

Letter from the Director



Like many fair traders I have spent my adult life dedicated to supporting small-scale producers and promoting fair trade to empower and improve their lives. But fair trade in itself is not a magic pill that will cure poverty throughout the world, and is just one important piece to creating a just economy. True fair trade also supports systemic change in government and international trade policies, to alleviate the depredations of unfettered capitalism bent on exploiting farmers and workers in blind pursuit of profits above all else. As long as we have unfair trade, labor and agricultural policies, we will have poverty and inequality.

In this issue of For A Better World we have included articles on domestic agricultural issues such as the lack of fairness in the farm bill and the movement to grow hemp in the US. These issues may seem a deviation from traditional international fair trade, but to create authentic system change we must connect all of these social justice issues.

As important as promoting fair trade relationships with small-scale producers, we must also address related issues like food sovereignty and the negative impact on food prices and supplies around the world of US farm subsidies, and fuel mandates that divert huge swaths of agricultural acreage into fuel for cars instead of food for people.

The issues are complex and we look forward to deep collaboration in our work towards a truly just economy.

To a day when all trade is fair,

Dana Geffner

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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.

Mission:

Fair World Project (FWP) promotes organic and fair trade practices and transparent third-party certification of producers, manufacturers and products, both here and abroad. Through consumer education and advocacy, FWP supports dedicated fair trade producers and brands and insists on integrity in use of the term "fair trade" in certification, labeling and marketing.

Why FWP Exists:

- ▶ Conscious consumers armed with informed purchasing power can create positive change and promote economic justice, sustainable development and meaningful exchange between global South and North
- ▶ The Organic movement, with the advent of federal regulations, has lost sight of the social criteria of fair prices, wages and working conditions.
- ▶ Family farmers and farmworkers in the developing world are often impoverished by unfair volatile prices, wages and working conditions.
- ▶ North American and European family farmers and farmworkers face similar challenges, and thus we need to bring fair trade criteria home with "Domestic Fair Trade."
- ▶ Existing certifiers and membership organizations vary in their criteria and philosophy for the qualification of products and brands for designation as "fair trade." FWP will work to keep the term "fair trade" from being abused and diluted.
- ▶ FWP cuts through politics in the world of fair trade in order to catalyze the rapid expansion of the universe of fair trade products, in particular promoting certification to rigorous standards that give consideration to the local context of a project.

The Fair Trade Movement:

The fair trade movement that FWP is part of shares a vision of a world in which justice and sustainable development are at the heart of trade structures and practices, both at home and abroad, so that everyone through their work can maintain a decent and dignified livelihood.

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

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Cover Photo credit:

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Laura Karlen in Murray Horkoff's Hemp Field in Kamsack, SK

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Fair Trade Timeline

Contributed by the Fair Trade Resource Network (www.ftrn.org)

1946



Edna Ruth Byler imports needlecrafts from low-income women in Puerto Rico, and displaced people in Europe, laying the groundwork for Ten Thousand Villages, North America's first fair trade organization

1948



Church of the Brethren establishes SERRV, North America's second fair trade organization, to import wooden clocks from German refugees of WWII

1968

United Nations Conference on Aid and Development (UNCTAD) embraces "Trade not Aid" concept, bringing fair trade into development policy

1969

Oxfam and other European humanitarian organizations open the first World Shop in the Netherlands to sell crafts, build awareness and campaign for trade reform

1972



Ten Thousand Villages opens their store, the first fair trade retail outlet in North America

1986



Equal Exchange is established as the first fair trade cooperative in North America, importing coffee from Nicaragua as a way to make a political statement with a high-quality, household item

1988



Farmers and activists launch the first fair trade certification system, Max Havelaar, in the Netherlands to offer third-party recognition and a label for fair trade products

1989



International Fair Trade Association (IFAT), now WFTO, is established by trade pioneers as the first global fair trade network

1994



Fair Trade Federation