



As part of our vision to be a positive force for change, we've produced a series of factsheets to help our customers better understand sustainability issues, and what we're doing about them.

Overview

Fairtrade is not only a certification, but is about better prices, decent working conditions, local sustainability, and fair terms of trade for farmers and workers around the world, but particularly in lower income countries. By requiring companies to pay sustainable prices (which must never fall lower than the market price), Fairtrade addresses the injustices of conventional trade, which traditionally discriminates against the producers from low-income countries. It enables them to improve their position and have more control over their lives.

The Fairtrade Premium is an additional sum of money paid to farmers and workers to invest in social, environmental and economic developmental projects to improve their businesses and their communities. They decide democratically by committee how to invest the premium. Fairtrade is often misunderstood though, as being 'just' about payments, when in reality, the Fairtrade Foundation work with partners on specific issues around the world, for example, supporting Bolivian coffee farmers tackling plant diseases linked to climate change, and to cocoa-growing communities creating the Women's School of Leadership in Côte d'Ivoire (source: Fairtrade Foundation).

The Fairtrade certification also involves meeting environmental standards, and the FAIRTRADE Mark can be displayed on products that meet the required standards, subject to approval. These standards exist for: Bananas, cocoa, coffee, dried Fruit, some fresh fruit & vegetables, honey, juices, nuts/oil seeds/oil, quinoa, rice, spices, sugar, tea and wine.



What's the problem?

Global markets for commodities can be highly variable, meaning that the price received by producers can fluctuate hugely, with no minimum set. This makes farming economically risky, despite the farmer producing a good that is globally in high demand. Without a minimum safety net price, farmers can be left very vulnerable to price volatility – leading to poverty, and in some cases, the stopping of production if costs just can't be covered.

Fairtrade works with farmers to ensure that production is both financially and environmentally sustainable, which protects future productivity and livelihoods. Fairtrade products are often perceived as more expensive but there is a wide variety of brands that produce affordable Fairtrade products, so it's important to engage consumers in buying and choosing Fairtrade products.

Our targets and plans

We stock a number of Fairtrade products, and report on the numbers of these in our annual sustainability report – available at www.bidfood.co.uk/sustainability. We aim to promote Fairtrade as a certification that consumers can trust, as every purchase supports the sustainability of that commodity and a safety net income for its producers.



Jargon buster

A similar but different certification that's relevant to some food and drink categories is Rainforest Alliance. This certification also aims to address social, environmental and economic issues relating to the production of specific commodities, but the approach is different to that of the Fairtrade Foundation.

An article explaining the differences can be found [here](#).

What can you do?

Ask your Bidfood account manager for a list of Fairtrade products that we stock – and ideally promote this to your customers, so that they can appreciate and understand the benefits of products that carry this Mark.

Share your feedback

We hope you find this fact sheet helpful, we'd love your feedback using the QR code or by clicking [here](#).

