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***Fair Trade for a Better World***

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March 18, 2016

Paul Rice, President and CEO  
Katherine Bostick, Senior Manager, Standards  
Nathalie Marin-Gest, Senior Manager, Produce & Floral Supply Chain  
Fair Trade USA  
1500 Broadway, Suite 400  
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Paul, Katherine and Nathalie,

In preparation for the upcoming Fair Trade USA stakeholder summit, I am sharing the attached outlining concerns specific to how the new standards will be applied to domestic farmworkers.

I look forward to discussing the details of the standards during the summit. However, the bigger picture of labeling and enforcement cannot be ignored. The standards will only be strong and relevant if farmworker organizations are involved in the development and monitoring/enforcement. The revised standards will be stronger if the labeling does not undermine small-scale farmer movements or other domestic farmworker-led programs.

I hope that you will take these concerns seriously by following up with the listed organizations if you have not already included them in your stakeholder outreach, as well as by including these concerns in the agenda of the stakeholder summit.

Thank you,

Kerstin Lindgren  
Campaign Director



## Concerns With Fair Trade USA Domestic Farmworker Program

Fair Trade USA has stated its intention to develop a domestic program to benefit farmworkers working in produce.

There are already several programs doing this in the U.S. including:

- Agricultural Justice Project (Food Justice Certified)
- Equitable Food Initiative (Responsibly Grown. Farmworker Assured.)
- Coalition of Immokalee Workers' Fair Food Program

All three of these programs take different approaches and include different components in standards and monitoring. What all three do have in common is farmworker ownership. Farmworker membership and advocacy organizations are involved with program development and monitoring.

Fair Trade USA does not have farmworker members. Because of this deficit, there is a real risk that FTUSA's program will undermine the established programs that are farmworker-led and have significant farmworker representation at the organizational level. While there is room for many approaches and advocates to improve conditions for farmworkers in the US, grassroots and farmworker-led approaches need to be elevated and celebrated. The impact of such programs comes from empowering farmworkers in having a voice in monitoring and program development itself as well as in the ability to more efficiently assess and address farmworker needs. To overcome FTUSA's deficit of governance and mitigate the risk of undermining farmworker led and owned programs, the undersigned organizations request of Fair Trade USA the following.

1. **Develop a new label for domestic produce that is distinct from the current label and does not use the term fair trade.** The fair trade term and Fair Trade USA's current label have developed a wide recognition among consumers and retailers based on a movement started by small-scale farmers in the global south. Any program developed by Fair Trade USA for domestic produce should be presented as an alternative to conventionally grown produce, not as an alternative to farmworker-led initiatives. Using "fair trade" unfairly applies market momentum from a small-scale farmer movement to a new arena and could overshadow the emerging programs developed specifically by and for farmworkers. Likewise, using the current label with different words will have the same effect.
2. **Establish transparent and formal relationships with democratic, movement-based, farmworker organizations representing domestic farmworkers to actively participate in standard development as well as to lead on-farm monitoring and grievance investigation.** Asking for stakeholder input from a broad and diverse stakeholder group is an important first step and we recognize also that the current board has one representative from a farmworker organization. However, because board configuration can change over time and because the board's role in monitoring and implementation is limited, it is essential to formalize farmworker leadership and accountability and include farmworkers themselves in

monitoring, grievance investigation, program policies, and certifications decisions. If FTUSA is unable to find a minimum of two farmworker organizations willing to and able to permanently participate in these roles, this should be taken as a signal that the program is not adequately serving farmworkers.

Signed:

California Institute for Rural Studies  
Canadian Fair Trade Network  
CLAC – Latin American and Caribbean Network of Fair Trade Small Producers  
Deans Beans  
Domestic Fair Trade Association  
Equal Exchange Co-op  
Fair World Project  
Farmer Direct Co-op  
Food Chain Workers Alliance  
Organic Consumers Association  
Teamsters  
Warehouse Worker Resource Center