



Green-Schools Global Citizenship

FAIRTRADE

Another way of ensuring we act as good global citizens is by examining our consumption habits; *what do we buy? Where do we buy it? Where is it produced? What effect does the production of this item have on the environment? What effect does its production have on the people that live in that country?*

"Before you finish eating your breakfast this morning, you've depended on half the world. This is the way our universe is structured... We aren't going to have peace on earth until we recognise this basic fact."
MARTIN LUTHER KING JR¹⁷.



Trade is natural to us: we have always traded products. In the past, it used to be quite a simple, straightforward activity between two people but it has developed into a very complex global system, involving many people like bankers, large businesses, consumers and producers - and many more. This makes it very difficult to keep track of the environmental and cultural impacts the production of our consumables have on an area and its people. Many of the products we buy, like coffee, tea, chocolate and bananas for example, are produced in developing countries and are often the only source of income for the people living in that region. Their produce is often sold to large companies for very little money. The price wars in supermarkets around the globe reduce the original price paid to the producers more and more, resulting in their having to

CHOCOLATE

Most of us like eating chocolate every now and again and we even say it can make us feel happier when we eat it! But have you ever wondered where chocolate comes from and if the farmer who produces the cocoa bean for our chocolate is as happy as us??

Ghana is one of the top cocoa producers in the world. Being a cocoa farmer is very hard work and Ghana's farmers earn, on average, £160 - per year! The price of cocoa beans is not stable which means that the cocoa farmer is never sure how much money he will earn at the end of his working week. Greedy, local cocoa buyers even 'fix' the scales on which they weigh the beans, giving the farmer unfair prices!

Fairtrade has ensured - among many other things - that Ghana's cocoa farmers get better prices for their cocoa crops which is so much fairer!

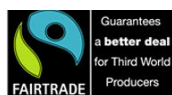
Check out www.papapaa.org or www.fieldmuseum.org/chocolate/education.htm to learn more about fair-trade cocoa; and to find lots of interesting projects you can try in your school

work harder and harder for their money; which, in turn, reduces their quality of life, their health and often the environment too. Is this FAIR?

FairTrade guarantees a better deal for producers in developing countries; and by buying Fair Trade products, you can ensure that the injustices to the producers are reduced. Fair Trade

Top Tip: Check out Trocaire's Fairtrade Resources on www.trocaire.org/schoolresources

is also about Sustainable Development: producer organisations are encouraged to continuously improve working conditions and product quality; to increase the environmental stability of their farming methods; and to invest in the development of their organisations and the welfare of their workers¹⁸.



The Fair Trade label is an eco-label - just like the Green Flag you have flying in your school; and the Blue Flag you can see flying at beaches that are clean and where you can swim safely. There are many eco-labels out there and by buying products that have eco-labels, you are doing your bit to ensure you are acting as a good global citizen, caring for people and the environment around the globe.



The **European Fair Trade Association** gained formal status in 1990. It regroups 11 fair trade importers in 9 European countries: Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Fair trade importing organizations buy food and handicrafts from disadvantaged producers in developing countries and aim at improving market access and strengthening producer organizations. In Europe, they sell their products through Worldshops, local groups, wholesalers and mail order catalogues. Fair trade importing organizations also play an important role in awareness-raising and in educating consumers and public authorities on fair trade and trade justice issues²⁰.



The Flower is the EU's eco-label for non-food products such as shoes, textiles, mattresses, tissue paper products, printed-paper, and detergents, etc. The products that bear the flower logo are the most environmentally-friendly in their range.¹⁹ Check out the website below to find out more. <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/pdf/marketing/leaflet.pdf>



Also, look out for the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) eco-label. The FSC was established to promote responsible management of the world's forests. You probably learned when you were working on previous Green Schools themes that deforestation is a big, environmental problem. The FSC logo is one of those that ensure that the product you buy comes from sustainable forestry, aiming to prevent habitat loss. So check it out! www.fsc.org

Breaking News

Orang-utan extinct in less than 12 years?

The Orang-utan, mainly found on the islands of Borneo and Sumatra, may face extinction in less than 12 years if we do not stop deforestation on these islands.

Rain forests are cut down to enable local farmers to create palm plantations. Palm oil is found in 10% of our food products like margarine, oven chips and even chocolate. We also use palm oil in bio fuel - supposedly really good for our environment - but is it? Palm plantations provide a source of income for the, generally poor, people of Sumatra and Borneo; but the main people to benefit are mostly large international companies; with only a small amount of the profits going to the local farmers. The local people's rights are frequently violated and they suffer from the loss of their traditional forests and agricultural land, which increases food scarcity for their communities. Deforestation leads to habitat loss, loss of biodiversity and climate change! The Orang-utans also depend heavily on these rain forests for their food, shelter and to raise their children. When the forests are cut down, the Orang-utans find themselves lost, without food and shelter so many of them die.

We can all help to stop deforestation by buying products that have the FSC eco-label on them and by buying paper that is recycled, preferably 100%!