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

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**New Report from Fair World Project Evaluates Certification Programs that Seek to Ensure Transparency and Integrity of Working Conditions for Farmworkers**

***Leading Advocacy Group Evaluates Impact and Effectiveness of Seven Certification Programs in the Interest of Farmworker Justice***

PORTLAND, OR - Fair World Project, a project of the **Organic Consumers Association**, the nation's largest network of green and ethical consumers, has released a new report titled, ***Justice in the Fields: A report on the Role of Farmworker Justice Certification and an Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Seven Labels***. The new report evaluates seven certification programs that consumer brands use to provide a level of transparency to consumers on the social impact of their supply chain on workers. The findings in the report are based on the criteria farms must meet, how these standards are enforced and what role farmworkers and their representatives play in both program development and on-farm enforcement.

To read the ***Justice in the Fields*** report, go to: <http://fairworldproject.org/campaigns/farmworker-justice/>

The report details the realities of agricultural work globally: it's difficult, dangerous, and can be poorly compensated. Farmworkers are often excluded from laws that protect other workers and even when they are included, the laws are often not well enforced. Labor unions can provide the function of negotiating better pay and conditions on behalf of workers they represent, but in reality union membership on farms is low, in part because of anti-union organizing. The report illuminates how, in recent years, certification programs have stepped in to fill the void and ensure justice and fair treatment for farmworkers on farms.

"It is tempting to see certification as a silver bullet," said Kerstin Lindgren, Campaign Director of Fair World Project, "but any certification is only as good as its standards and enforcement mechanisms. Ultimately, any good program empowers farmworkers and works together with existing regulations and unions to strengthen their voice."

Of the seven certification labels evaluated in the report, Fair World Project strongly recommends two of them: Agricultural Justice Project's Food Justice Certified and Coalition of Immokalee Workers' Fair Food Program. Two others are recommended with qualifications: Equitable Food Initiative's Responsible Grown, Farmworker Assured, and Fairtrade International's Fairtrade Certified.

"At their best, certification labels can raise the bar for worker justice on farms and lead consumers to purchase products that empower farmworkers," said Dana Geffner, Executive Director of Fair World Project. "But conscious consumerism is just a small part of what's needed—we hope that this report can inform and inspire people to engage in activism on behalf of all the people who grow our food, whether they work on a certified farm or not," continues Geffner.

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***Fair World Project (FWP)** is a non-profit organization whose mission is 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. FWP publishes a bi-annual publication entitled *For a Better World*. For more information, visit: <http://www.fairworldproject.org>.*