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School: Joliet Junior College

Day 18 Greenest Challenge

Things at Joliet Junior College that *could* be Fair Trade Certified...

- **Ben and Jerry's ice cream (we offer small individual portions of Ben and Jerry's ice cream that may be Fair Trade Certified)**- conventional ice cream is filled with sugar [and likely chocolate], and much of these farmers of these ingredients are small scale farmers. However, as it is the big corporations who outcompete for international business, buying fair trade ensures that those neglected small-scale farmers get the opportunity to also be part of the market, ultimately giving the farmers a better life as they may now become fairly paid.
- **Individual tea bags**- conventional tea is most likely full of pesticides, and likewise purchasing from the conventional brand may economically show more support to the corporations and/or farmers using the conventional farming techniques- leaving the small-scale farmers at a disadvantage. By buying fair trade, you are giving those small-scale farmers the opportunity to have their product competitively sold.
- **Individual sugar packets**- conventional sugar may be likely grown with conventional agricultural methods- meaning monoculture, which depletes the soil of nutrients, and may also treat farmers poorly. However, by buying fair trade- one is ensuring the farmers growing the sugar are practicing sustainable agriculture and fair working conditions for the farmers.
- **Granola bars (Larabars specifically)** -granola/energy bars are filled with sugar, and a variety of fruits, oats, and/or nuts. All of these crops that were produced to make the conventional granola bar may be filled with pesticides, and perhaps made with cheap labor. By buying fair trade, you are ensuring that the labor was not cheap, and was in fact fair- and that the crops used to grow your food have minimal pesticide use, if any at all.
- **Popcorn Indiana (I am fairly positive this popcorn is at our school and is Fair Trade Certified)**-conventional popcorn may most definitely use GMO's, which have negative effects on our environment. By buying fair trade, you are ensuring that the popcorn is non-GMO, and that small-scale workers that contributed to growing the food have the ability to make a fair wage that will/may hopefully get them out of poverty.

I am only somewhat positive of one item that is Fair Trade Certified at my school- unfortunately we get many conventional brands to bring in

packaged snacks at our school, instead of organic and fair trade snacks/meals, which is what we should be striving for.

My school is not a fair trade school- though I am definitely very inspired to look into making our school become a Fair Trade College. Up until this challenge- I didn't even know a school could become a fair trade school! I would love to make that my personal project for this year on campus (besides my work with preserving our fen), and I think in working with my school's sustainability coordinator, I could definitely accomplish this goal and become a fair trade school. I did not have as good of a previous knowledge on fair trade as I have most of the other challenges, and given that, now that I am more aware of what fair trade really is and what it entails to both the consumer and the producer, I am so inspired and motivated to buy primarily fair trade goods, and educate others on the importance of fair trade; and I think that becoming a fair trade school would be an amazing way to educate others. The biggest task I would have in following the steps to becoming a fair trade school is to form a committee, and make fair trade products available on campus- but I think with enough education and support, these steps can be easily achieved.