

## THE BIRTH OF A NEW MOVEMENT

In recent years, the Fair Trade movement has united farmers, workers, traders and consumers with a message of fairness, equity and environmental stewardship in trade with producers in marginalized countries. Representing a convergence of co-operative, solidarity, and social justice movements, Fair Trade emphasizes ownership, empowerment and development for small-scale farmers, artisans and workers in the global South.

Increasingly, we can see that the challenges faced by rural communities are very similar around the world. As the movement for "Domestic Fair Trade" has gained momentum, our organizations have come together to contribute to a movement for fairness, equity and sustainability that supports family-scale farming, farmer-led initiatives such as farmer co-operatives, just conditions for farm workers, and the strengthening of the organic agriculture movement. Our organizations seek to bring these efforts together with mission-based traders, retailers and consumers to contribute to the movement for a more equitable, diverse and sustainable agriculture in North America and around the world. By creating businesses committed to principles of fairness and equity and leading by example, we hope to create positive change in the mainstream marketplace by influencing the conduct of conventional corporations.

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*For a copy of the Working Group's Principles for  
Domestic Fair Trade, if you'd like to become a  
partner, or for more information, please contact:*

### DOMESTIC FAIR TRADE STEERING COMMITTEE

Erin Ford, Organic Valley Family of Farms  
[erin.ford@organicvalley.coop](mailto:erin.ford@organicvalley.coop)  
Erbin Crowell, Equal Exchange  
[erbin@equalexchange.coop](mailto:erbin@equalexchange.coop)

## DOMESTIC FAIR TRADE

*Bringing home  
social, economic  
and environmental justice*

## WHY DOMESTIC FAIR TRADE?

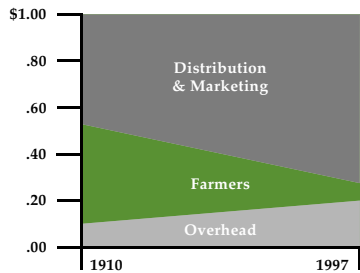
Many people today are familiar with International Fair Trade, as it applies to the import of coffee, tea, and cocoa. However, as the movement has grown it has become apparent that many of the challenges facing producers in developing countries are facing family farmers here in North America.

Big agribusiness continues to thrive, while in the past 40 years, 4 million small farmers have gone out of business.

The increase of importing under North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has caused such a surplus in local supply, that a drop of 40% in payment to farmers has been seen since 1995.

Despite this excess in supply and lower pay price, US consumers have seen an *increase* in cost at the store of 22% and rising.

WHERE OUR FOOD DOLLAR GOES



In the last century, an extraordinary shift occurred in how each dollar spent on food was distributed. The latest information shows farmers receive only about 8 cents of every dollar we spend on the food they grow.

SOURCE: STEWART SMITH/UNIVERSITY OF MAINE

## MAKING DOMESTIC FAIR TRADE A REALITY

With the current hardships facing our local family farmers today, many people are coming together to find a viable and progressive solution. The Domestic Fair Trade Working Group is made up of individuals from farmer, worker, retail and consumer organizations that are developing standards for a new Domestic Fair Trade model. Some of the basic principles are:

**Family-Scale Farming.** Family farms preserve the culture of farming and rural communities, promote economic democracy, environmental and humane stewardship, and ensure a more healthy and sustainable planet.

**Direct Trade.** These regulations would help reduce the “middle men”, delivering more benefits to the producers, while connecting the consumers more directly to them.

**Rights of Labor.** Fair Trade means a safe and healthy working environment for producers and workers. It will ensure there are mechanisms in place through which hired labor has an independent voice and is included in the benefits of trade. Programs of apprenticeship are promoted to develop the skills of the next generation of farmer, artisans and workers.

**Fair & Stable Pay Price.** Not only will this enable family farms to be more sustainable, it will also protect laborer’s wages and the equal pay for men and women.

**Sustainable Agriculture.** Certified farms would be sustainable and holistic in approach, employing production methods such as organic, biodynamic, small-scale, and the humane treatment of animals.

**Democratic & Participatory Ownership & Control.** Emphasis on co-operative organizations as a means of empowering producers, workers and consumers to gain more control over their economic and social lives. In situations where such organization is absent, mechanisms will be created to ensure the democratic participation of producers and workers, and the equitable distribution of the fruits of trade.

**Transparency & Accountability.** The Fair Trade system depends on transparency of costs, pricing, and structures at all levels of the trading system. Fair Traders are accountable to each other and the wider community by openly sharing such information.

