

Letter from the Director



This issue's cover featuring FWP's Just Economy map shows the important groups striving to create a just economy: small scale artisan and farmer groups in the developing world seeking fairness in trade; workers in the global apparel industry organizing for better wages and working conditions; and farmers and agricultural workers in the North and South seeking economic fairness at home. All social movements are unique, with specific goals and strategies, each contributing to a world of justice and equity. A key challenge to the movement for economic fairness and justice will be to develop collaborative strategies to ensure that small producers and agricultural workers' have market solidarity opportunities that are mutually supportive and not counter productive.

In this issue, Rudi Dalvai, WFTO's President, discusses in his article "Metamorphosis of the Fair Trade Movement" how fair trade has changed from a small producer driven movement to a consumer driven market. This metamorphosis of the fair trade movement is in danger of putting small producers at a disadvantage if we do not move forward with careful intention. Fair trade was created by and for small producers in the Global South in order to build a more just system of trade and help to eliminate poverty in the poorest communities in the world. Fair trade was envisioned as an important way to combat corporate globalization that prioritizes

profits over people. Fair trade supports not only the survival of small rural farming communities in the Global South, but is an important vehicle for educating and activating consumers to take action beyond the checkout stand. Small farmers are more than romantic visions of a rural utopia; small farmers are the backbone of the global food supply, guardians of biodiversity and key players in advancing democratic communities.

As we know, there are deplorable and exploitative working conditions for workers in every sector and step of the food chain. FWP supports efforts and campaigns that advocate for agricultural workers at home and abroad. FWP is working with labor unions, farmworker associations and the Domestic Fair Trade Association to explore and develop strategies to best support workers. FWP is also launching a campaign this fall to promote Alta Gracia, a living wage, union apparel company, on college campuses across the country.

Farmers, artisans, consumers and other stakeholders are in danger of becoming confused as the fair trade movement evolves through its growing pains. Consumers especially are in need of deeper education regarding the true aims and history of fair trade, and the transformational impacts that fair trade can engender. Too often, consumers are simply told to just "Look for the Label" without going further beyond passive consumption. Civil society needs to have an informed robust discussion about the complexities of fair trade, trade policy reform and market power dynamics in order to truly shift to a just global economy.

To a day when all trade is fair,

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.

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

Fair World Project

PO Box 42322
Portland, OR 97242
800-631-9980
info@fairworldproject.org

Dana Geffner

Executive Director
dana@fairworldproject.org

Ryan Zinn

Campaign Director
ryan@fairworldproject.org

Cover Illustration By

Michael Aubert
President of Cosmic Egg
Studios

Sue Kastensen

Project and Creative Advisor
sue@fairshake.net

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

