

from *chocolate*



to computers

**look behind some of the products we consume
& uncover the impact their production has on
workers & the environment**

for secondary schools



credits

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from *chocolate* to computers

introduction

From Chocolate to Computers looks behind some of the products we buy, use and often take for granted, uncovering the impact their production has on the workers involved and on their environment. It aims to:

- explore human rights, interdependence and sustainability in the context of world trade
- raise awareness of some of the complexities of fair trade

The pack can be used for an interactive assembly, or as the basis for a workshop on Global Citizenship. It enables participants to explore the links we have with people across the globe, through what we consume. It:

- presents the conditions in which five different products are produced
- engages the audience in analysing different aspects of production
- develops understanding of the range of working conditions which exist within both 'fair' and 'free' trade
- encourages participants to take action for change

From Chocolate to Computers is suitable for secondary age groups (11-18) as well as adults. It is designed to involve between five and 30 'performers' with an audience who can also participate. Preparation can be minimal or more time consuming, depending on how many costumes and props are being used. In secondary schools the pack supports learning within Citizenship, Geography, English, Drama and RE; and can be used as the basis for cross-curricular work.

free or fair?

Free trade refers to conventional international trade which is controlled by trade rules which operate to the benefit of large corporations and governments, rather than those working to produce the goods we consume. Fair trade is an alternative approach to conventional world trade. It is a partnership between producers and consumers, based on reciprocal benefit and mutual respect. Fair trade ensures producers in the Majority World (countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and South America) receive a fair price for the work they do, and gain better access to markets in the Minority World. It aims to tackle the long-term problems of the Majority World through sustainable development for excluded and disadvantaged producers. For Majority World producers, Fair trade means:

- being paid a fair price for the work they do
- commitment to long term relationships between producers and buyers, providing stability and security
- producer organisations are supported in their social development projects, such as providing health care and education facilities
- sustainable environmental projects and practices are supported, such as tree planting and farming without using harmful chemicals
- respect for people's rights, for example promoting gender equality to change the traditional low position of women in society
- producers being able to have more control over their own lives

from chocolate to computers

preparation

- ▷ Explain to the group that they are to be involved in a presentation that explores how some of the products we consume are produced
- ▷ Ask six participants to take the following workers' roles:
 - an interviewer/reporter
 - Agnes Graham, a cocoa grower from Ghana
 - Charles Darnley, a banana worker from Cost Rica
 - Maria Akamba, a flower grower from Kenya
 - Maya Pertiwi, a worker from a factory producing trainers in Indonesia
 - Vernie Pescadero, a Philippino migrant who works in a computer factory in Taiwan
- ▷ Each worker will be 'interviewed' about their working conditions. With a large group, up to six people could take each role, sharing the answers to the questions between them. They will need to read through, prepare or learn their answers, using the information on p4-14. The more they are able to ad lib the better! If time allows, participants could research additional information on each product (see **weblinks**, p18)
- ▷ Ask each individual/group to mime an action to symbolise the work they do:
 - cocoa growers use machetes to split the cocoa pods
 - banana growers wrap the bananas on the plant in blue plastic to protect them from frost
 - flower growers use handheld sprays containing pesticides
 - factory workers use sewing machines to stitch trainers
 - factory workers use solder irons on computer circuit boards
- ▷ Give the group time to prepare the costumes and props they have decided to use (see templates, p5, for ideas)

resources

- ▷ To make this visual, use props, eg bar of fair trade chocolate, fair trade banana, bunch of flowers, pair of trainers, computer mouse.
- ▷ Large target, covered initially, with six sections (p4)
- ▷ Information for the workers (p6-16)
- ▷ Questions for the interviewer to ask the workers (p4)
- ▷ Target symbols for each product (p4)

variation

If numbers of participants are low, or time is limited, the activity can be run using just three products – cocoa, flowers and computers provide the best range of experiences.

running the session

introduction

- ▷ Ask the audience to raise a hand if, in the past week, they have: eaten chocolate, eaten a banana, bought or received a bunch of flowers, worn a pair of trainers, used a computer.
- ▷ Explain that all those who have raised a hand are linked, through what they buy, eat and use, to people across the globe. Through what we consume, we are all part of the chain linking producers with consumers in the global trading system

main activity

- ▷ Tell the audience that they are going to meet some of the people who have produced the products in front of them – refer to the props
- ▷ They are going to hear about the lives of these people and assess the conditions in which they work
- ▷ As they listen to each worker they need to think about that person's work in terms of:
 - health & safety
 - job security
 - community benefits
 - environment
 - pay & conditions
 - unionisation
- ▷ Unveil the target, pointing out that it is divided into six sectors – one for each of the six criteria listed above. Depending on the age and ability of the audience, these criteria may need some explanation
- ▷ Introduce the interviewer and the cocoa grower/group of cocoa growers who should repeatedly mime their action, pausing only to answer the interviewer's questions
- ▷ Once they have heard the interview, ask six volunteers from the audience to come up and give each of the criteria a score, by placing a cocoa symbol on each section of the target. The closer to the centre, the better the conditions. When this process is complete ask the rest of the audience if they agree with the volunteers. If not, discuss and adjust the symbols as necessary
- ▷ Repeat the process, introducing the workers who produce each product. After the cocoa producers, the order of products should be bananas, flowers before and after Fairtrade auditing, trainers and finally computers to show a continuum, from 'fair' to 'free' trade. Note that the flower workers are asked the interview questions twice to demonstrate how fair trade has made a difference to their lives.
- ▷ After each interview ask for another six volunteers, give them the appropriate symbols, and ask them to score each of the criteria on the target, as with the cocoa producers. With the flowers, the volunteers may decide to change the positions of some of the flower symbols, depending on what improvements they have noted with the introduction of fair trade

conclusion

- ▷ Sum up by asking the audience to look at the target, and comment on what it shows.
- Q Which workers experienced the best/worst working conditions, pay, and job security?
- Q Were they surprised by anything they found out?
- Q What action might they take to follow this up?

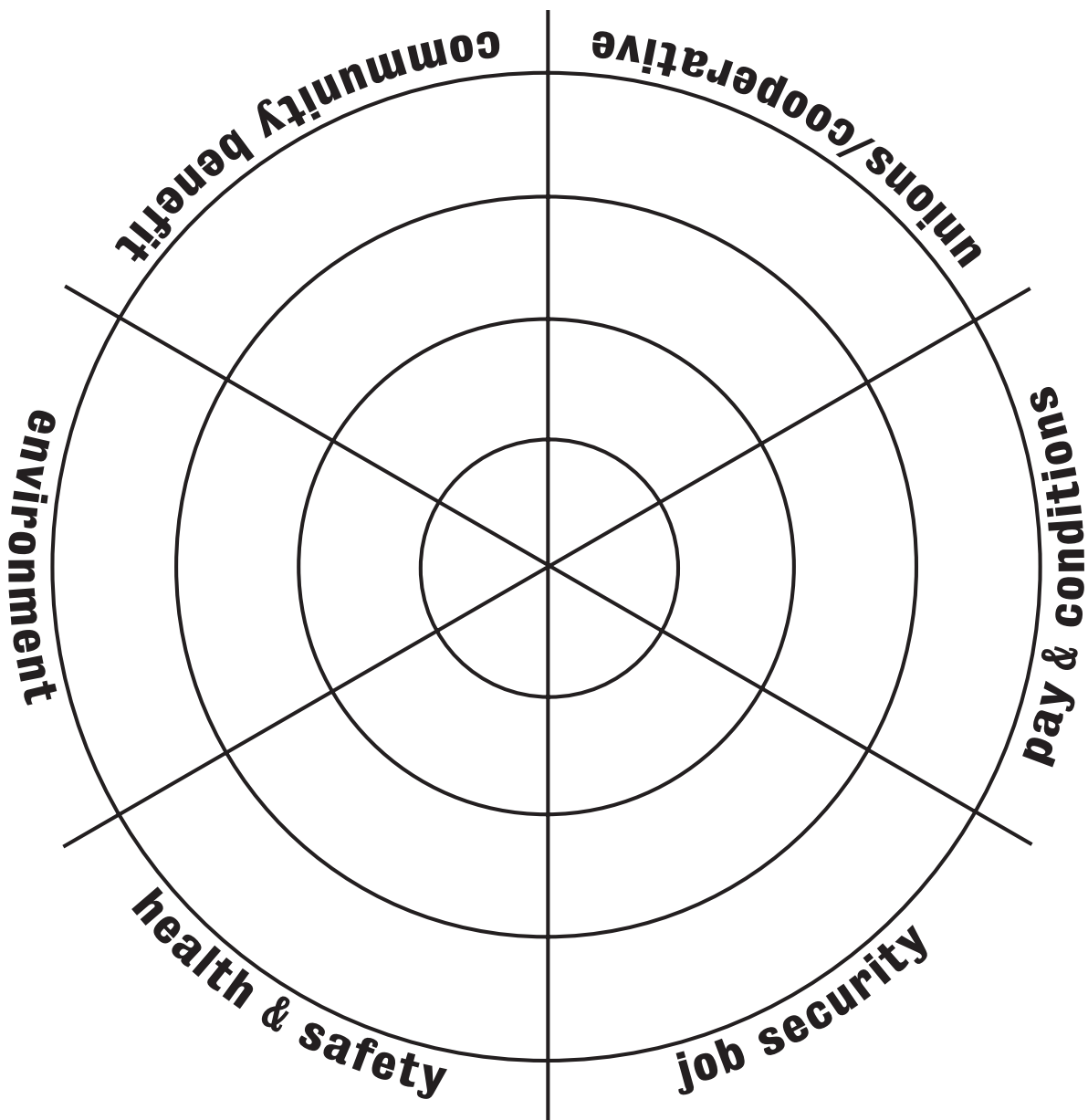
follow up action

- Make sure your school, community group or work place has an ethical purchasing policy and is committed to fair trade. Find out about becoming a Fairtrade school (www.peopleandplanet.org.uk and www.fairtrade.org.uk) or Fairtrade town (www.fairtrade.org.uk)
- Write to your local media and local supermarket to raise awareness of how unfair 'free' trade can be, asking them to stock more fair trade products
- Find out more – ask questions about where products are produced, who produces them and in what conditions before you buy them
- Tell other people and encourage them to make a commitment to support fair trade
- Join a campaign group – or set one up. See **weblis**t, p18
- Lobby your council and MP to push for change, locally and globally
- Believe we can make a difference

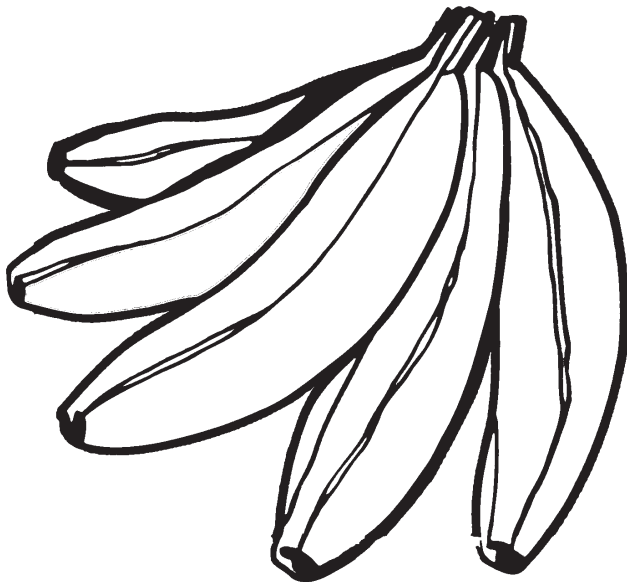
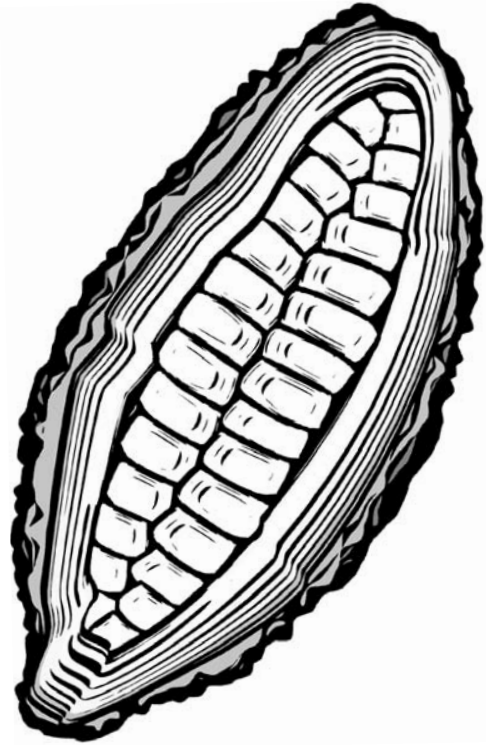
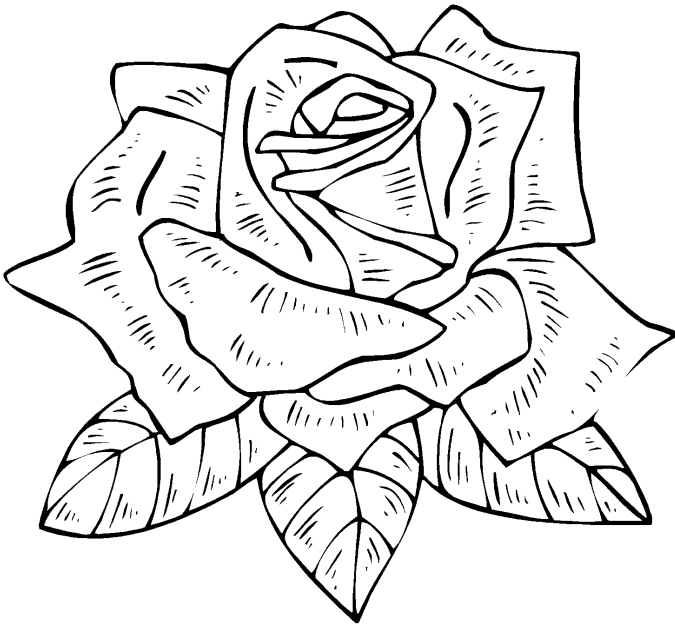
questions

When interviewing each producer, the interviewer should ask about:

- Health and safety, eg Is your job ever dangerous? How does your job affect your health?
- Job security, eg Are you ever afraid you might lose your job? Do you have a contract to give you job security?
- Community benefits, eg How does the work you do affect your community? Does the job bring any benefits to your community?
- The environment, eg Are you concerned about the impact your job has on your environment? How is the environment being damaged by the work you do?
- Pay and conditions, eg Do you feel you get a fair wage for the work you do? What about your working conditions? Do your pay and working conditions ever vary? When?
- Unionisation, eg Are you able to join any workers' organisations, so you can have a say in what you do? Do you feel you have any control over the way you have to work? Have you ever thought about striking to try to improve things?



Note: The closer to the centre, the better the conditions.



cocoa

Agnes Graham is an independent cocoa grower in Ghana, supplying part of her crop to Night's fair trade chocolate company.

health & safety

We use traditional methods, splitting the cocoa pods open with machetes, but we're really skilled at doing this. Snakes can be a problem, but extra income from fair trade means we can afford rubber boots to protect our feet.

job security

We've been growing cocoa here for generations – prices fell so low that many people from our village had to give up and move to the nearby town to look for work. At least now, with fair trade, we have guaranteed pay AND contracts from the fair trade company. Now we feel our future here is much more secure.

community benefits

The fair trade company pays us a bonus of £100/tonne of cocoa beans for community projects – we've decided to use this for new wells, latrines and education.

environment

With fair trade we can't use too many chemicals – our cocoa is grown without much damage to the environment. We grow food crops alongside the cocoa trees.

pay & conditions

Recently the fair trade price we were getting for our cocoa beans was twice the normal price – this makes such a difference – my children go to school now and I've been able to improve our home.

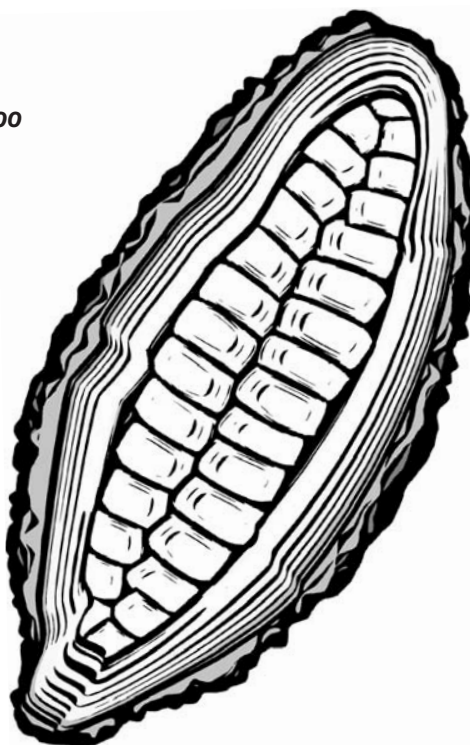
unionisation/cooperative

We belong to a farmers union of 40,000 cocoa growers – it's run by us so we're in control. All union members have equal rights and opportunities, and officials are democratically elected.

to find out more

www.kuapakokoogh.com

www.global300.coop/en/profiles/kuapakokoo





bananas

Charles Darnley is a banana worker who works as part of a cooperative that produces Fairtrade bananas on a plantation in Costa Rica.

health & safety

The bananas are grown as naturally as possible with few pesticides. We can grow our own crops in between the bananas. We have all, as part of the cooperative, devised safer working practices within our means. But this is constantly revised.

job security

Oke Fairtrade distributors have signed a contract with us, ensuring that we get a decent price that doesn't fall below the production cost. This means we can plan production targets for years ahead and gives us job security.

community benefits

The cooperative gets an extra fair trade bonus that is used to buy books for our local school, which benefits all the children in the area.

environment

Bananas are picked when green and minimal pesticides are used on them. We cover the bananas in a large plastic bag to prevent insects getting access to the bananas. They take six days to reach Europe and two weeks to get to the customer via supermarkets by lorry.

pay & conditions

We get a decent living wage that enables us to look after our families much better. Work is physically very hard but we have some control.

unionisation/cooperative

We are part of the cooperative and participate in decision-making processes, which means that we can improve our working conditions together and make decisions about the use of the fair trade bonus.

to find out more

🔗 www.democracynow.org and search for *Costa Rican banana*

🔗 www.fairtrade.org.uk/producers/bananas

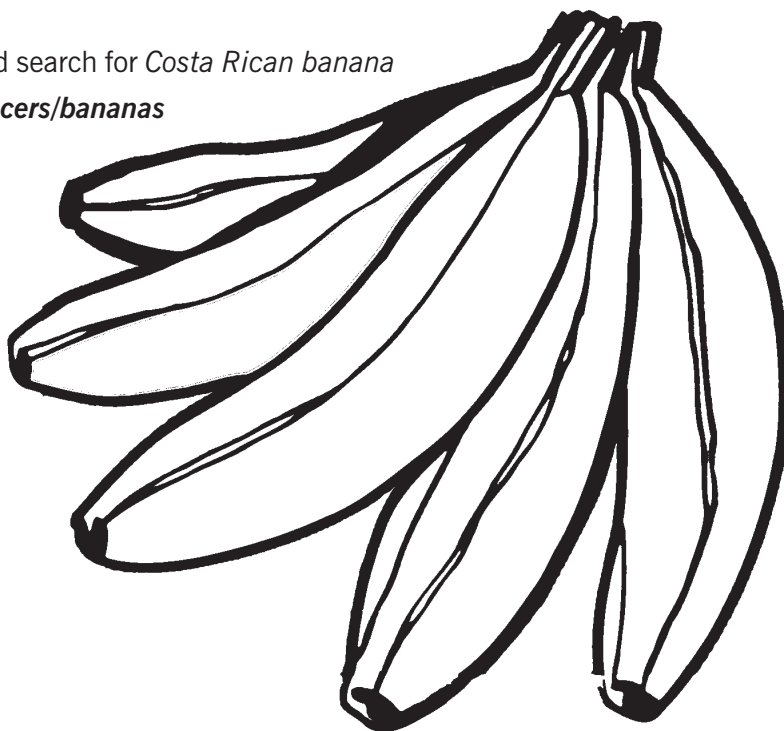




photo: Pete Stevens/AgroFair

trainers

Maya Pertiwi works for a large factory in Indonesia, supplying trainers to Umbok, a leading sportswear company.

health & safety

It's hot and dusty in the factory, with really poor ventilation. This means health problems for many of the workers. The managers make heavy demands on us. They even hand out amphetamines to get us through the night when we have an order to complete.

job security

We risk being fired if we turn down over-time – AND we're forced to tell inspectors that we only work an eight hour day.

community benefits

The only way our families and communities benefit is through us having a job and not being out of work, but low pay means we easily fall into debt – our whole community is very run down.

environment

The materials used to make trainers include synthetic rubber and solvents – fumes and waste materials can pollute the surrounding area.

pay & conditions

In the peak season we have to work seven days a week. This happens in the run up to global sports events like the Olympics. Our wages have FALLEN – we're not even paid the legal minimum wage.

unionisation

There used to be just one 'union' controlled by the state, so that wasn't much use! Now, other unions are being formed, but activists are sacked and groups of thugs hired to intimidate workers – police are often present but they don't do anything.

to find out more

www.ictur.org/TURCIndonesia.htm





photo: Irene Slegty/Panos Pictures

computers

Vernie Pescadero is a Philippino migrant who works for Compell, a leading computer manufacturer, in their Taiwan factory.

health & safety

Here we often have to work through the night with only one break of 45 minutes every eight hours – this is dangerous for our health. My eyesight has become very bad from too much close soldering of circuit boards without protection.

We've also heard rumours there are higher rates of cancer among computer factory workers – it's worrying.

job security

Most of us are young women employed through agencies. One of my friends works for an employer who has no permit to hire foreign workers – they told her she has to work every day and will be seized by the police if she goes out. We don't feel at all secure in our jobs

community benefits

All the jobs in our factory are highly sought-after - unemployment is very high. As our wages are not enough to cover food, clothing and rent, this has a knock-on effect on our communities.

environment

Plenty of toxic materials are used in making computers and even before they reach your desktop they'll have produced a lot of waste – just one of the circuit boards I make produces around 20 kilos of waste and most of it is classified as hazardous.

pay & conditions

As migrant workers our pay is very low. We get no paid holiday, no sick pay and no maternity benefits. At work we're often harassed & humiliated by our supervisors

unionisation

Although trade unions are recognised by the government, many employers don't care about labour regulations and have no idea how inhumane the working conditions are.

to find out more

www.globalvoicesonline.org

www.humantrafficking.org





photo: Chris Stowers/Panos Pictures

roses before fairtrade

Maria Akamba works for FlorUltra, a Kenyan flower producer exporting roses to Europe

health & safety

We had to go into the greenhouses without protection straight after the roses had been sprayed with pesticides banned in Europe. We often felt sick or got dizzy and had headaches. We were often denied time to go to the toilet by our supervisors.

job security

My best friend was raped by our supervisor and got pregnant. She was sacked when she stopped work to give birth. Her baby was severely deformed and died soon after.

community benefits

The land was bought from poor subsistence farmers too poor to pay off their debts.

environment

Village farmers were getting angry as wells were running dry, due to the amount of water used to grow water-hungry roses instead of local food.

pay & conditions

We worked long hours and couldn't say no to overtime especially around Christmas, Easter and Valentine's Day. Our salaries were too low to pay for our children's food, clothing or schooling; so they often had to work too.

unionisation/cooperative

Any attempts to establish trade unions were repressed – people could be put in prison or had 'accidents'. Striking was illegal.

to find out more

www.ethicaltrade.org





photo: Dave Richards/RISC

roses after fairtrade

The flower company agreed to independent audits to qualify for Fairtrade accreditation.

health & safety

We now have masks and protective clothing which is better but very hot to wear. Pesticides have changed to those that are legal in Europe.

job security

We cannot get sacked for getting pregnant. The company's fair trade buyers sign a contract that pays more per rose than on the world market. The payment never falls below the production cost, which means the company can plan. Fairtrade roses cost 10-15% more to consumers in Europe.

community benefits

The company still uses what was previously food-growing land for local needs. But some of our children can now go to school.

environment

The company still uses too much of the area's ground water and although pesticides are less dangerous they still leach into our environment

pay & conditions

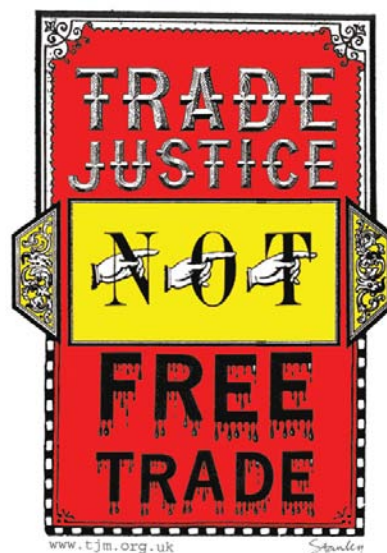
We now have a contract and get better pay than other flower workers in the area. Children are no longer allowed to work here.

unionisation/co-operative

We still work hard but have now formed a union and can raise problems and press to change our conditions for the better without fear.

to find out more

www.ethicaltrade.org



other teaching resources

All You Need For A Fair Trade Assembly KS 2/3

RISC 2002 £1.50

Curriculum links: PHSE/PSE/PSD, Citizenship, Literacy, Geography

Three adaptable 15-minute assemblies, focusing on different fair trade products (chocolate, bananas, clothes/fashion). Each assembly explains the problems faced by producers and the choices we have as consumers – with plenty of opportunities for student participation.

Bananas & (Cocoa) Beans KS2

RISC 2004 £5

Curriculum links: PHSE/PSE/PSD, Citizenship, Literacy, Geography

The pack investigates our links with people across the globe through trade in food and drink products. It is divided into four parts, each of which can stand alone, be used in sequence, or be used to build a new dimension into existing schemes of work. It starts by raising awareness of our global links, and then goes on to look at the negative impact these links can have. Fair trade is introduced as a positive alternative, and ways in which we can all take action for positive change follow on from this. Designed for minimum teacher preparation and maximum pupil participation.

Choc-a-lot KS 2/4, 16+

RISC 2003 £5

Curriculum links: PHSE/PSE/PSD, Citizenship, RE, Geography; Global Youth Work – enabling young people to explore their links with contemporaries in the South.

This pack is for teachers and youth workers and provides a detailed outline of activities for a day workshop which introduces young people to the issues behind the global chocolate industry. It enables them to find out the facts, develop a wide range of skills and have confidence to take action for change. Themes include: the role of chocolate in our lives, how chocolate is made, how the big chocolate companies increase their profits at the cost of cocoa farmers, the role of fair trade and how to take further action to demand better conditions for producers.

The Cost of Coffee KS4 & 16+, FE, Youth & Community groups

RISC 2005 £7.50

Curriculum links: Citizenship, PHSE, Geography, RE, Literacy, Numeracy, Media Studies, Business Studies

Activities which examine the causes and impact of the crisis faced by 25 million small coffee farmers worldwide due to low world prices. Analysis of the response of the big coffee companies and corporate social responsibility.

Growing Bananas KS2

RISC 2005 £5

Curriculum links: Citizenship, PHSE, Geography, RE, Literacy, Numeracy

Grow bananas from scrap paper and discover how difficult life can be for banana growers in the Caribbean – and how fair trade can give them a better deal. A whole class trading game with background information.

Passion for Fashion KS 2/4, 16+

RISC 2003 £5

Curriculum links: PHSE/PSE/PSD, Citizenship, Literacy, Art; Global Youth Work – enabling young people to explore their links with contemporaries in the South.

This pack is available in both school and youth work versions. It outlines the programme for an action-packed one day event which enables participants to explore the global fashion industry, and find answers to issues of ethical trade and workers' rights. Although it's presented as a one day event, each of the activities in the pack can be easily adapted for use in different situations.

Teaching About Fair Trade

RISC free downloadable leaflet

This free leaflet for primary and secondary teachers is an invaluable starting point for any work on trade issues and fair trade. It contains guidance on how to include fair trade in every part of the curriculum as well as lists of recommended resources.

reading list

No Nonsense Guide to Fair Trade David Ransom New Internationalist
A useful guide that delves into the complex debate on fair trade. Short, accessible, comprehensive and very useful for busy teachers

50 reasons to buy Fair Trade Miles Litvinoff & John Madely Pluto Press
This explains why fair trade really matters, including practical actions to show how everyone can be part of the fair trade movement

Trigger Issues: T-shirt Troth Wells New Internationalist
A short engaging book that traces the impact of the most ubiquitous fashion item and its links with the cotton trade

No Logo Naomi Klein Harper Perennial
A thorough, fact-filled exploration of what lies behind products we buy. It encourages us all to ask searching questions about the brands we choose

Banana Wars – the price of free trade Gordon Myers Zed Books
A clear account of the winners and losers in the banana trade, this explains the role of the WTO and the impact decisions made elsewhere have on producers

Global Trade – past mistakes, future choices Greg Buckman Zed Books
A thought provoking look at the history of global trade, its current impact on people and the environment in different contexts, and future options for change

The Good Shopping Guide Ethical Marketing Group
A guide to well-known companies and brands, giving recommendations to help consumers to make the best choices for a just and sustainable world

Ethical Consumer ECRA Publishing
A bi-monthly magazine researching the social and environmental records of the companies we buy from. It includes detailed buyer's guides, news, in-depth features, opinion and comment

weblinks

www.africa-eu.org Partnership of European NGOs campaigning against unfair EU trade policies

www.bafts.org.uk Directory of fair trade shops in Britain

www.cleanclothes.org Comprehensive reports on companies, eg Nike, Adidas, Levi Strauss

www.dubble.co.uk Day Chocolate Company make Divine chocolate and Dubble bars from cocoa produced by Kuapa Kokoo co-operative in Ghana

www.ethicalconsumer.org Researches the ethics behind everyday products, covers social justice and sustainability

www.fairdealtrading.com Where to get fair trade sports balls and trainers with background information on the producers

www.fairtrade.org.uk Fairtrade Foundation, who award the Fairtrade Mark, info on Fairtrade Schools

www.labourbehindthelabel.org Campaigns for workers' rights in clothes and sports shoe industry

www.maketradefair.org Oxfam's fair trade campaign site

www.papapaa.org A resource for KS2&3 about fair trade chocolate from Ghana

www.tjm.org.uk Trade Justice Movement – a coalition of 60 organisations campaigning for fairer trade rules

about risc

Reading International Solidarity Centre



what does RISC do?

Our activities include:

- developing an urban roof garden for local and global education
- organising a programme of events and exhibitions on global issues and speakers from the 'Majority World' (countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Latin America)
- providing training for teachers and youth workers on development education
- producing resources such as teaching packs, AV aids and exhibitions for use by schools, and/or youth and community groups
- selling books and development education resources; fiction and non-fiction for children and adults on global issues
- promoting campaigns on local and international issues
- providing a loan service of artefacts and education packs for schools and youth workers
- selling fair trade, organic and environmentally friendly products, and world music CDs
- giving work experience opportunities for volunteers.

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