

Project Green Challenge

Day 18

GREENER

#FairTrade

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A Farmer's Story

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WHY FAIR TRADE?

Fair trade, from what I learned, is defined as **conducting economics activities in a way the helps the environment, and most importantly its people.**

In previous topics, I saw in “**The Story of Stuff**” how farmers, factory workers are **under paid**, and local communities are **deprived of their own resources**, which are taken away for the more **privileged** to squander.

Under fair trade, farmers and the environment aren't being **squeezed out of every little bit of profit they can produce** by all those who are more financially previledged. Instead, they are given the **equal oppourtunity to thrive** from the very products that they produce with **their own two hands.**

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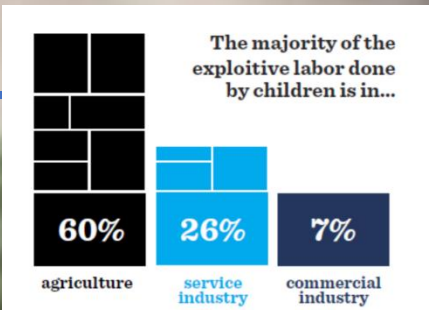
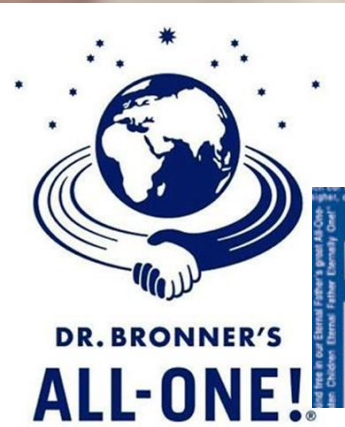
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150 million children are engaged in **child labor** around the world, with **60% working in agriculture** and more often than not, under **slave conditions**.



Since I can't meet the people who actually grow my food, third party certification is what I need to look for!



Buying fair trade ensures that the workers who made my products are properly treated, taken care of injuries from work, and are properly paid I vote with my dollar, and I need to make sure that my money is going to those that Produced my food, those that deserve and need, those that I should thank!

Through supporting fair trade brands like DR. BRONNER'S, I'm giving my share of help to the farmers, too!



IT'S NOT JUST WHAT YOU GROW, IT'S HOW YOU GROW IT
Ethically Sourced, Certified Fair Trade Ingredients

Project Green Challenge

Day 18

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Across the World, **1.24 Million Farmers** are benefiting from fair trade, More than **106.2 Million Euros** are paid to **small-scale producers** a year - these are the people *to whom every dollar matters a lot!* Moreover, **almost 1/3** of their pay **is spent on education**, a crucial step *to improving their state of life!*



Behind every one of the fair trade products are people, people whose lives are forever changed because of this opportunity...

WHY DO WE NEED FAIRTRADE?

- 3.4 BILLION OF PEOPLE LIVED IN RURAL AREAS OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES SAFE ON LESS THAN \$1 PER DAY
- GOOD RETURNS ON AGRICULTURE FOR THEM UNUSUAL
- PRICE VOLATILITY OF COMMODITIES IS MOSTLY CONTROLLED BY POWER
- POVERTY CYCLE BROKEN

HOW DOES FAIRTRADE WORK?

It's a exchange for meeting the Fairtrade standards which support farmers to sustainably improve the yield and quality of their production.

1. Increase a fair price which reduces the cost of sustainable production, and 2. Give access to better communication.

Put simply, Fairtrade provides a better deal for farmers.

1.4 MILLION FARMERS & WORKERS IN 70 COUNTRIES

WHO BENEFITS FROM FAIRTRADE?

BENEFITS FOR FARMERS

- A fair day's pay for a fair day's work: Farmers receive a fair price for their produce.
- Investment in development: Farmers also receive the Fairtrade premium which can be used for social, economic and environmental projects within their communities.
- Environment: Fairtrade actively encourages practices that are environmentally sound and that mitigate the effects of climate change.
- Empowerment of women: Fairtrade encourages female leadership of producer organisations and fair membership.
- Partnership: Fairtrade creates business partnerships and encourages fair trade relationships, enabling them to have a fair price, investment, standards and marketing.

BENEFITS FOR CONSUMERS

- High ethical standards: Majority of Fairtrade premium is invested in improving yields and farming methods, helping farmers to break the poverty cycle.
- Trust: Independent verification of Fairtrade standards leading to 2 areas of sustainable development: social, environmental and economic.
- Quality: Fairtrade is a membership standards and quality control that the use of generally accepted quality by farmers.
- Quality: Fairtrade actively requires investment in training and improving farming methods.
- It's simple: In your everyday shopping, make to products carrying the FAIRTRADE logo.

ON AVERAGE, FAIRTRADE FARMERS EARN UP TO **19%** MORE THAN NON-FAIRTRADE FARMERS*

*Based on sugar and potato contracts

2,100+ FAIRTRADE CERTIFIED PRODUCTS AVAILABLE IN AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND

FIND OUT MORE

www.fairtrade.org.au
Facebook: FairtradeNZ
Twitter: fairtrade_nz

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Day 18

Fair Trade

A Farmer's Story

Gerardo Arias Comacho
-Coocaffe, Coata Rica.

Gerardo was born in Costa Rica, the second youngest of 13 children born to his two farming parents. They owned a small coffee farm, out of which the entire family made a living upon.

In the 1980s and all throughout till the 2000s, the coffee prices were so low that many families went broke. Gerardo's parents could hardly support the family, much less a decent education.



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A Farmer's Story

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As an result of the cruel poverty, Gerardo was forced to travel a rough journey illegally to the US, and spend eight harsh years of working low-paying jobs.

When he finally earned enough to travel back, Gerardo said, “The coffee market was still so unstable”. His home town still had no local schools, no working roads, much less bridges and other infrastructures.

However, he said, “fairtrade changed my life.” “I believe that if it wasn’t for fair trade, I would have gone broke.” Expressed Gerardo. With his products fair trade certified, prices are always stable, and he receives a premium price.

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Project Green Challenge
Day 18
Fair Trade
A Farmer's Story



“When prices go down, farmers produce more and prices drop further. Fairtrade is the way trade should be: fair, responsible and sustainable.”

--Gerardo Camacho, Founder of COOCAFE.

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“With the help of Fair trade, my son is in college, and my ten-year-old has already had as much education as me. My little princess is in her second year at school -They won't ever have to jump the border like me, leaving their country for ten years like me.

I tell them: 'you have choices, to be a coffee grower or something else.'”

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Little Thoughts...

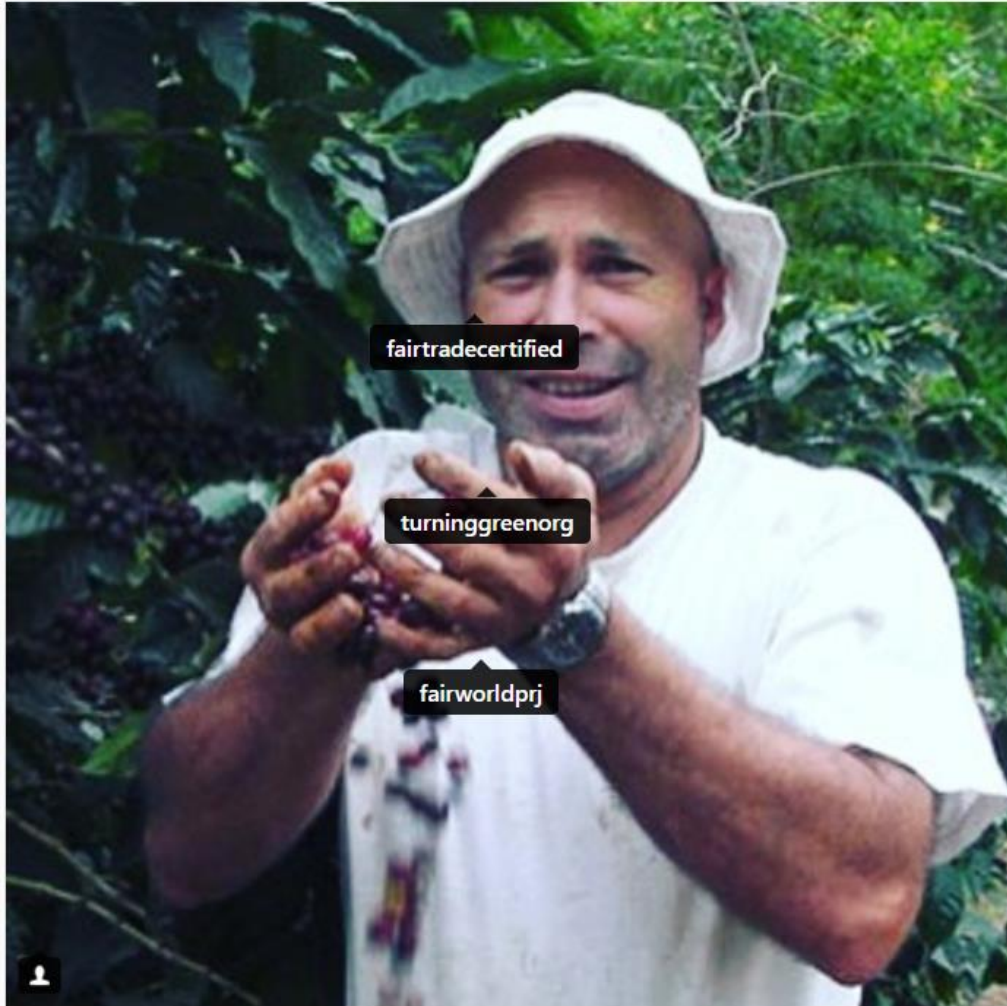
Choices. The last lines of Gerardo's interview echoes in my ears over and over again. The hardships of poverty that many farmers face don't remain on the toil of their work -yes, Gerardo had to work ten rough years, far away from home. But the saddest part of it all was that they were stripped away of opportunities, the equal claim to insurance, wellbeing, statues, and education for him, his children, and perhaps all the generations after if it wasn't for fair trade that Gerardo was given a change to make his dreams come true.

After hearing this story so closely, I once again think of what I can do with my dollars, being privileged enough that my smallest actions cast a vote on how lives should be for someone else, the farmers just like Gerardo. To not choose fair trade is, in a sense, accepting the systematic discrimination to the producers who have no choice but to sell at the price that the market deems appropriate for them. Just like a few days ago, when I realized that choosing organic was fighting for a way of life. My actions can change how the society works.

I'm lucky enough to have the privilege to spend on whatever I choose to spend on, and from now on, I'll choose to spend on those that enables someone else to have the opportunity to choose just like me.



chriscat_gogreen



chriscat_gogreen #pgc2017

GERARDO ARIAS CAMACHO, one of the thirteen sons of two ordinary coffee farmers in Costa Rica. At age 10 he was forced out of school because of poverty, and due to the low prices of coffee all throughout his childhood, Gerardo had to choose but to cross the US border dangerously. Thankfully, when he made his way back home, after some hardships, Gerardo met Fair trade. Now, his coffee is guaranteed a price, and he is able to not only afford an education for his children, but also use more energy efficient equipments that run on coffee scraps. Though fair trade, he earns himself more opportunities, and earns the world a better environment. ❤️❤️ @turninggreenorg

Small changes, big impacts 😊

Thank you for this day, and the chance to meet Gerardo

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