

# Muslim Action Guide 2009



Unfair trade rules continue to lock millions of people in the developing world in poverty. Two billion people – a third of humanity – work hard to support themselves yet still struggle to survive on £1 per day or less. Through Fairtrade we are trying to help tip the balance in favour of poor farmers and workers. You can help by taking action in Fairtrade Fortnight (23 February – 8 March 2009) and throughout the year. In this guide you can read about the difference Fairtrade is making for producers and find out what you and your community can do to spread the benefits of Fairtrade to more people than ever.

Whenever I attend Fairtrade events I am always enthused by the commitment of business people, faith groups, Fairtrade activists and school children. It's the same wherever I go. It's a reminder that the Fairtrade movement is rooted in an ever broadening coalition of people who want to exercise their consumer power to change the lives of people thousands of miles away. And what a change!

farmers – an example of the way Fairtrade can lift communities into those value-added markets from which they have been frozen out for so long. But for every Fairtrade farmer there are countless others who languish in poverty. We are rightly proud of what we've achieved so far but they, and their communities, represent the challenge for next year and many more after that.

**George Alagiah**  
Patron of the Fairtrade Foundation



I will never forget Alex and Fatima, the children of coffee growers I met in Nicaragua. With the help of the Fairtrade premium they are now skilled coffee tasters offering advice to

*If one of you sees something wrong, he should change it with his hand; and if he is not capable of that, then with his tongue; and if he is not capable of that, then he should detest it with his heart; and that is the weakest faith*

Hadith narrated by Bukhari

# For producers in South Africa



The end of the apartheid in South Africa in 1994 was the start of a new era, but racial inequalities remained, with 85 per cent of agricultural land being held by the minority white farmers. The agricultural landscape was dominated by white-owned large-scale farms whilst the black workforce was largely oppressed and landless. Fairtrade has been working to empower disadvantaged workers. Uniquely in South Africa Fairtrade standards have been developed to include national government requirements on black economic empowerment (Black Economic Empowerment or BEE), which aims to gradually transfer land, business ownership, management skills and knowledge back into the hands of those who suffered most under apartheid.



Almost all Fairtrade certified producer groups in South Africa are large farms that use hired labour. As well as improving lives through the investment of the Fairtrade premium, Fairtrade standards require producers that depend on hired labour to actively contribute to BEE targets, so their employees take a greater share in the ownership and management of the farms they work on.

The effects of Fairtrade go well beyond economic benefits. As well as receiving a minimum price for their produce, Paul Afrikaner, a worker at Citrusdal-Bergendal farm, which produces Fairtrade wine, rooibos tea, oranges and other fruit, explains how Fairtrade standards have made conditions for workers safer: 'The circumstances we work under have changed, for example, if chemicals are sprayed in the orchards, we are no longer allowed to work during that time.'

Paul is also treasurer of the Joint Body at Bergendal. The Joint Body is democratically elected by workers and it decides the best way to spend the Fairtrade premium. Paul says: 'The premium money that we get improves life in the community. The workers also get training. This is very good.' Workers benefit from a programme of training courses on topics including conflict resolution, financial management, food hygiene and health issues such as HIV/AIDS.

You can buy Fairtrade citrus fruit when in season from Asda, Booths, Budgens, Co-op, Marks and Spencer, Morrisons, Sainsbury's and Tesco.

**God loves those who are fair and just**  
Quran 49:9



# What is Fairtrade?

Many farmers and workers in the developing countries struggle to provide for their families. Poor market access and unfair trade rules often mean that the price they get for their crop does not cover the cost of production. Fairtrade is a rapidly growing international movement which seeks to guarantee a better deal for farmers and workers in the developing world. A product that is Fairtrade certified carries a label, the FAIRTRADE Mark.

## Islam and Fairtrade

*... there is a rich heritage in Islam of high moral standards, ethics, values and norms of behaviour, which govern personal, professional and business life. In the area of business and commerce Islam obliges buyers, sellers and consumers to act honestly, fairly and with integrity in their daily business practices – for business is not something that can be treated separately from all other aspects of social life. Islam also obliges workers to be treated fairly, and with dignity and respect. Since the fair trade movement is primarily concerned with fairness, equity and justice, it seems that the principles of fair trade and the teachings of Islam are entirely congruent.*

From *An Islamic perspective on fair trade*, Islamic Relief (2008)

**Allah shows mercy to a man who is kind when he sells, when he buys and when he makes a claim**

Hadith narrated by Bukhari

*As shoppers we are responsible for the choices we make and it is in our power to make a positive difference by promoting social justice in poorer parts of the world. The values of accountability, justice, empowerment and compassion are key to the work Muslim Aid and are inherent in fair trade too. We have recently opened our first ever fair trade coffee shop, The Fair Factory, in East London and as more and more people choose Fairtrade, more producers are empowered to use their hard-earned income to provide healthcare and education for their children.*

Saif Ahmed, CEO Muslim Aid

## Is the Fairtrade system a charity?

No Fairtrade is not a charity. Fairtrade is about empowering small farmers in developing countries that often lose out due to unfair trade rules and dishonest traders. By selling their products through Fairtrade producers receive a fair and stable price for their produce, as well as a little extra money to invest in their communities. This allows them to support themselves today but also gives them hope for a better future for tomorrow.

**'We don't want your money. We simply want you to buy our coffee at a fair price so we can be independent'**

Farmer from Coche, Ethiopia.

# Fairtrade and trade justice



The Fairtrade Foundation is a member of the Trade Justice Movement – a coalition of organisations committed to campaigning for trade rules which benefit poor people and the environment. The coalition is critical of Europe's current trade policy which puts big business above the interests of people in developing countries.

As well as continuing to push African, Caribbean and Pacific countries into bad trade deals, the European Union is also setting its sights on a further 34 developing countries in Latin America and Asia where over 970 million live on less than US\$2 a day. These trade deals aim to force open markets for European business, on agriculture and services in particular, that could harm the poorest and most vulnerable groups in the developing world, destroying jobs, small-scale industries and the livelihoods of small farmers, as well as increasing environmental exploitation and the abuse of human rights.

We have a real opportunity to put a stop to this aggressive trade strategy in advance of the election of Members of the European Parliament in June 2009, and the subsequent appointment of a new Commission President and a new Trade Commissioner. MEPs will play a key role in approving these positions, and these two people will have the power to set the agenda on trade for years to come.

In joining this campaign, you will be adding your voice to millions of others through Europe, Latin America and Asia who are opposing these deals.

## Help stop Europe's unfair trade deals

### What you can do

- Read more about these trade deals at [www.tjm.org.uk](http://www.tjm.org.uk)
- Ask Baroness Ashton, the new EU Trade Commissioner, to stop pushing unfair trade deals on poor countries. Order briefings and postcards from [www.fairtrade.org.uk/resources](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/resources)
- Send a message to the current EU Commission President Barroso by email. Go to [www.wdm.org.uk/campaigns/trade/action/barroso.php](http://www.wdm.org.uk/campaigns/trade/action/barroso.php)
- Visit or write to your MEP on the issue. Check out the TJM website for the lobby guide which contains all the information you need. Download it from [www.tjm.org.uk](http://www.tjm.org.uk)





## Tea producers in Sri Lanka

Thamara Weerasena (43) is married to Sugath Nuwarage (52) and they own a tea farm in Sri Lanka. For years the family struggled to meet their living costs because their sparse tea bushes were neglected and provided little income for the family. The prices paid by middlemen were so low that investing time and money to improve the crops was not worthwhile. Income from Sugath's work as a driver was never enough but Thamara struggled to continue sending the children to school, at times taking high interest loans from banks, pawning her jewellery to pay the interest.

The family's circumstance has greatly improved since Small Organic Farmers' Association (SOFA) was established. Thamara can now sell all her tea directly to Bio Foods, a Sri Lankan exporter, at a Fairtrade price of 31 Sri Lankan rupees per kg (about 18 pence), much higher than the 15 Sri Lankan rupees per kg (about nine pence) paid by local intermediaries. Fairtrade guarantees that producers receive a minimum price which covers the cost of sustainable production and means can Thamara can afford to continue her children's education.

On top of the minimum price producers also receive an extra amount of money, the Fairtrade premium to invest in projects that will benefit the whole community. The co-operative decided to use some of the premium to improve their crops. They are growing their new tea plants organically. Thamara is much happier working without the chemicals that used to make her ill and her tea leaf production has increased nearly tenfold.

The Fairtrade premium has been used to repair and build new roads around the farms, enabling farmers to transport their crops to the market much more easily. SOFA have also used the premium to provide low interest loans to farmers. Thamara has been able to buy roof sheets and other materials to improve and extend her house. She also used a loan to diversify her crops and started growing spices like cinnamon which she now sells through Fairtrade and receives nearly a third more for her crop than she would otherwise. Fairtrade has helped Thamara feel much more hopeful for her, and her children's future.



***Let there be amongst you traffic and trade by mutual goodwill***

Quran 17:35

# What can you do for Fairtrade?



## Become a Fairtrade Mosque

To become a Fairtrade Mosque your mosque must meet three goals:

- use Fairtrade tea and coffee at events and in meetings
- move forward on using other Fairtrade products such as sugar, biscuits and fruit
- promote Fairtrade during Fairtrade Fortnight and during the year through events, worship or other activities whenever possible.

By becoming a Fairtrade Mosque you are helping ensure that poor producers in developing countries are receiving a fair price for their crops so they can afford to feed their families, afford healthcare, and send their children to school. You are also sending a loud message to your community that you feel that trade should just and fair for everyone involved.

## During Fairtrade Fortnight:

- Help set a new Fairtrade banana eating record during Fairtrade Fortnight! Get your mosque, community group or school involved in the world record attempt – find out more details on our website [www.fairtrade.org.uk/fortnight](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/fortnight)
- Do a presentation about Fairtrade at your mosque or community centre – or contact us to see if there are any speakers available. You can find a presentation and information to help you on our website [www.fairtrade.org.uk/fortnight\\_resources/](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/fortnight_resources/)
- Attend one of the thousands of Fairtrade events taking place between 23 February and 8 March. Check out our online events calendar [www.fairtrade.org.uk/events](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/events) to see what's going near you.

## Throughout the year:

- Use Fairtrade dates during Ramadan or organise an *iftar* using Fairtrade products for friends and family.
- Sell Fairtrade products in your mosque or community centre. You can find a list of wholesalers on [www.fairtrade.org.uk](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk) or try Traidcraft: [www.traidcraft.co.uk/buying\\_fair\\_trade/fair\\_traders/](http://www.traidcraft.co.uk/buying_fair_trade/fair_traders/)
- Run a session about Fairtrade with your youth group or *madrassa* – you can get ideas for activities by visiting [www.fairtrade.org.uk/schools/support\\_resources/](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/schools/support_resources/)
- 80 per cent of all footballs are stitched in Sialkot, Pakistan so why not use Fairtrade footballs for your next sporting event?





# Resources

## Resources

- Read Islamic Relief's paper, *An Islamic perspective on fair trade* by visiting [www.islamic-relief.com/Indepth/fair\\_trade.aspx](http://www.islamic-relief.com/Indepth/fair_trade.aspx)
- Order an Action Guide packed with ideas and events that will help raise awareness of the FAIRTRADE Mark. You can also read it online here: [www.fairtrade.org.uk/resources/downloadable\\_resources.aspx](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/resources/downloadable_resources.aspx)
- Order promotional materials and merchandise for your Fairtrade event from posters and leaflets to inflatable bananas and Fairtrade bunting. You can order materials from [www.fairtrade.org.uk/resources](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/resources) or by calling 020 7440 7676
- Visit [www.fairtrade.org.uk/resources/films](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/resources/films) to download or order a DVD of short films about Fairtrade to show at your event. Or use them as trailers at a film evening, with the documentary *Black Gold* as the main feature.

## Hot tip

Let local media know about your events. It will raise publicity for your event and let your local community know what your mosque is doing for trade justice.

## Hot tip

Contact local retailers or supermarkets to see if they are willing to donate products for a Fairtrade event you are holding.

***Give full measure and full weight in justice, and wrong not people in respect of their goods***

Quran 11:85

## Buy Fairtrade

Check out the UK's first Islamic company to sell clothing made from Fairtrade and organic cotton:  
[www.urbanummah.com](http://www.urbanummah.com)



# Indian Basmati rice pudding



## Ingredients

### Serves 4

Preparation time: 5 minutes

Cooking time: Approximately 15 minutes

85g (3oz) Fairtrade caster sugar

570ml (1 pint) milk

1 Fairtrade vanilla pod (split open)

200g (7oz) Fairtrade basmati rice

110ml (4floz) double cream

4tbsp Fairtrade soft brown sugar

### Method:

Preheat the grill. Place caster sugar, milk, and vanilla pod into a pan and bring to the boil

Add the rice, reduce the heat and simmer gently for 8-10 minutes

Add the cream and simmer for a further 4-5 minutes until the rice is tender. Remove the vanilla pod.

Divide the rice pudding between 4 heat-proof serving bowls, and sprinkle over the brown sugar.

Slide the bowls under the hot grill, and leave until the sugar is bubbling and caramelised.

Serve immediately.

**For more recipes like this using Fairtrade products, such as Fairtrade chocolate fudge cake, vegetable biryani, and lamb tagine, get the *Fairtrade Everyday Cookbook*. Visit [www.fairtrade.org.uk/resources/recipes.aspx](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/resources/recipes.aspx)**

## Fairtrade olive oil

In 2009 the first ever olive oil carrying the FAIRTRADE Mark will be available in the UK. The olive oil will be initially sourced from farmers in Palestine and Morocco. Taysir Arabasi, an olive oil producer from Palestine sent this message to us:

***Fairtrade is the only opportunity for us as olive oil producers to have access to a market where we can get better prices and enough profits to sustain our production and to keep our culture of practicing this cultivation. We are hoping that the Fairtrade window can increase our sales and give us the opportunity of developing our cooperatives and society.***

Keep up to date on our website to find out where and when you can purchase Fairtrade olive oil:  
[www.fairtrade.org.uk/products/retail\\_products/](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/products/retail_products/)

[fairtrade.org.uk](http://fairtrade.org.uk)

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