



**Canadian Student Fair Trade Network 
Réseau étudiant canadien pour le commerce équitable**

Purchasing Policy Campaign Action Guide

www.csftn-recce.org

Introduction

About the CSFTN

Student groups are at the forefront of the Fair Trade movement in Canada. They have been instrumental in raising awareness of Fair Trade in their universities and colleges, schools and broader communities, in increasing demand and availability of Fair Trade Certified products and in incorporating the principles of Fair Trade in the decisions of academic institutions. The Canadian Student Fair Trade Network (CSFTN) is a national umbrella organization that was established in 2004. CSFTN's functions are to link together the various student groups doing work on Fair Trade issues in a common movement, to promote greater communication and coordination within the movement; and to create linkages with other similar movements. The groups involved in the CSFTN include various independent student groups as well as local student chapters of larger organizations like World University Services of Canada (WUSC) and Oxfam and Équiterre.

About the Purchasing Policy Campaign

The CSFTN's Purchasing Policy Campaign arises out of a broader push for the adoption of ethical purchasing policies at public and private institutions across the country and beyond. Many institutions (including universities, school boards, municipalities, businesses, and provincial legislatures) are moving to adopt and implement such policies in order to formalize their commitment to ethical purchasing. Student groups across the country and around the world are calling on their schools to do the same, with several examples of success to date.

CSFTN's Purchasing Policy campaign aims to respond to the need for strengthened communication and coordination between these student groups so that they may share information and resources. The goals of the campaign are to share some of the strategies and experiences of students who worked to have Fair Trade purchasing policies adopted by their schools and to encourage other student groups to engage their institutions in establishing and implementing similar policies. Through a coordinated campaign with comprehensive resources, it is hoped that student groups will gain the tools and support they need to bring about the adoption and implementation of Fair Trade purchasing policies at their schools.

About this Purchasing Policy Action Guide

This action guide is meant to be a practical tool for students to use in advocating for Fair Trade purchasing policies. It has been written by students with experience in this regard. The guide includes the following sections:

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1. Overview of the Issues

An institutional purchasing policy can take several forms. It may focus on a particular issue, or can be a more encompassing “ethical” purchasing policy. While this guidebook focuses on Fair Trade products, specifically Fair Trade Certified products, you may want to consider related environmental and labour concerns (No Sweat, locally produced etc.) and decide whether or not to include them in your policy.

Fair Trade

The Fair Trade movement emerged over 60 years ago to address recognized injustices in the conventional international trading system. Fair Trade is an alternative system of trade linking small-scale producers in the South more directly with buyers in the North. While the Fair Trade market was first developed for handicrafts, an independent certification system for agricultural products developed in the late 1980s to extend the benefits of Fair Trade to millions of small-scale farmers suffering from low and inconsistent commodity prices and exploitative working conditions.

An international umbrella organization, the Fairtrade Labelling Organizations International (FLO) now sets international Fair Trade standards that guarantee to producers not only a fairer price for their goods, but also additional funds for community development; access to credit; stable trading relationships; democratic organization; and adherence to environmental and labour standards. FLO and its affiliated organizations offer independent monitoring and certification of the production chain. TransFair Canada is the only independent, third-party certification organization for Fair Trade Certified products in Canada, and the Canadian affiliate of FLO. Any product bearing TransFair Canada's Fair Trade Certified logo (above) is guaranteed to have met international Fair Trade standards, thanks to strict monitoring and auditing requirements at each step of the production chain.

The international and Canadian consumer markets for Fair Trade Certified products are growing rapidly. Currently, well over 5 million people (including producers and their dependents) benefit from the Fair Trade certification system. As more people become aware of the issues surrounding Fair Trade, they are choosing to make changes in their own lives. Awareness has led to greater demand for Fair Trade Certified goods, which has in turn increased the number of



producers that benefit from working in the Fair Trade system. The success of Fair Trade proves that a more just and sustainable economic model is viable.

More detailed information can be found in TransFair Canada's Student Action Guide available on the TransFair Canada website. The following websites also offer excellent resource material:

Canadian Student Fair Trade Network: www.csftn-recce.org

TransFair Canada: www.transfair.ca

Fairtrade Labelling Organizations International: www.fairtrade.net

Équiterre: www.equiterre.qc.ca

No Sweat

Anti-sweatshop campaigning looks to address the injustices that factory workers frequently face, including: abusive treatment, excessive working hours, dangerous conditions, and inadequate wages, etc. "No Sweat" describes apparel and other manufactured goods that have been produced in factories that respect workers' rights and are compliant with the International Labour Organization (ILO) Labour Standards of no forced labour or illegal child labour, the right to unionize and collectively bargain, fair pay and working hours, a safe and healthy work environment, etc. No Sweat or ethical purchasing policies for apparel set minimum labour standards that a company must meet for its products to be bought by an institution. For more information:

Maquila Solidarity Network: en.maquilasolidarity.org

United Students against Sweatshops: www.studentsagainstsweatshops.org

Workers Rights Consortium: www.workersrights.org

Environmental sustainability

There is also a growing movement to examine more closely and act to improve the impact of personal and institutional activities on the environment. Environmental sustainability is being integrated into institutional operations and purchasing in a variety of ways. Policies on sustainable operations look at issues such as waste reduction, material reuse, composting, recycling, and energy consumption.

With regards to purchasing in particular, sustainable food policies that focus on organic and local production are of major interest today. Organic crops are produced without pesticides or herbicides that damage local ecosystems, poisoning plants and animals and degrading the quality of soil and water. Organically produced food also protects the

health of farm workers and consumers. Local foods meanwhile are sourced from farms in the region in which they are consumed. This reduces the burning of fossil fuels that result when food is transported over long distances. For more information:

Sierra Youth Coalition's Sustainable Campuses project:

www.syc-cjs.org/sustainable/tiki-index.php

Canadian Organic Growers: www.cog.ca

Canadian Youth Environmental Network: www.yen-rej.org

Why a purchasing policy

Getting Fair Trade Certified products available at a university or college is a significant accomplishment that contributes to a number of important ends:

Impacting demand - As schools hold major buying power, their choice to switch to Fair Trade Certified products can significantly increase local demand and can encourage local retailers to supply more Fair Trade Certified goods.

Influencing consumer behaviour – With Fair Trade Certified products available in the campus outlets that students and school employees shop at daily, those previously unfamiliar with Fair Trade Certified products become aware of their existence. It also becomes easy for all members of the campus community to make the purchase of these products a daily habit - a move that can ultimately lead to a broad, long-term shift in individual consumption patterns. Finally, through their interaction with these products and the movement that they represent, students and staff can develop a better understanding of the socio-economic circumstances facing small producers in the Global South.

Institutionalization of Fair Trade principles – While the availability of Fair Trade Certified products can be increased without a Fair Trade Purchasing Policy, a policy provides a number of unique, valuable advantages. As a binding, written commitment, a school-wide Fair Trade purchasing policy represents the institutionalization of Fair Trade within the school for those products covered by the scope of the policy. Such a commitment can outlast rapid turnover of the student population and changes in administration and in food service providers. By contrast, in some instances where growth in the availability of Fair Trade certified products was not accompanied by a purchasing policies, students have seen product growth on their campuses reversed after a couple of years.

Note however, that purchasing Policies are not immune to change or elimination. Student groups should continue to monitor the implementation of the Fair Trade purchasing policy once it has been adopted.

Demonstration of values – A school's decision to adopt a purchasing policy is a gesture of symbolic importance. It provides concrete demonstration by the administration and students of their support for Fair Trade and distinguishes the institution as a leader in ethical and responsible decision-making. Such a commitment can influence decision-making in other areas of the school's activities and influence the values of future students and staff.

Ripple effect – One university or college's decision to adopt a Fair Trade purchasing policy can influence others to do the same. With the growing trend amongst public and private institutions to implement ethical and Fair Trade purchasing policies, your school's adoption of such a purchasing policy may provide the necessary inspiration and pressure to cause others to follow-suit. Further, your experience in the drafting and implementation process may be used as a model by others.

2. Getting Started

Overview of the process

Advocating for a purchasing policy is a long-term process that can span from several months to a few years. Even after the administration's support has been gained – often a significant accomplishment in itself – there is the process of reworking the policy document and determining how it will be implemented. It may be helpful for your group to begin by assessing your capacity, setting an overall aim and short and long-term objectives.

As you move along in your campaign you will need to build support among the general student body and school population in order to bring legitimacy to your cause. Being able to demonstrate widespread support for adopting a purchasing policy will give your demands the mandate and credibility they need to attract the attention of decision-makers.

In terms of tactics you must find an effective balance between more confrontational and more cooperative approaches. Although both methods are of value, in the case of Fair Trade, school administration and food service providers have responded far more positively to a

cooperative approach. There are many benefits of Fair Trade that can be demonstrated to win the support of decision-makers. Engaging in negotiation to get the policy instituted has generally proven effective. A confrontational approach, nevertheless, may need to be employed as a last resort, if other methods do not work.

Assess your situation

As a starting point, your group will want to look into the situation that currently exists at your Institution to help you determine an approach for moving forward.

Determine the level of availability of Fair Trade Certified products on campus: Are some Fair Trade Certified products already available? If not, getting a Fair Trade Certified coffee option may be as easy as just asking for it. In moving towards a purchasing policy it is helpful to build on pre-existing Fair Trade product availability. You can point to these products to show that Fair Trade items do sell, adding weight to your bid for a purchasing policy

Assess the level of awareness about Fair Trade at your school: Are students generally aware of Fair Trade? How about faculty, staff and administration? How many people already buy Fair Trade Certified products? How many would if they were available on campus? Are there any recurring misconceptions that need to be cleared up? Since widespread knowledge and support for Fair Trade are crucial to a successful purchasing policy campaign, start by gauging the existing situation on your campus.

Assess your group's own skills and commitment: Who are the members of your group? Which sections of the campus community do they represent? What are the specific skills of each member? What time commitment are they able to make? Getting a sense of your skills as a committee and as individuals can facilitate the division of tasks within the group. You may discover that you would benefit from recruiting other members with skills that are currently lacking. If the majority of those involved are students in their last year, you will need to recruit students who have more time left in their degree to continue the process.

Understand your institution's governance structure: Who awards retail contracts on campus? Which body would be responsible for passing a Fair Trade purchasing policy? What is its composition? To whom would such a policy apply? Which other administrative bodies would need to be consulted? Each school has its own unique system of governance. You

will need to figure out how yours is structured, determine the offices and individuals you want to target and identify the decision-making body that will ultimately have to pass the policy to make it binding. These structures will influence which tactics your group finds most appropriate to use.

Consider the various stakeholders affected: What groups exist on your campus that could be allies/supporters? What groups may challenge your efforts? Think about student government bodies, cultural clubs, issues-based clubs, unions, faculties, departments, administrative offices and bodies, on-campus retailers and suppliers. Some organizations will be immediate allies, while you may need to devote energy to win the support of others or to foster individual supporters within various groups. These partners may provide the essential political and/or official support needed to get the policy passed.

Set objectives

The value of adopting a Fair Trade Purchasing Policy is that it institutionalizes the use and availability of Fair Trade products. The degree and form of institutionalization will vary depending on the focus of the purchasing policy adopted. It is therefore important to specifically determine the core objectives your group wants to achieve through a purchasing policy. Establish an overall aim as well as short and long-term goals to guide your work. By doing so, you will have a basis from which to plan your actions and events. Refer back to the overall aim and long-term objectives frequently to ensure that you remain focused on them throughout the campaign and the processes of drafting and reviewing the policy.

Overall Aim – a final goal your group wishes to achieve. For example:

- To have our school offer exclusively Fair Trade Certified products whenever and wherever possible.

Long Term Objectives - several goals which when compiled will amount to the achievement of the overall aim. For example:

- To incorporate Fair Trade into the school's mission statement
- To incorporate Fair Trade into catering contracts
- To have Fair Trade sold by all retail outlets on campus, not as only an option alongside non-Fair Trade products but exclusively (Fair Trade isn't a flavour!)
- To ensure the use of Fair Trade products in student union offices (grad and undergrad if both exist on your campus)
- To ensure the use of Fair Trade products at all school meetings

Short Term Objectives - more immediate action-based items leading to the accomplishment of the long-term objectives. For example:

- To raise awareness of Fair Trade on campus
- To build support from students and staff for a Fair Trade Purchasing Policy
- To discuss Fair Trade with the bodies governing retail outlets on campus
- To create links and partnerships with other campus groups

Establish a timeline

Once your group is clear on what you want to achieve, determine a rough timeline to guide your work through the stages that follow. Although it is unlikely that you will be able to adhere strictly to the deadlines you set, establishing, revisiting and revamping your timeline through the campaign will help push you to move forward in a schedule of actions without losing sight of your long-term objectives.

When drafting a timeline be sure to consider events and dates occurring outside of your immediate campaign that might be of relevance such as the academic calendar; dates of student elections; meeting dates of influential administrative bodies; upcoming institution policy reviews; and international campaign days.

Inform yourself

It is very important that your group members are knowledgeable about the injustices of conventional trade and the workings of the Fair Trade certification system in order to educate others and bring legitimacy to your cause.

3. Building Awareness and Support

In order to get your policy passed it is important to demonstrate that support exists for Fair Trade among the broader campus population, and that students would buy Fair Trade Certified products if they were available. Your group may need to organize an awareness-raising campaign to educate students about Fair Trade, or undertake other activities to demonstrate student support.

Creating broad awareness

An awareness-raising campaign is not only an important step towards achieving a purchasing policy, but a valuable undertaking unto itself. It gives you the opportunity to educate others about challenges facing

small-scale producers in the conventional world market and the ways Fair Trade seeks to address these. By encouraging students to buy Fair Trade, they may begin a lifelong trend that will hopefully extend to other forms of ethical and sustainable purchasing.

Be sure to keep track of the numbers of students and other members of the school that participate in your events. This information can be used to demonstrate their support to decision-makers when it comes time to negotiate your purchasing policy.

Hold events that are creative, interesting, and engaging. Universities and colleges are busy places with a lot going on, so it is important to run events that will draw attention. Nevertheless, be sure to also provide opportunities for students to be informed about the issues. Some ideas for campaigns are to:

- Organize a petition or letter-writing campaign in support of your purchasing policy. The opportunity to contribute in a concrete way can rally students and make them more willing to get involved.
- Invite a speaker to your school to give a talk about Fair Trade. Learning about the movement in greater depth will help students to understand and have an emotional attachment to the cause.
- Hold a Fair Trade sampling event, allowing students to taste a range of Fair Trade products. You can even provide a blind taste test with non-Fair Trade beverages, giving students the chance to compare Fair Trade Certified coffees to non-Fair Trade coffee, for example.
- Host a Fair Trade sale, such as a holiday sale featuring handicrafts from Ten Thousand villages.
- Hold a media event, something creative and eye-catching that will get students and the broader community to take notice.
- Distribute buttons, ribbons or other visual signs that students can wear to show their support for Fair Trade and the purchasing policy.
- Go "reverse trick-or-treating", walk door to door at Halloween handing out Fair Trade Certified chocolate minis with a fact sheet on Fair Trade. This can be done in residence buildings and within the broader community.
- Be sure to get on the CSFTN mailing list or check out the website for periodic coordinated actions organized across different campuses.

Demonstrating support

Being able to demonstrate support for a purchasing policy is a key factor in getting the policy passed. You must prove that the wider school population has given its support to your mandate.

At all universities and colleges there are certain organizations and governance bodies whose support is essential to having a policy passed. Look for potential allies within key groups, including faculty and administration. This can be a way to gain broader support from these bodies and to access inside information about their operations that is useful in determining how you will engage them in the future. You might also consider collecting letters or other demonstrations of support to show to the administration. Below is a list of potential groups from which you can garner support, as well as an indication of how you can benefit from working with them.

General student body – It is important to show that students are aware and demand an increase in Fair Trade products on campus. You need to be able to demonstrate that students will purchase Fair Trade in order to convince decision makers that a purchasing policy is financially beneficial.

Student unions (undergraduate and graduate) – The support of your student government may contribute to getting a policy passed as they often have access to resources and influential personnel which the average student will not. They have communications with the student body as well as the administration. They represent the official voice of the students, so they are an important political actor within school governance. Encourage the student unions to pass Fair Trade purchasing policies as a step toward a school-wide policy.

Student clubs – Student clubs, including college cabinets, levied clubs, international students' associations, etc., can be good allies. They can give political support and can encourage dialogue about the campaign within their membership.

Professional unions and associations – These are the unions representing various employee groups on your campus and may share common values or goals with your group. Their support can be important to demonstrate that there is broad demand for Fair Trade products, reaching beyond the student body.

Academic departments – These departments may have done relevant research which they could offer to support campaign and policy development. In addition, targeting departments provides another opportunity to engage faculty and students.

University administration – It is important to first identify what level of influence the administration has on the adoption and implementation of the purchasing policy you are putting forward. If the administration has the capacity to adopt and enforce a purchasing policy, their level of cooperation will dictate your approach. If they do not have this capacity, they may still be a useful ally in demonstrating support for Fair Trade.

Food service provider, bookstores and private businesses on campus – As on-campus retailers, the willingness and ability of these actors to provide Fair Trade Certified products is important to the successful development and implementation of a purchasing policy. Once you have a firm understanding of Fair Trade and the type of policy you would like to create speak with the purchasing staff and managers for campus sales outlets. You may find they provide a surprising source of support. If their willingness is not forthcoming you will need to work with other allies to generate pressure and demonstrate that demand for Fair Trade Certified products exists on your campus. Where on-campus retailers are reluctant to sell Fair Trade, a formal purchasing policy affecting contracts between the school and retailers is particularly relevant.

External actors – Community members, the media, local businesses and politicians should not be overlooked as you build support and awareness. Investigate whether there are any groups working on Fair Trade issues in the wider community that may be willing to support your cause. When holding events and working towards or achieving key milestones remember to speak to campus and community media or send out a press release. Drawing media attention to your groups Fair Trade Purchasing Policy campaign can be an effective method to mobilize support and increase the pace of your progress.

4. Writing a draft purchasing policy

Decide on your focus

The decision of whether to include Fair Trade Certified products only or to also include other ethical goods depends on what is already in place at your school, and the energy and focus of your group. Certainly the ideal situation is to have your institution make a commitment to ethical and sustainable consumption more broadly. However, this could make for a longer and more complicated process. Your group can assess whether or

not it is feasible to include a number of issues within a single policy or to work on adopting separate purchasing policies.

Structure and terms of your policy

Look at the examples of existing purchasing policies and case studies on to get ideas on how to structure your own (see section 6 and CSFTN's website). Typically the structure of a purchasing policy includes a title, an introductory section to explain any definitions and the rationale behind the policy, and the terms of implementation.

Decide which products you want to have included in the policy (food and beverage products, Fair Trade Certified sports balls, apparel, etc.) For each product, determine whether it is realistic to source exclusively Fair Trade Certified or to just provide a Fair Trade option. Also, decide which outlets on campus will be subject to the policy (cafeterias, bookstore, retail or fast food chain, athletics department, etc.).

Details to include

- Explain the rationale behind Fair Trade products and the policy
- Explicitly refer to "Fair Trade Certified" products in the policy. "Fair Trade Certified" products are those that adhere to the standards and monitoring of Fairtrade Labelling Organizations and TransFair Canada. Other products may call themselves "fair trade", but do not follow the principles of Fair Trade or may meet a weaker set of standards.
- Build a process of consumer education into the policy. For example, your policy may state that Fair Trade Certified products must be available in places where they are clearly visible and that the Fair Trade Certified label must be prominently displayed.
- Be specific in the terms of implementation. For an exclusive policy applicable at all outlets across the campus use wording such as "university managed or contracted outlets."
- Ensure that there is a reliable and effective system set up to monitor the policy and to ensure it is being implemented.

5. Negotiating with Administration

Do not approach the university administration until you are prepared and have done all your research. You want to present yourselves as knowledgeable, professional, and determined. It is important to be diplomatic and respectful while at the same time highlighting the ethical imperatives of Fair Trade and the potential costs and benefits of having a policy. Be sure to point out that Fair Trade does not necessarily cost more

when competitive bidding processes for school contracts occur. Do not create an unnecessary antagonistic relationship with the school administration. Students have had the greatest success getting Fair Trade introduced and purchasing policies adopted by taking a cooperative approach.

Educate and inform

When you meet with the administration, provide them with the information they will need in order to understand the issues well enough to be able to support and pass the purchasing policy. You need to be able to change their minds on how they make purchasing decisions. Be prepared to offer a presentation, written information, or answer questions on the following:

- Outline what Fair Trade is; its principles and standards; how Fair Trade certification works; the roles of TransFair Canada and FLO International; and the impact of Fair Trade for developing world farmers and workers.
- Show that demand for Fair Trade products and support for a purchasing policy exist within the school community.
- Discuss the broader benefits of having a purchasing policy including your institutions role in the international Fair Trade movement; the growth of ethical purchasing policies and of Fair Trade policies in other schools (their scope, costs, when they were adopted); and how your school would be joining this trend and could stand out as a leader if a strong policy is adopted.
- Review the initial draft of the policy and discuss the details of how it will be implemented, such as which products and campus outlets will be included in the scope of the policy and the estimated financial cost of implementation.

Working in partnership

Even after the school administration comes to support the policy in principle, it can still be a tedious process to get the policy adopted. Be prepared to work in close partnership with the administration and other stakeholders like the food service provider to determine how the policy will be brought into practice. The details of implementation will need to be determined collaboratively and the policy document will most likely be reworked several times. It is important for you to be involved in this process to support the work being done, but more importantly, to ensure the policy does not become watered down.

The food service provider will have to find out if their current distributor will supply Fair Trade Certified products. If not, they will need to figure out if another company can supply them, which company can best suit their needs and the details of how this would be done. Perhaps the main

question your institution will have is how much more the policy will cost than what is currently being spent. It may help to have some initial quotes, but the school or food services provider will likely also be able to negotiate a better deal with the distributing company based on their volume. Through competitive bidding processes Fair Trade products are sold at comparable prices to conventional goods.

The purchasing policy document may have to be modified based on what is actually practical in terms of implementation. The wording may also change to make the document more official and to match the format of other institutional policy documents. Again, make sure the policy is not weakened! With patience and persistence a strong and implementable policy can be developed.

6. Case Studies

York University

Timeline of Major Accomplishments

- Work was begun in 2002 by a few individuals
- In 2005, the group coalesced into a coalition with a larger mandate, the Sustainable Purchasing Coalition (SPC)
- In 2006-2007, the SPC collaborated with the Fair Trade Coalition (another on campus group) creating an effective partnership.
- A Fair Trade purchasing policy has not been adopted by York University but significant progress has been reached in generating support, raising awareness and increasing Fair Trade availability.

Structure, Decision Making Bodies and Administrative Procedure

- FOOD SERVICES (<http://www.yorku.ca/foodservices/>)
- YORK UNIVERSITY SECRETARIAT (SENATE)
 - i. This consists of the university president, secretary and general council, along with all assistants, and VPs.
(<http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/>)
- YORK UNIVERSITY LICENCE BOARD
(<http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/licensing/index.htm>)
- PROCUREMENT SERVICES
(<http://www.yorku.ca/finance/services/procurement/>)

Tactics Utilized

NEGOTIATIONS

Students and faculty members have spoken to individual retailers to try to convince them to offer Fair Trade alternatives and a number of smaller retailers now do as a result of this intervention. We've spoken to the administration (purchasing and VP Students) about a Fair Trade purchasing policy but we've been met with much resistance.

EDUCATIONAL CAMPAIGNS

A variety of Fair Trade workshops were held in 2006. About eighty students participated in these educational workshops to learn about the history and current situation of Fair Trade. These sessions also included advocacy training about what students can do on campus in terms of getting Fair Trade into their faculties and different vendors. Fair Trade fairs and other events have been held over the years to help educate students, staff and faculty and to raise the presence of Fair Trade alternatives on campus.

FAIR TRADE FAIRS

The Fair Trade Coalition held a Fair Trade fair in 2006 which was moderately successful. In 2007 (March) the SPC and the Fair Trade Coalition jointly hosted a Fair Trade fair which proved highly successful. Ten vendors participated and sold their products. Educational materials provided by TransFair were distributed, along with flyers made by the SPC. This aided with the educational goals of the SPC-Fair Trade Coalition.

LOBBYING

Some faculty members have directly lobbied the administration about getting a policy. The administration, however, has been resistant. They have been willing to work with some of the larger food service providers to encourage them to provide a Fair Trade coffee option in some of their facilities. The administration was willing to do this for one primary reason. Howard Daugherty, a professor in Environmental Studies at York, who works on sustainability issues in the Costa Rican rainforest, participated in the development of an environmentally friendly and Fair Trade Certified coffee brand (Las Nubes) with local producers in Costa Rica. It is in large part because this brand also carries the York logo and provides good publicity for the university that the administration has been willing to push the major food service providers to offer it. The biggest food service providers, Sodexo and Aramark, now do provide Las Nubes in some of their facilities. Coffee retailers such as Tim Horton's and Second Cup, however, do not.

STUDENT NEWSPAPER

In 2006 we had one article written specifically about the SPC and the different working groups we have within it. We also contributed articles about No Sweat and Fair Trade (three written by SPC members) raising awareness on these initiatives and trying to increase support for them. All articles were submitted in our on campus newspaper, Excalibur.

PETITION

In 2005-2006 we created a petition about the incorporation of Fair Labour practices into university policies at York. This included both No Sweat and also Fair Trade. Over 300 students signed the petition and we gained great support on campus.

Policy Document

None

Tips and Closing Remarks

It is important to realize that a policy is not the only tool needed to affect change, spreading knowledge about Fair Trade and labour conditions worldwide is also very important. The more people are educated, the better choices and decisions they can make, leading to wider change.

Contact Information

Darrel Reed dreed@yorku.ca;
Victoria Barnett veegs@yorku.ca, 416-721-3471

Trent University

Background

Year 1

Organizing for Fair Trade at Trent began in the 2003-2004 academic year with the creation of Fair Trade Trent, a working group of the Ontario Public Interest Research Group (OPIRG) Peterborough. Fair Trade Trent chose to operate as an OPIRG working group because this provided access to supports like funding, office space, staff assistance for promotions, and a space for networking with activist groups and students.

Year 2: Dealing with Membership Turnover

One of the main challenges facing Fair Trade Trent has been high membership turnover. All those involved during the 2003-2004 year left Trent because they graduated, moved, or were studying abroad. Fair Trade Trent was rebuilt with new membership. Contact with and between organizers who were abroad helped to ensure continuity. It was also helpful that the records and resources from the previous year were archived in the OPIRG office where they could be easily drawn upon. The working group built up in the first half of the 2004-2005 year and by January had a core of 5-10 activists attending organizing meetings.

Year 3: Balancing Objectives

Since its inception Fair Trade Trent's mission has been two-pronged. One component has been to provide education and raise awareness about Fair Trade. The other has been to lobby the foodservice provider and the Trent administration for more Fair Trade products to be available on campus. The two objectives are inseparable. We had to demonstrate through a variety of means to the university administration that the student body supported Fair Trade. It became more challenging to balance awareness-raising and lobbying in the third year of organizing when the university-wide committee was formed to develop and implement a purchasing policy for Fair Trade Certified products. A division of labour in Fair Trade Trent became necessary to a degree as the two areas both required work and commitment.

Structures and Decision Making Bodies

Food Services provider for Trent University – ARAMARK

Trent University Fair Trade Committee – Mandated to develop a purchasing policy for Fair Trade Certified products at Trent. Comprised representatives from Fair Trade Trent, the Director of Student Affairs, a member of the President's office, the head of ARAMARK, a faculty representative and a representative from the Athletics department

Trent University Administration – particularly the office of Student Affairs and Office of the President

Tactics Utilized

Petitions

The tactics that Fair Trade Trent used to engage students varied through the three years of organizing. The petition campaigns in 2004 and 2005

served as demonstrations of grassroots support for Fair Trade on campus. In 2004 the petition garnered 1050 signatures and in 2005 it garnered 650 signatures. The petitions were delivered directly to both ARAMARK and to the university administration. Gold ribbons were also used to help to raise awareness among students in conjunction with action to pressure the administration.

Educational Events

The educational events that Fair Trade Trent organized often drew a limited crowd of students and university community members, but still served an important role in the academic setting of the university because they deepened awareness and understanding of Fair Trade for students studying in a variety of departments on campus. The events perhaps served mostly to educate and develop an outer core of supporters often amongst members of other student groups or governing bodies who could secure support for Fair Trade Trent within their networks.

Guest Speakers

Over the past three years, Fair Trade Trent has organized a variety of different educational events. In 2004, the group organized a talk with a representative of Oxfam Canada, addressing the Make Trade Fair campaign. The next year the group sponsored a panel-discussion on Fair Trade with a representative from Oxfam Canada, a Trent professor and a representative from a local business selling Fair Trade Certified products. That same year, 2005, the group sponsored a presentation by a representative from a women's weaving co-operative in Chiapas, Mexico who were doing a Canadian speaking tour organized by the CSFTN amongst others. We also sponsored a presentation by a Fair Trade tea producer from Sri Lanka. These events were made possible through networking with other Fair Trade organizations, such as TransFair Canada.

In 2004 and 2005, we also held taste testing days for Fair Trade products including coffee and chocolate. In 2006 we held several different educational events. On Halloween night members of Fair Trade Trent went door-to-door giving out Fair Trade chocolate. We also hosted a two day sale of Ten Thousand Villages' Fair Trade handicrafts as well as a presentation by a coffee producer and activist from a Fair Trade co-op and political organization in Guatemala.

Working with the Administration

Negotiating with the Trent University administration has been a part of Fair Trade Trent's work throughout the last four years. This has involved dealing

with both the administration and the foodservice provider, which in the case of Trent is ARAMARK. ARAMARK is contracted as the foodservice provider until 2010. During the first petition campaign in 2004, Fair Trade Trent dealt directly with ARAMARK to secure an option of Fair Trade Certified coffee in all of the cafeterias. The next year we continued to engage the Trent administration and ARAMARK. We had a second petition campaign which demonstrated continued support for Fair Trade on campus. It was not until Fair Trade Trent's third year that the demands for a purchasing policy gained traction.

That year Fair Trade Trent, ARAMARK and the Trent administration all sat down to begin the work of the Fair Trade committee. The committee's mandate was to develop a purchasing policy for Fair Trade Certified products at Trent. The committee comprised members of Fair Trade Trent, two representatives from the Trent administration including the Director of Student Affairs and a member of the President's office, the head of ARAMARK, a faculty representative, and a representative from Athletics because of the demand we made for Fair Trade Certified sports balls.

Fair Trade Trent had spent the last two years soliciting and collecting letters of support from different student and university groups. These letters were more important in showing widespread political and moral support for Fair Trade and the adoption of a purchasing policy than in providing official approval required for the passage of the final policy.

Policy Document

For more information visit

<http://opirg.trentwomenscentre.ca/content/category/6/90/334/> and <http://www.trentu.ca/admin/sweatshop/>

Tips and Closing Remarks

1. Articulate your Demands Clearly

It is important to establish a clear mandate and direction from the outset. Is your group going to demand the implementation of a Fair Trade option in the cafeterias or the adoption of a university-wide purchasing policy institutionalizing the procurement of Fair Trade products? At Trent we have gone the second route. If this proves overly ambitious for the context of your campus, it is not the only option. A lot depends on the context of the campus, and the provisions of the contracts current foodservice providers have with the university, which they are both bound by. A policy

mandating the exclusive supply of Fair Trade Certified products is the ideal root. It may not be the most feasible in the medium- to short-term.

2. Demonstrate political and moral support

It is essential to demonstrate grassroots support to ensure the passage of the policy. It will prove far too easy for the university administration to label your Fair Trade activist group as a “special interest group” if you do not solicit and gain support from other groups on campus. A process of coalition building may become very important on your campus depending on the size and specific context. Large and diverse representation in the coalition could help to speed up the policy process.

If an ad-hoc committee with representatives from different organizations does not come together, it is more important to provide an impression of grassroots support. The show of support can come in the form of letters of support or issued statements. These gestures connect members of many organizations to the policy and provide support for passing it.

3. Moving from “activist” to “diplomat”

During the life of the purchasing policy campaign there will be two distinctive time periods. The first will be an activist period in which your group will need to raise awareness about Fair Trade on campus to garner grassroots support. In this stage a more confrontational or moralistic stance towards the university administration may be required. The second phase is a more diplomatic period that involves working with the administration and the foodservice provider. In this stage you may have to work within the constraints of current contracts to make the changes you can within the life of those agreements. Creating these initial changes is a success in itself. But this should be seen as a step toward your end goal, a comprehensive policy.

Contact Information

Patrick Clark patrickclark@trentu.ca

Queen's University

Timeline of Major Accomplishments

Recent activities relating to the Fair Trade purchasing policy at Queen's University have focused on increasing the depth and strength of the

University's existing policy. The original policy required the provision of Fair Trade coffee as an option by food services. Working from this baseline, Queen's Oxfam club and other student groups launched a campaign focused on building a more comprehensive Fair Trade purchasing policy. In the proposed policy Food Services would be required to procure only Fair Trade products (beginning with coffee, and integrating others over time). The provision of Fair Trade products would be taken into consideration in the negotiation of food service contracts. The following timeline highlights the major accomplishments and current directions of Fair Trade purchasing at Queen's.

- 2004: Fair Trade Purchasing Policy drafted by Queen's Project for International Development modelled on McMaster's Ethical Purchasing Policy
- 2005: Policy passed requiring the provision of an option of Fair Trade coffee by the food services director
- January 2005: Queen's Oxfam launches the Make Trade Fair Campaign, focusing on the link between international trade justice issues, local Fair Trade purchasing and University purchasing policies
- September 2005: The Fair Trade Guide to Kingston is released, encouraging students, faculty and community members to purchase from locations with Fair Trade Certified products
- February 2006: A policy for Fair Trade Exclusive Purchasing receives attention as a student government election issue. Those elected stated publicly that they endorse Fair Trade Exclusivity and general student support for the policy was demonstrated
- January 2007: the principle offers open office hours and Oxfam members book appointments to talk about Fair Trade exclusivity
- March 2007: advertisements are taken out in the student newspaper during the student government elections. The ads highlight the current student government's lack of action for Fair Trade and demand that the current candidates adhere to their promises around Fair Trade in the coming year.
- March 2007: School food outlets host Fair Trade days, where all of their coffee, tea and sugar is Fair Trade Certified.

Structure, Decision Making Bodies and Administrative Procedure

FOOD SERVICES

- Governed by an Advisory Committee
- Operates with a business mentality

Dean of Student Affairs

-Responsible for Student Services at the University

-Passes university policy

STUDENT UNION / STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Tactics Utilized

NEGOTIATION

Negotiation was used to engage parties that either had the ability to make tangible changes to the university's purchasing policy or that would provide support necessary to influence key decision makers. Booking appointments for negotiation required incredible persistence in communication. A key lesson learned was that the campaign group must not feel intimidated or give up if key players initially seem uninterested or unenthusiastic as persistence does pay off.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

The issue was first brought to the attention of the student government through broad based discussion and media coverage at election time. A coalition of groups including the Queen's Project on International Development, Queen's Oxfam and Queen's International Affairs Association joined together to approach the election with a strategic plan. They coordinated meetings with each of the candidate groups, sent an open letter to the candidates through the student newspaper and ensured members of the coalition were present at every election debate with questions regarding the proposal of Fair Trade exclusivity.

STUDENT NEWSPAPER

The student newspaper was constantly used to draw attention to the issue of Fair Trade. Coalition members found that along with other forms of ethical purchasing, such as local food and No Sweat clothing, the media was sympathetic to their cause. Frequent opinion pieces and letters to the editor were submitted and the group invested in advertisements.

PETITION

The Make Trade Fair campaign collected signatures of members of the campus community in support of Fair Trade exclusivity. These petitions could later be used in negotiations, presentations and discussions.

EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

Queen's Oxfam and the Queen's Project on International Development both held a series of educational events including movie screenings,

chocolate sales for Valentine's Day and Christmas, presentations at conferences, and booths at different events. These educational activities helped to gain public support and spur dialogue on the issue of Fair Trade.

Policy Document

Email the below-listed contacts for more information.

Tips and Closing Remarks

Don't depend on public education to achieve tangible policy change, and don't feel guilty about the fact that you may be involved in meetings which are only accessible to small groups of people. Work on making any information you come across as public as possible, and know that tangible change can be achieved by convincing your counterpart, instead of attacking them.

The experience of Queen's has largely been one of coalition building. Despite setbacks, the issue of Fair Trade continues to be of focus at Queen's because of the diversity of groups and organizations that are dedicated to this issue.

Contact Information

Kate Whitlaw oxfam@ams.queensu.ca; Amanda Wilson amanda.divito.wilson@gmail.com; Queen's Project on International Development apid@post.queensu.ca; OPIRG Kingston info@opirgkingston.org



Canadian Student Fair Trade Network 
Réseau étudiant canadien pour le commerce équitable
www.csftn-recce.org