

## Fair Trade Letter- Central Market

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Soumya Gupta from the British School of Houston. Recently, in Geography we have been studying about Fair Trade and its many benefits. In the following paragraphs I am going to explain what fair trade is and why they should be stocked in our supermarkets.

Everyday, many of your employees fill the shelves with Nestle Coffee, Chocolate and Bananas from all over the world especially Africa, but do you really know what the bananas or the coco farmers have been through?

The banana farmers work very hard everyday in the heat only to come home to a small mud hut. Banana farming isn't easy, you have to be able to distinguish between ripe bananas and unripe bananas and you have to be willing to risk your life to climb the tree and cutting through the tough wood which binds the bananas to the trees and this requires strong muscles.

After all this hard work you would expect to get a good price for money but in-fact they get a very small wage and the shipping companies charge them a lot of tariff so they can't ship their own bananas. The small pay isn't enough for the children to go to school so they don't get an education and have to work on the family farm. This is child slavery and some of the children are beaten and the wounds don't heal properly as there isn't enough money to visit the doctor or pay for medicine.

Also, the price for bananas keeps changing due to the demand for the product.

The horrific truth is that the original ingredients have lesser value than the final product even though they were crucial to the production of the final product.

This is where Fair trade comes in to help these poor farmers.

Fair trade is an organized social movement that aims to help producers in developing countries obtain better trading conditions and promote sustainability It is a fairly new strategy to help poor farmers.

Their vision is of a world in which justice and sustainable development are at the heart of trade structures and practices so that everyone, through their work, can maintain a decent and dignified livelihood and develop their full potential.

To achieve this vision, Fair trade wants to transform trading policies and practices in favor of the poor and disadvantaged. Fair trade contributes to sustainable development for producers, workers and their communities.

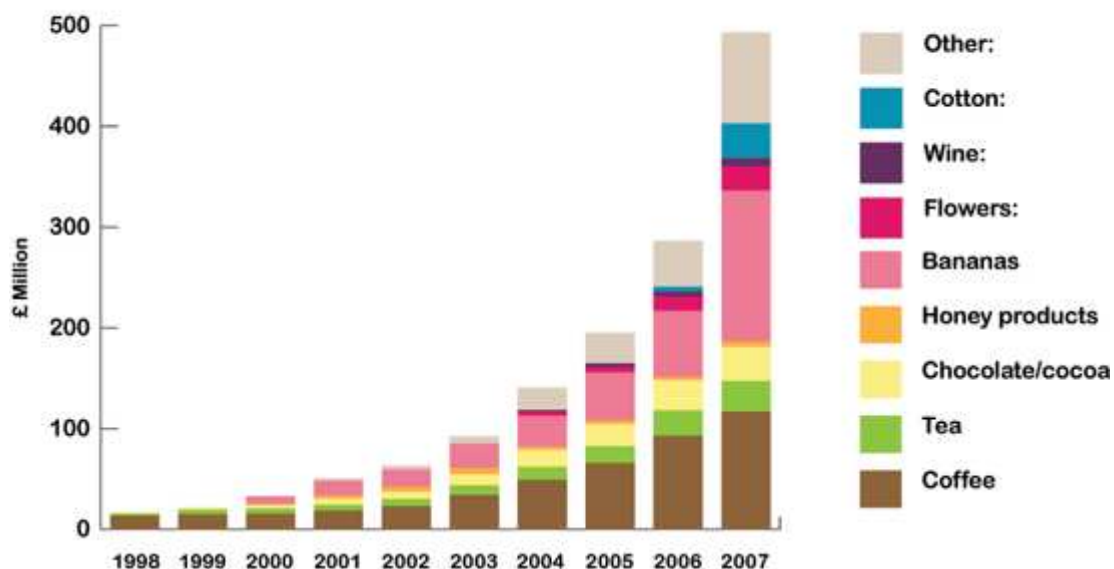
The fair trade companies have a fixed price for the produce so the farmers are not cheated out of any money and they also give the farmers some bonus money for social projects like schools and theatres which helps a village to develop. If every village keeps developing like this the country eventually develops.

For a product to be classified as fair trade, it needs to be fair trade certified. This means that the crops must be grown and harvested in accordance with the international Fair trade standards.

This is a sustainable form of development as the farmers keep getting a fair price for their product and the company keeps buying the products. This can be a never ending process and it helps the country develop because of the extra money for social products.

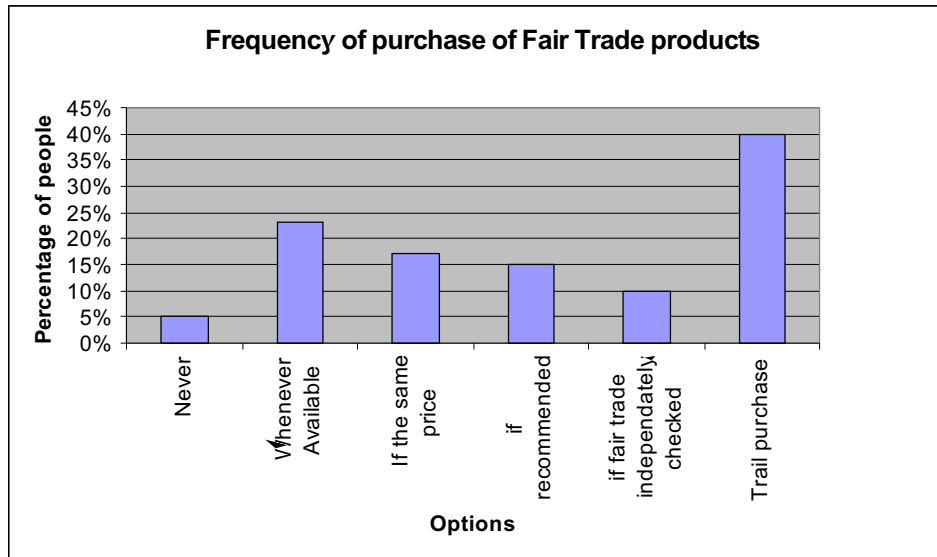
But one of the main problems with fair trade is that many people haven't heard about it in many countries including United States. But in other places like The United Kingdom where people are aware of what it is, it has had a huge impact on the population and the people are willing to do more to help these poor farmers. The graph below shows how fair trade has grown in the UK.

## Sales of Fairtrade certified products in the UK



This graph shows how few people knew about fair trade in 1998 so there were less products that were fair trade certified. But as the supermarkets started stocking it and the people tried it, they gained more information about it and told their friends. Slowly, the news spread and in 2007 many more products were fair trade certified meaning a lot more farmers got a better lifestyle as with the money they could provide the basic amenities for their families.

I mentioned before one of the problems of fair trade, not many people have heard about it in the United States. This may seem like a problem as you may believe that the people pay not be willing to try it but this supposed problem may actually be the solution.



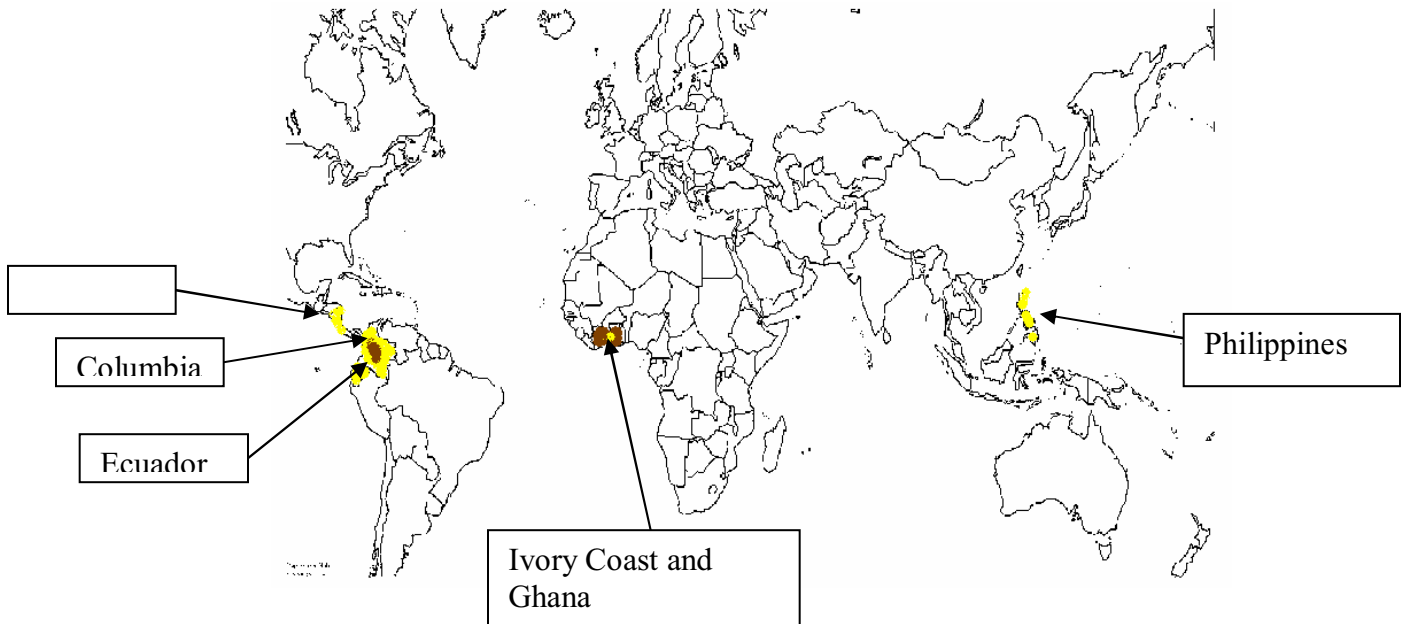
This graph shows the frequency of the purchase of the fair trade products. As you can see the highest percentage of people buy it for a trial purchase.

Also, after the consumers know that if they buy fair trade they will be helping improve the lives of many farmers than they are a lot more willing to purchase these items because it will give them a feeling of self-accomplishment and make them feel like they are doing their part to help the less fortunate without incurring additional expenses.



Many people worry that these products might not be organic. This is true but you can't expect the poor people to sit around and watch their crops die when they know there is a pesticide which can help kill those bacteria. These pesticides however are made from

only natural ingredients meaning they are environmentally friendly and are harmless to people.



This world map shows a few places which farm bananas (yellow) and cocoa (brown). Most of these countries as you can see are in South America and Africa because these places are generally less developed than the rest of the world.

These places are usually less developed because of environmental factors like natural disasters and extreme temperatures. In addition, there are also human factors like colonization.

But fair trade can help these countries develop one farmer at a time. So wouldn't you want to do your part in helping these farmers when they do so much for you?

If it weren't for them you wouldn't be able to sell bananas or coffee or chocolate. Fair trade is a fast, easy and affordable way to help some of the LEDC countries develop.

So please let us help these farmers by putting fair trade products in our supermarkets.

King Regards,

Soumya