YEAR IN REVIEW 2021

BUILDING A MORE JUST ECONOMY
Writing this 2021 annual report has forced me to reflect on the many challenges that collectively we’ve endured and the ability for us to move forward regardless. There was some hope at the start of 2021 with the roll out of COVID vaccines, we imagined in the not so distance future to be able to see each other beyond a zoom square, to attend conferences, and to travel so we could connect and be inspired by what others were doing to create a more just food system. It soon became clear that majority countries would not receive enough vaccines, and anti-vaccine advocates refused to be vaccinated thus new variants such as the Delta variant and then later the Omicron variant spread and another wave of closures, mask mandates and the rise of illnesses became the normal once again. As governments, scientists and companies raced to make enough testing kits we all went back into the unknown, testing our mental health and pushing so many to their limits.

This historic time has presented us with opportunities to be more vulnerable with each other and while self-care and compassion is the most important for each of us, I have been continually impressed by the extraordinary ability of our small but mighty team to push forward in our continuation to advocate for a better world. We are seeing an immense shift of consciousness blanket the globe: workers’ organizing at Amazon warehouses and Starbucks, Indian farmers’ months-long protests of unjust trading policies, and thousands speaking out against COP26 in solidarity with frontline workers and in support of small-scale regenerative organic farming. This new shift is giving us the lifeline we need to continue to advocate for a more equitable global economic system.
In 2021, the For A Better World magazine transitioned to the For A Better World podcast and was widely received with critical acclaim. The podcast continues to have the same focus by building powerful and effective coalitions where we were able to best use our strengths and networks to complement our vision for a just economy and global trade, food, and farming systems which nourish people and don’t exploit them or the planet.

We recognize that the world that we want represents transformative change. To get there, it’s going to take campaign wins that are bigger than us, and it’s also going to require that we change the narrative about what is possible. That perspective shapes the strategies we have chosen to prioritize across our work this year. These pages will highlight our continued work watch-dogging ethical labels, pushing for fair procurement and advancing a fair global food system through farmer and worker organizing.

In solidarity,

DANA GEFFNER
Executive Director
2021 AREAS OF FOCUS

Watchdog of Ethical Labels
FWP strengthened and refocused our watchdog role, recognizing that just as a good certification requires involvement from the intended beneficiaries, a strong watchdog role requires the same. We’ve invested in developing relationships with those intended beneficiaries, and it has strengthened our critique as well as public response to that critique. The outcome is such that we are seeing significant movement as more people recognize the need for change in the food system, and the real threats that weak, corporate-friendly certifications pose.

Chocolate Industry
Fair World Project continues to focus on the chocolate industry as one where the threats of the climate crisis, corporate consolidation, and low prices all disproportionately harm small-scale farmers.

Chocolate is a crop around which FWP is able to engage in multiple international coalitions and engage on policy debates as well as corporate campaigning. FWP’s core objectives are fair livelihoods for farmers, coupled with support for transitioning to more regenerative farming practices.

Global Pandemic Response
In 2021, FWP moved from rapid response to focusing on key ways that the pandemic has heightened existing inequities in the world, focusing on a few key issues that strengthen our overall narrative and allies.

FWP joined the global coalition calling for a patent waiver on vaccines. Our work helped win Pres. Biden's support for a global TRIPS waiver, as well as highlight the inequities in our current global trade system.

Fair Procurement
Fair World Project’s work on procurement has focused on leveraging our expertise on certifications to support strong procurement standards.

2021 has seen big changes in tactics as the political landscape has changed and the pandemic has changed food procurement, especially at the university level, where our main campaign as part of the Real Meals Coalition has focused.

Fair Global Food System
Fair World Project is uniquely positioned between the fair trade and natural foods sectors and the global movements for justice and human rights. In 2021, we continued to bridge those movements and connect the issues in a way that resonated for multiple audiences.

FWP was one of the first US organizations to support the Indian Farmers' Protest, linking fair trade principles to global justice.
Fair World Project uses social media as part of our work to share resources and connect the dots on issues in our food and farming systems for a large range of audiences. By connecting the headlines to the root causes, and lifting up the work of movements for justice, we bring actionable analysis to help people take next steps towards a better world.
For a Better World is a podcast about fair trade and the farmer and worker-led movements that are fighting for equitable food and farming systems. In every episode, we take you around the world to hear from farmers, workers, and activists involved along the supply chains of everyday items.

Nestle’s KitKat Unwrapped: Cocoa, sugar, and palm oil: behind the main ingredients of Nestle’s KitKat bar, there are some bitter truths. We talked with cocoa farmers who’ve worked with Nestle, activists who are exposing them, and visionary leaders around the globe who are building alternative models that are changing the balance of power in the food system.

Unfair Dairy: Chobani and Fair Trade USA recently released a new “fair trade dairy” label that claims to promote worker wellbeing. But farm workers reveal the hidden costs of unfair dairy. This season we unpacked the real solutions to the dairy industry’s ever-growing crisis and hearing from the farmers, workers, and advocates working to tackle the root causes of unfair dairy.

For a Better World was nominated and selected as a finalist for the Discover Pods Awards 2021 in the Best New Podcast and Best Food-Focused categories.
2021 PROJECTS

Fair World Project continues to work on campaigns with key allies and in many different sectors.

Watchdog of Ethical Labels

We continue to see the importance of our role as a watchdog of ethical labels in the marketplace as Fair Trade USA’s “fair trade dairy” label certifies CAFOs, which are widely recognized as one of the worst institutions in our modern food system. FWP has been building a coalition in opposition to this label since before the pilot began and have brought together 35+ workers and human rights, food justice, animal advocacy, organic, and environmental organizations signing on in opposition.

We released our dairy label report, which was cited in a consumer fraud lawsuit targeting Chobani. Fair World Project continues to be actively engaged with organizers working to support workers on certified farms.

In 2021, FWP was consulted and served as a source or subject matter expert:

- *Washington Post* article on child labor and acai
- *Forbes*, on fair trade certification and on cocoa
- Official Fairtrade International chocolate standard revision stakeholder process
- Lawsuit targeting Rainforest Alliance and Hershey’s
- To the standards revision process bringing Good Food Purchasing, Healthcare without Harm, and Real Food Generation procurement standards into alignment, covering a wide range of procurement. Standards revision begun in 2021, anticipated completion fall of 2022.
- Real Meals campaign victories include getting Johns Hopkins University to drop corporate dining services, getting Big 3 cafeteria contractors to commit to not purchasing GMO salmon, and to a successful pilot in sourcing from local Black farmers in North Carolina.
2021 CAMPAIGNS

Chocolate

Co-ordinated a coalition petition on child labor earned nearly 50,000 signatures across multiple groups. Key asks include holistic solutions that include living incomes, reduction of pesticide use, end of deforestation as well as robust child labor monitoring and remediation. Co-organized a digital action for CNN’s #MyFreedomDay coordinating messaging with leading human rights and environmental groups, including Freedom United, Green America, and Mighty Earth. Also, as part of a global coalition publishing an open letter acknowledging the history of racial injustice rooted in colonialism that has shaped the chocolate industry.

Pandemic Response

FWP joined the global coalition calling for a patent waiver on vaccines. Together, we convinced the Biden administration to back the so-called TRIPS Waiver at the World Trade Organization although delay tactics continue. Our work focused on the digital campaign. FWP helped to deliver a petition signed by 100s of organizations and over 100,000 individuals; participated in digital campaigns that reached thousands of viewers explaining vaccine inequity and the relationship to inequity of global trade.

Global Solidarity Campaign for India's Farmers Protest

FWP helped raise awareness of the Indian Farmers’ Protest, connecting the dots between their demands and global movements for a fair, just food system. We partnered with leaders in diasporic communities to craft a statement that reflected the demands of farmers and caste-oppressed workers. That statement was co-signed and issued as a joint letter of solidarity signed by 50+ fair trade and ethical businesses, with an emphasis on those sourcing from India. The letter was also signed by over 3000 individuals. FWP was one of 75+ orgs signing an open letter bought as an ad in the New York Times and recruited other fair trade and human rights orgs to join.
2021 MEDIA

We're pleased to be part of mainstream food media including more coverage of the human issues in our food system.

FWP's work has been cited in several national newspapers, magazines and podcasts.

Art of Citizenry podcast
Baker City Herald
Business News
CGTN
Common Dreams
Dissent Magazine
Evolve CPG podcast
Feminist Food Journal
Food Print
Food Tank
Forbes
Green Biz
Open Democracy
Organic Insider
Pacifica Radio
Price Pottenger
The Bittman Project
The Good Men Project
The Tufts Daily
The Wire
Treehugger
Truthout
Voice America
Washington Post
Union City Radio
YES Magazine
2021 MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

The Bittman Project

Learn About Unfair Dairy and Its Effects on Workers and the Environment

Why Dairy Farmworkers Are Moving Beyond Fair Trade

5 Things You Should Know Before Buying A Chocolate Bar

Food Tank’s 2021 Podcast List

Small children are climbing 60-foot trees to harvest your açaí

It's International Food Workers Week—Support Organizing That Centers Those Who Feed Us

There's a long history of over-exploiting and under-paying the people who do the vital, yet too often unseen, work that keeps grocery stores stocked with food.
BUILDING

A BETTER WORLD
Thank You to Our Dedicated Donors

We could not continue to work towards a just agricultural system that prioritizes people and the planet without the financial support of Dr. Bronner's, Equal Exchange, Cafe Mam, Dean's Beans, and hundreds of individual donors!

FWP is a member of 1% for the Planet

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