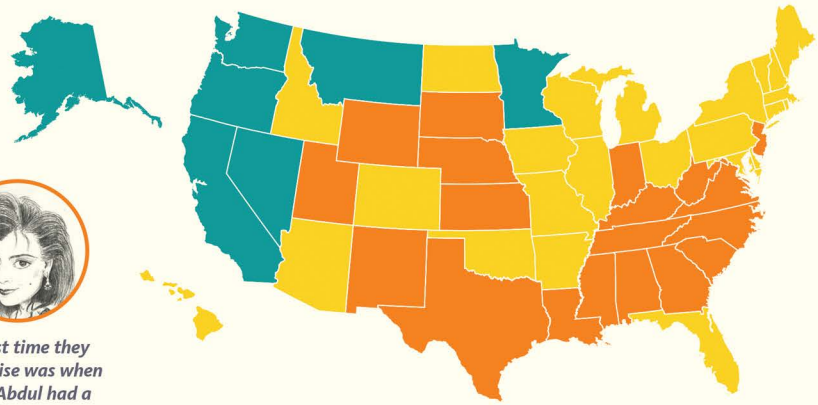
Racial Composition



Tipped work is one of the *FASTEST GROWING* occupations and one of the *LOWEST PAID*, especially for workers of color.

Tipped workers earn a median of $8.00/hr,* ***but which state you live in matters:***

MINIMUM WAGES OF TIPPED WORKERS BY STATE



Minimum wage for tipped workers (excluding tips)

- lowest ($2.13)
- middle ($2.14–7.24)
- highest ($7.25–9.19)

Source: Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division, *Minimum Wages for Employees*. January 1, 2013. http://www.dol.gov/whd/state/tipped.htm

The last time they had a raise was when Paula Abdul had a top 10 hit in 1991!

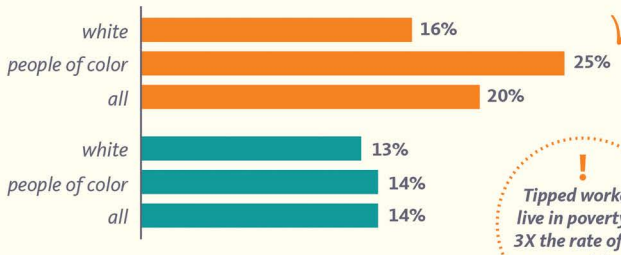
In states with the lowest minimum wage ($2.13/hr), the poverty rate for workers of color is nearly DOUBLE that of states with the highest minimum wage.

In states with the highest minimum wage ($7.25–9.19/hr), wages still aren't great, but the poverty rate for tipped workers is lowest of all the states.

In states with a minimum wage in the middle ($2.14–7.24/hr), poverty rates are in between the other states.

That's 1 in 4 living in poverty!

POVERTY RATES FOR TIPPED WORKERS



Tipped workers live in poverty at 3X the rate of the U.S. workforce.

*This wage includes tips. Tipped worker paychecks primarily go to taxes, meaning workers often live off of tips alone.

Join ROC United's campaign to raise the tipped minimum wage at livingofftips.com.

ROC United is working to raise wages and labor standards for the nation's 10 million restaurant workers. Learn more at www.rocunited.org.

Lifting Up What Works®
PolicyLink

PolicyLink is a national research and action institute advancing economic and social equity by Lifting Up What Works®. Learn more at www.policylink.org.

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce. Bureau of the Census. Current Population Survey. 2006-2012. Calculations by Restaurant Opportunities Centers United based on King et al., Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 3.0 [Machine-readable database]. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2010. <http://usa.ipums.org/usa/> (accessed November 2013).

Design by Leslie Yang. Paula Abdul illustration by Jim Sweet.

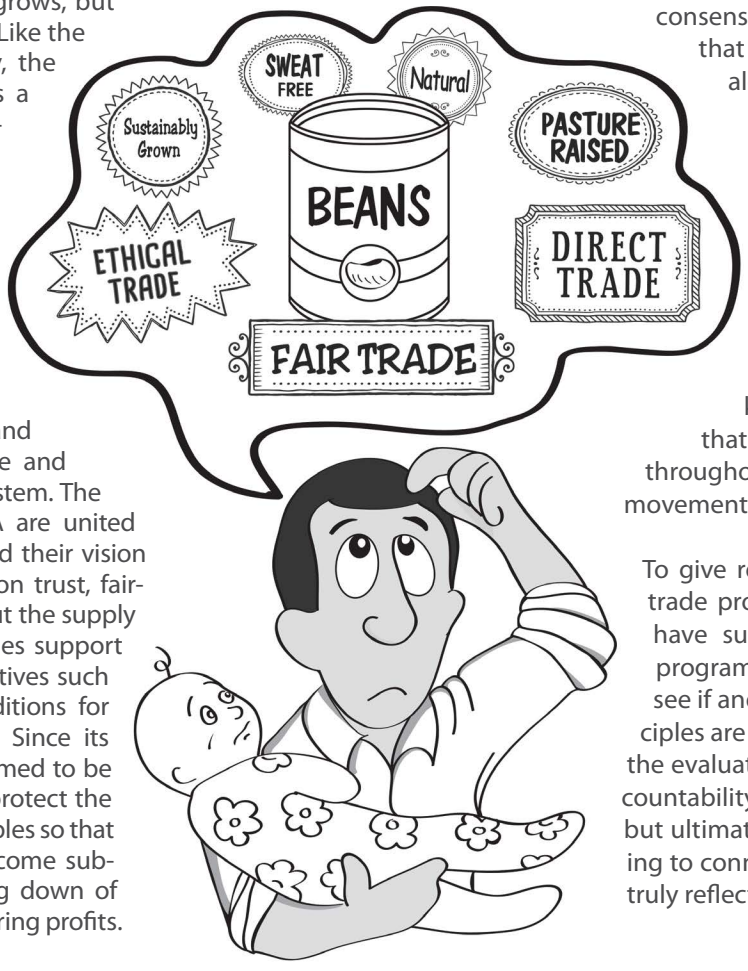
Fair Trade in the Global North:

Domestic Fair Trade Association Evaluates an Emerging Landscape

DOMESTIC FAIR TRADE ASSOCIATION

Contributing Writer
Colette Cosner

Over the last year, fair trade certifiers, previously focused on the Global South, have begun to turn their attention to food operations in the U.S. and Canada. Thanks to an upswell of local food initiatives — living wage victories, GMO debates and farmworker rights campaigns — people are starting to acknowledge the human and environmental degradations in the food system. As we become more exposed to the injustices that wind up on our tables, consumer demand for domestic fair trade products grows, but so too does consumer confusion. Like the organic movement in its infancy, the domestic fair trade movement is a veritable alphabet soup of overlapping market claims and conflicting definitions. If we want to bring the principles of fair trade to the Global North, we have to start with education.



Enter the Domestic Fair Trade Association (DFTA). The DFTA is a national coalition of farmers, farmworkers, retailers, processors and NGOs dedicated to health, justice and equity in the food and farming system. The diverse stakeholders of the DFTA are united by a common set of principles and their vision for an agricultural system based on trust, fairness and accountability throughout the supply chain. Domestic fair trade principles support small-scale farms, farmer-led initiatives such as farmer cooperatives, just conditions for workers, and organic agriculture. Since its founding in 2008, the DFTA has aimed to be a resource for consumers and to protect the integrity of their own strong principles so that "domestic fair trade" does not become subject to "fair-washing," the watering down of standards for the purpose of garnering profits.

In early 2014, the DFTA published evaluations of six prominent fair trade and social justice certification programs. The purpose of the evaluations was to identify which domestic fair trade principles are being addressed well by certification programs, which ones are not, and ultimately which programs demonstrate best practices that could serve as a model for other programs. Members of the DFTA's stakeholder groups worked together to approve the results of the evaluations through consensus: a decision-making process that seeks common ground and dialogue from its participants, who all have equal say in whether a decision moves forward. Given that our food and farming system often pits the needs of farmers and farmworkers against one another, this collaboration was a tremendous accomplishment — modeling the kind of relationship-building that the DFTA seeks to establish throughout the sustainable agriculture movement.

To give readers a snapshot of new fair trade projects in the Global North, we have summarized a few certification programs and used our evaluations to see if and how domestic fair trade principles are being upheld. Our hope is that the evaluations are not only a tool for accountability and continual improvement, but ultimately a consumer resource helping to connect people with products that truly reflect their values.

Fair Trade Certified

In early 2014, SunSelect Produce of Aldegrove, BC, Canada began to offer "Fair Trade Certified" peppers. Fair Trade Certified is the certification program of Fair Trade USA, a U.S.-based non-profit third-party certifier of nearly 12,000 products worldwide. The majority of SunSelect's 120 employees are migrant workers from Guatemala, and the program emphasizes its community development premiums — funds specifically designated for social, economic and environmental development projects in their employees' home countries. These funds are kept in a separate bank account and are managed by democratically elected representatives via a Fair Trade Committee. The committee, made up entirely of greenhouse workers, examines the most pressing needs of their communities and votes on how to best use the premiums.

While the DFTA found Fair Trade USA's board to have strong stakeholder participation, an area of great concern is the certification program's potential inclusion of large-scale operations and plantations. They also found apparent loopholes that could exempt small operations from key labor protections such as freedom of association.

Fair for Life Certified

Citadelle Maple Syrup Farmers Cooperative in Quebec, Canada became "Fair for Life Certified" in early 2014. Fair for Life is a certification program implemented by the Institute for Marketecology (IMO). Citadelle is the world's largest supplier of 100%-pure maple syrup and represents more than one-third of the maple syrup producers in the province of Quebec. The cooperative offers its members various benefits, including free barrels, insurance, payment of a dividend when profits allow, and training. According to its Web site, Citadelle emphasizes its work to preserve the traditional structure of small-scale, family-based maple production. The company is also known for being socially responsible to its employees, the environment and the local economy.

According to the DFTA evaluations, Fair for Life performs well on the family-scale farm principle, exemplified by Citadelle's certification. Unlike other certification programs, Fair for Life clearly defines "smallholder" in their standards and explicitly lists smallholders as a marginalized group under the program. In addition, Fair for Life does not allow for exemptions to labor protections, such as the right to freedom of association. In other words, all fundamental workers' rights are protected without exception.

One area where the DFTA would like to see improvement, however, is in regard to the transparency and accountability principle. Information on the governance structure of Fair for Life is not easily available; references to it on the IMO and Fair for Life web sites are sparse, making it difficult to ensure multi-stakeholder participation.

Food Justice Certified

The first organization in North America to achieve domestic fair trade certification through the Agricultural Justice Project (AJP) was Farmer Direct Cooperative in Regina, SK, Canada. The AJP's "Food Justice Certified" label is based on high social justice standards ensuring fair treatment of workers, fair prices for farmers and fair business practices. Farmer Direct Cooperative's sixty-nine organic family farm members grow oilseeds, legumes and cereal crops, such as hemp seeds, flax seeds, lentils, beans and ancient grains.

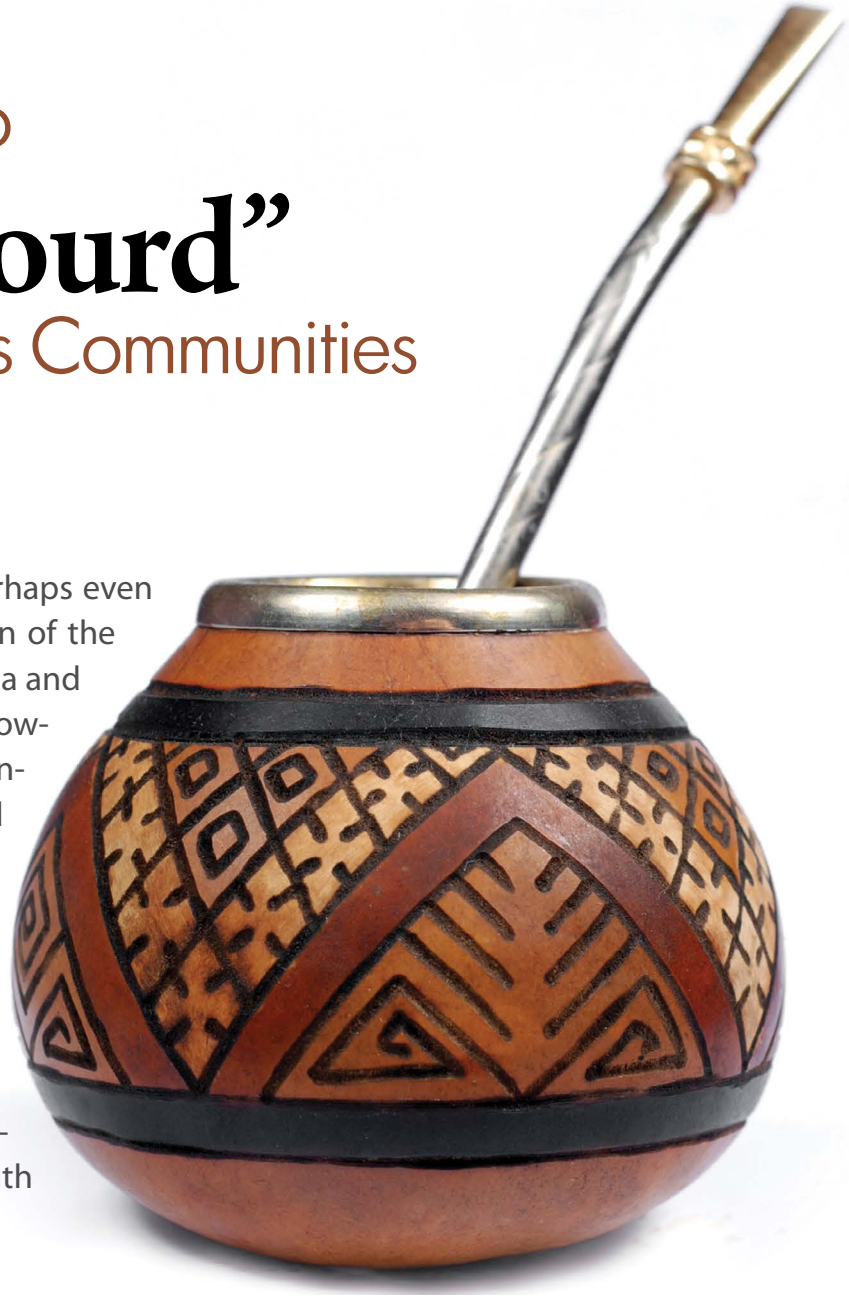
Many of AJP's standards were written to reflect the principles set forth by the DFTA. One of the DFTA principles where AJP's certification outshines others is the rights of labor. AJP has solid stakeholder involvement, including workers' associations and unions, in the monitoring of working conditions. AJP also scores very well on principles of governance, transparency, accountability and implementation — including posting extensive information about its decision-making and complaints/appeals processes on its web site. Some areas where the DFTA would like to see improvement, however, include offering credit to under-resourced farmers, strengthening language around community impact, and establishing a means to measure the program's outcomes.

While all three certification programs examined here emphasize important and varied aspects of domestic fair trade, certification alone is not the final panacea to the creation of a more healthy and just food system. We do hope, however, that the evaluations serve as a tool for dialogue and clarity — and perhaps even collaboration between evaluated programs. The real work of the DFTA, then, is to ensure that the voices of the most marginalized people in our food system are heard at the table for these discussions, and that their leadership is uplifted by solidarity throughout the supply chain.

To view the DFTA evaluations in detail, please visit www.thedfta.org.

Guayaki Invites You to "Share the Gourd" to Empower Indigenous Communities

Contributing Writer
Kat Schuett



You may have heard about yerba mate, and perhaps even experienced its "feel-good effect," a combination of the caffeine boost of coffee, the health benefits of tea and the euphoria of chocolate. In South America, however, mate is more than just a beverage. For centuries, indigenous people have shared a gourd filled with mate to symbolize community — and to join together in a vision.

As the first company to bring fair trade and organic yerba mate to the U.S., Guayaki hopes that, by "sharing the gourd," they can inspire the rest of the world to be part of a vision to empower indigenous communities and protect South America's rapidly diminishing rainforests.

Cultural Regeneration through Market-Driven Restoration

During the junta period in the 1970s, native tribes were chased down nearly to extinction, as their home, the rainforest, was ravaged by industry. Forced onto reservations, the indigenous people lost much of their cultural identity. Although many tribes returned to the rainforest in the 1990s, they lacked a way to earn income and were forced to rely on aid. Prejudice made it challenging for natives to create business partnerships and ate away at their self-worth, leading to in-fighting and alarming rates of youth suicide.

Then, in 1996, David Karr and Alex Pryor came up with an idea — one that could provide jobs and a sense of pride for indigenous communities, while simultaneously creating market value for the rainforest, making it worth more standing than cut down. Yerba mate was the seed from which this dream would grow. The vision was to create a demand for this beverage in the U.S. and partner with indigenous communities to grow mate and other native plants within the rainforest. The more mate they sold, the more jobs they would create and the more acres of rainforest they would rescue.

A Model for Indigenous Communities

In 2002, Guayaki signed a ten-year contract with their namesake, the Ache Guayaki in Paraguay, forming their first partnership and providing the tribe with a long-term source of steady income. Instead of growing mate on plantations, where most of it is produced, Guayaki's agro-forestry sage helped the Ache learn how to organically cultivate mate within the rainforest, where its nutrients are shaded from the sun. Harvesters learned how to hand-pick the mate for optimum quality, while protecting the health of the tree for future harvests. Others mastered the art of drying mate at low temperatures and aging it to lock in antioxidants and flavor. "Ten years later, the Ache are thriving and have what they need to be self-sufficient, including a knowledge of agro-forestry and biodiversity — and that is being passed on to their children," says Pryor.

As a real-life success story, members of the Ache tribe and Guayaki have been asked to teach other tribes, as well as governmental and non-profit groups, how to replicate the model. One of the most exciting results of the partnership, though, was in July of 2012 when the


Photo Credit: Celine Freres

government voted to award the Ache with legal title to their land. "Thanks to the work we did with Guayaki, we could prove to the Paraguayan authorities that we are capable as an indigenous community of developing and running a model project and making good use of the forest," says Emiliano Mbejyvagi, a young Ache leader. "We are proud to be a role model that protects the environment."

Guayaki now works with six tribes, including the Marrecas in Brazil, a project that is part of the Clinton Global Initiative. "So far, Guayaki has created jobs for over 225 indigenous people and has restored more than 40,000 acres of rainforest," says Karr. "By 2020, our mission is to restore 200,000 acres and create 1,000 jobs."

Fostering a Democratic Voice

In South America, sharing the gourd is similar to passing around a microphone. Whoever holds the mate has the opportunity to share their point of view. "It is about building relationships that make us all feel alive. We share mate to celebrate culture and to create a spirit of hospitality and dialogue," says Pryor. "The relationships we have built provide equal opportunity for everyone to freely express themselves, creating a healthy democratic community."

To ensure that all voices are heard, Guayaki organizes annual workshops that bring together indigenous community leaders, government officials, NGOs, local business leaders and even the mayor from the closest town. "We talk about our dreams, challenges and what we want to create together. It shifts the dynamic. People communicate in a different way, and the indigenous people are celebrated and respected," says Chris Mann, CEO. "It's about being partners, sharing what each of us knows, and growing and benefiting together."

Women are also empowered through this model. In fact, the Ache's chief, Margarita, was recently named Paraguay's "Woman of the Year." "We do not see each other as business partners," she says. "We see each other as brothers and sisters. Everyone is equal."


Photo Credit: Celine Freres

Beyond Fair Trade

In addition to paying 50% over market prices, Guayaki's 10% fair trade premium helps fund schools, clean water, healthcare and shelter. The Marrecas also voted to use their premium to host an annual cultural celebration. At first, the certifiers denied it, but Guayaki and the community convinced them that it was not just a party — it was a reclamation of their cultural identity. "The most common challenge indigenous communities face is cultural value," says Pryor. "When cultural value is attained, indigenous communities feel empowered, and economic growth comes naturally."

Furthermore, to ensure economic stability, Guayaki has helped the community establish other sources of income, so that only half is now derived directly from the company. The Ache's partnership with Guayaki has proven that they are reliable partners, and they now work with several other businesses growing organic crops. They earn additional income by teaching other tribes how to grow mate and by selling native plants. Guayaki provided a zero-interest loan for an air dryer that can be used for other needs as well, and even pays the Ache a royalty for the use of their name.

To educate future generations about organic, fair trade and agroecology principles, Guayaki, in conjunction with the Patagonia and Forecastle foundations, funds an afterschool program for more than 400 students. Over 3,700 native trees will be planted through this program.

At meetings in the U.S., Guayaki employees also share the gourd, as well as their dreams and concerns. Repeatedly named WorldBlu's "Most Democratic Workplace," the company offers stock options after two years, and, because it is a certified B-Corp, its democratic, social mission is legally protected. Guayaki is committed to a vision that not only cares for the rainforests but also the people who live there. When you drink Guayaki, you become part of this vision, too.

"Everyone is a part of this mission, from our farmers and employees to our investors and customers," says Pryor. "This shared vision is the soul of Guayaki."


Photo Credit: Celine Freres

FOOD, FARMING AND CLIMATE CHANGE- SMALL-SCALE FARMERS AND AGROECOLOGY

Industrial agriculture is a key driver in the generation of greenhouse gases (GHG), accounting for 30-50% of total emissions. Chemical fertilizers, pesticides, heavy machinery, monocultures, land change, deforestation, refrigeration, waste and transportation all contribute to a food system that generates significant emissions and affects global climate change. However, small-scale farmers and pastoralists could sequester a significant amount of CO_2 emissions by switching to widely available and inexpensive organic management practices. In fact, recent studies demonstrate that small-scale farmers already feed the majority of the world with access to less than a quarter of all farmland, while actively sequestering CO_2. Even though small farms are by and large more productive than big farms, we are fast losing small farms in many places, while big farms are getting even bigger and generating more GHG emissions.

Sources: GRAIN, Food First and Rodale Institute

Learn more and take action at: fairworldproject.org

INDUSTRIAL AGRICULTURE AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Agricultural activities are responsible for 11% to 15% of GHG emissions.

Land clearing and deforestation are responsible for 15% to 18% of GHG emissions.

Food processing, packing and transportation are responsible for 15% to 20% of GHG emissions.

Decomposition of food waste is responsible for 3% to 4% of GHG emissions.

SMALL-SCALE FARMERS COOL THE PLANET AND FEED THE WORLD

Small-scale farmers feed the majority of the world with access to less than a quarter of all farmland.

Small-scale, integrated organic farms are more resilient in the face of intensifying climate change events, like hurricanes, than are plantations and monoculture operations.

Regenerative organic farming could sequester more than 100% of current annual CO_2 emissions via a switch to widely available and inexpensive organic management practices.

The UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food estimates that small farms produce up to 80% of the food in the non-industrialized world.