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ARTICLE

The article that resonated the most with me when I was browsing through the Fair World Project articles was “Changing How Rice is Grown Around the World”. I was at first drawn to it for two reasons: one, because rice has been an integral part of my daily diet for as long as I can remember; and two, because when I read the title, I realized I actually didn’t know in the first place how rice is grown. It was another one of those “out of sight, out of mind” moments that Americans are so prone to. When I read about the environmental and social impacts of growing rice--something that I take for granted--I grew excited by the prospect of supporting these women and implementing sustainable farming measures in their communities!

PROFILE



NIHAL SINGH

Nihal Singh works with MD Pavitramenthe, a farming association that grows organic mint.

Fair Trade practices, especially during COVID-19, have helped in many aspects of Pavitramenthe’s work. When the pandemic first hit, farm laborers were perhaps the most vulnerable: restrictions on the amount of people working on the fields meant that these farmworkers lacked money and food. Pavitramenthe developed a distribution program to indiscriminately provide these workers with food, masks, school supplies, and so forth, but their efforts did not end there.

Even after the pandemic, they hope to improve relations between farmers and the government as well as create home gardening spaces for farmers.

Another way that Pavitramenthe has dedicated themselves to being a Fair Trade company is through their agricultural practices. Part of fair trade is decreasing our negative impact on the land. Singh, a practicing Hindu, believes that nature will “fight us back” if we continue to exploit and damage it, and sees regenerative and organic agriculture methods as a way to aid us, our communities, and our planet.

Pavitramenthe’s efforts to aid their community in times of crisis made me reflect on how we have worked to help our own citizens--not just Americans, but countries around the world. What struck me was how they did not discriminate. They did not care whether the farmworkers were Muslim or Hindu; they did not view them as lesser for lacking adequate resources. It is an example of humanity at its finest, and it is done through these fair trade practices that give so much back to the community and to nature.

<https://fairworldproject.org/the-covid-19-pandemic-shows-the-importance-of-working-with-nature-reflections-from-a-fair-trade-leader/>

FAIR TRADE

building communities,
shaping futures,
protecting the planet

by Samantha Lee :)

WHAT IS FAIR TRADE?

I defined fair trade as the prioritization of worker health, sustainability, and transparency in an international economy: the creation of a system that places people over profit. when we ensure that everybody is getting their fair share for the work that they do, we are creating a more equitable society where the western world is not the center of the discussion but a partner in it.



RECOGNIZING FAIR TRADE

Here are some fair trade labels you may see on your products. If you want to look for brands, you can visit www.fairtradecertified.org or www.fairtradeamerica.org. To check for authenticity, consider the brand: how much do they speak on their fair trade practices? If they have one of the labels listed in the reference guide, what is that fair trade program's reputation?



REFERENCE GUIDE TO FAIR TRADE AND LABOR JUSTICE PROGRAMS

Many labels, located on products you eat, wear, and use, but not all labels are created equal. This table grades labels and based on the criteria in the International Guide to Fair Trade Labels, created by a global coalition of fair trade advocacy organizations and academics.

Label	Labels	Standards	Fair Trade Requirements
Hand in Hand	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fairtrade	Yes	Yes	Yes
Equal Exchange	Yes	Yes	Yes
fair for life	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fair Trade Certified	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fair Trade Certified	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fair Trade Proof	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fairwild	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fair Trade Federation	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fair Trade Organization	Yes	Yes	Yes
fair for life	Yes	Yes	Yes

HOW TO CHOOSE AUTHENTIC FAIR TRADE PRODUCTS

- EVALUATE:** Look for fair companies, cooperatives, independent organizations and strong fair trade certification to determine products made by dedicated fair trade farmers.
- AVOID BAIT ACTORS:** Do not buy from companies that market their products as Fair & Just fair trade products.
- LOOK BEYOND CERTIFICATIONS:** Learn more to know products from the communities where they grow and where they are.
- READ LABELS:** Understand which organizations and other organizations of those independent in the product are involved in the process.
- BE AN ACTIVIST:** Ask your fair trade to carry these authentic fair trade products and get involved in change efforts.

Learn more about the standards behind these labels and find companies committed to fair trade values at FairWildProject.org

BENEFITS OF FAIR TRADE

The benefits of fair trade are numerous, both for farmers and for us.

FOR FARMERS	FOR US
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fair wages • safe working environments • aids small workers instead of large corporations!! • no forced/child labor • sustainable agriculture practices = protects the land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knowing our products were produced sustainably and justly • provides a connection to those that grow our food • supporting these farmers! • high quality, well-produced products • easy to incorporate into our lives!

FAIR TRADE EXEMPLAR

Nihal Singh works with MD Pavitramenthe, a farming association that grows organic mint.

Fair Trade practices, especially during COVID-19, have helped in many aspects of Pavitramenthe's work. When the pandemic first hit, many farm laborers lacked money and food. Pavitramenthe developed a distribution program to indiscriminately provide these workers with food, masks, school supplies, and so forth, but their efforts won't end there. Even after the pandemic, they hope to improve relations between farmers and the government as well as create home gardening spaces for farmers.

Pavitramenthe has also dedicated themselves to fair trade through regenerative agriculture. Part of fair trade is decreasing our negative impact on the land. Singh, a practicing Hindu, believes that nature will "fight us back" if we continue to exploit and damage it, and sees these methods as a way to aid us, our communities, and our planet.



RESPONSES:

I presented this slide to two of my friends.

#1

- "I learned that fair trade prioritizes people and communities over profit, I believe that this is very much crucial to incorporate, many people are forced to face harsh working conditions to financially support themselves."
- "Fair trade is as the name states. In trade, such as in commerce, it allows for more fair treatment that allows for people to be more important than the profit you make."

#2

- "I knew that fair trade benefits both the farmers and people in unique aspects."
- "I only knew a slight bit of the topic, like how it allows for farmers and the like to get better treatment."

#3

- a resounding yes!

#4

- "One can support fair working conditions even if not always being able to find fair trade products all the time by conducting more research on potential fair trade products and their indications of authenticity. Being

able to reflect on the everyday produce that you buy and being more mindful towards your next trip to the grocery store can help you gain more insight about fair trade.”

- “You can do your best to support farm laborers, and actively contribute to programs that support fair trade, or advocate for better working conditions for them when there are strikes or concerns.”

INSTAGRAM

