

FREE PUBLICATION

FOR A BETTER WORLD

IDEAS AND ACTION FOR A JUST ECONOMY

IN CONVERSATION WITH

DOLORES HUERTA

¡SÍ SE PUEDE!

Women in Food
and Farming

Feminism for
Food Sovereignty

Ending Sexual Assault
in the Fields

FALL 2018 - WINTER 2019



Fair World Project is a non-profit that advocates for fair trade policies that support small-scale farmers, artisans, and workers. We publish the perspectives of farmers, farmworkers, mission-driven business people, and activists working to build a better world.

WHY WE EXIST:

- Conscious consumers, armed with informed purchasing power, can create positive change and promote economic justice.
- Family-scale farmers and workers in both the Global South and Global North often face volatile prices, low wages and poor working conditions as a result of unfair trade policies and corporate practices. FWP promotes policy changes and market-based initiatives that address these systemic problems.
- Existing certifiers and membership organizations vary in their criteria and philosophy for qualification of products and brands certified to display eco-social labels or claims, such as fair trade. FWP educates organizations, retailers and consumers on the standards reflected in various certification schemes, and works to keep eco-social terms meaningful.

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COVER

United Farm Workers leader Dolores Huerta organizing marchers on the 2nd day of March Coachella in Coachella, CA 1969.

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FROM THE DIRECTOR

When you see an icon of a farmer, odds are that it depicts a man. But women are at the heart of our food and farming systems. Seed saving, tending family plots, picking, processing and preparing – women touch every aspect of our food. By some estimates, they make up nearly half of the global agricultural labor force. They farm alongside family members or on their own small plots, work as farmworkers, and often do most of the post-harvest processing. Yet too often, their voices and their unique struggles go unheard.

In this issue, we focus on their voices in our food and farming systems. Small-scale farmers and farmworkers around the globe face myriad challenges. Women face additional challenges, as global forces of profit-driven industrial agriculture and climate change intersect with forces of sexism, both personal and structural.

From the tomato fields of Immokalee, Florida, to the seed banks of Zimbabwe and beyond, women are coming together and organizing. They are doing it in ways that are “confrontational and militant, celebratory, restitutive and emancipative, transformative and reassuring,” as Elizabeth Mpofu puts it in her article, written from her perspective as General Coordinator for La Via Campesina, the global movement of self-described peasant farmers. And they are standing up to the forces that exploit their labor and their bodies, privatize their seeds, and steal their lands and livelihoods.

I was so honored to interview Dolores Huerta, civil rights icon and co-founder of the United Farm Workers of America (UFW) union with Cesar Chavez, and a personal hero of mine. I found our wide-ranging conversation to be thought-provoking – and I hope you do too! She returned several times to themes that are simultaneously so simple and yet so difficult in our daily lives: the change that can come from speaking truth to power, and the importance of connecting directly to people.

Connection is at the heart of people coming together and working for change. As you read this issue, I hope that you are inspired to reach out and connect, to come together, and to stand up to the injustices you see around you near and far. It is a challenge that all of us, regardless of gender, can rise to meet.

To a Better World,

Dana Geffner

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



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Founder and President of the Dolores Huerta Foundation. She co-founded the United Farm Workers of America (UFW) union with Cesar Chavez in 1962.



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Cofounder of Alaffia. She has helped build an organization that empowers individuals and communities through the fair trade of indigenous resources.



ELIZABETH MPOFU

An organic farmer and activist based in Masvingo, Zimbabwe. She has worked tirelessly for the betterment of smallholder farmers and the rights of women and girls. Currently, she is a member of the International Coordination Committee (ICC) and General Coordinator of La Via Campesina.



MEGAN OLSON

Social scientist at Landesa, a global non-profit organization working to develop sustainable and gender-responsive laws, policies and programs that strengthen land rights for the world's poorest people.

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PHOTO CREDIT: Fairtrade International

Grow Ahead Announces Agroecology Scholarships & Farmer-to-Farmer Trainings



Fair World Project's partner Grow Ahead is a crowdfunding platform that helps small-scale family farmers address climate change in their communities. In collaboration with the National Association of Rural and Indigenous Women (ANAMURI), Grow Ahead is funding a national farmer-to-farmer training in Chile. Entitled "Planting Hope," the training will build off the years of work ANAMURI has done in Chile to train rural and indigenous farmers in agroecological farming methods.

This builds on Grow Ahead's successful 2017 campaign that fruitfully funded ten scholarships for Honduran women farmers. The peer-led training took place at Café Orgánico Marcala's (COMSA) organic training center in Honduras and focused on a wide range of topics, including permaculture, fair trade and soil health.

Learn more and help fund future trainings at:
growsahead.org

GOOD FOOD WINS IN CHICAGO



In May of 2018, Cook County voted to adopt the guidelines of the Good Food Purchasing Program. This means that the estimated \$20.6 million currently spent by the second largest county in the U.S., which includes Chicago, will go toward food that meets standards for public health, local economic development, animal welfare, worker well-being and the environment.

Previous adopters, like the cities of Los Angeles and Oakland, have reported successes in their schools and other facilities. Momentum continues to build, with another thirteen cities, including Austin, New York, Cincinnati and Washington, D.C., actively pursuing the program.

Learn more at: goodfoodpurchasing.org

FREE TRADE DEAL HURTS WOMEN'S WAGES

Multiple studies have found that the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has led to lowered wages and lost jobs in the U.S. Now, a study called "NAFTA and the Wages of Married Women" shows that wage losses were borne disproportionately by married, blue-collar women who had not completed high school. Single people also experienced a drop in wages; however, it was small and not as significant as anticipated. The study ruled out several possible causes for this discrepancy, including the possibilities that married women tended to work in more vulnerable jobs, or that they had less flexibility to relocate. The root causes remain, according to the study's authors, "a puzzle."

The full text of the study is available at: bit.ly/NAFTA_MarriedWomen



POOR PEOPLE'S CAMPAIGN ISSUES CALL FOR ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Fifty years after Martin Luther King, Jr.'s coalition launched the Poor People's Campaign, a new coalition issued "a national call for moral revival." Building on Dr. King's original framework, the renewed campaign calls on the country to address the five interlocking injustices of systemic racism, systemic poverty, ecological devastation, the war economy and militarism, and religious nationalism. Their platform calls attention to a range of specific policy proposals, including addressing voter disenfranchisement, mass incarceration and living wages, all of which disproportionately impact those who are people of color, poor people, and/or women.

Learn more at: poorpeoplescampaign.org



NEW REPORT: Fair Trade Cocoa Farmers Still Struggling to Earn a Living

A new report commissioned by Fairtrade International (FLO) examines the household incomes of fair trade cocoa farmers in Côte d'Ivoire. Their findings are sobering: just 42% of fair trade farm families have earnings above what is defined as extreme poverty (\$2,276/year), and only 23% earn above the poverty line. The report finds that the poorest farmers would have to triple their incomes in order to earn a livable income for their families. While fair trade contributes positively to farmers, especially via training opportunities, the report points to a need for a holistic approach to raising incomes, as many of the obstacles to increased earnings are broad and systemic, including insufficient access to land.

The full text of the report is available at: bit.ly/CocoaFamilies



PHOTO CREDIT: Jon Lewis, courtesy of LeRoy Chatfield

¡Sí Se Puede!

IN CONVERSATION WITH DOLORES HEURTA

INTERVIEWED BY DANA GEFFNER

“¡Sí, se puede!” You have probably heard that iconic rallying cry, but you might not have known the story of the woman who coined it: Dolores Huerta. Co-founder of the first farmworker labor union, the United Farm Workers of America (UFW), alongside Cesar Chavez, she organized the massive grape boycotts of the 1970s and 80s that earned California farmworkers lasting legal protections.

Ms. Huerta has worked for civil rights and social justice for over half a century, and she is finally getting the recognition she deserves with a recent documentary film, *Dolores*.

Fair World Project's Executive Director, Dana Geffner, was excited to join Ms. Huerta in a wide-ranging conversation in which she shared advice on everything from organizing in today's challenging political climate, to having difficult conversations, to the ways we can all support farmworkers.

I saw the movie, *Dolores*, and it was fantastic and inspirational. It has been in major cities around the United States, and I am sure you have had a chance to talk to audiences and communities about it. I was wondering if there is anything that surprised you about the audience's reaction?

The audiences have seemed to find it very relevant in terms of today's issues, and they have said that it was very moving and inspiring to them.

As a veteran organizer, can you share a little advice for those who might just be getting into organizing in their communities? When you are training or mentoring a new organizer, what is the most important piece of advice you give them?

My advice is that you cannot do it by yourself, you have got to have other people there with you to be able to do the job. Figure out what your goals are and what you want to achieve. Even if a goal might be far in the distance, it is important to start making a plan with action steps detailing the work that needs to be done to reach that goal that you are striving for.

Are there other resources that you would recommend for new and emerging organizers and leaders?

Well, the only resource that you must have to organize are human resources – people.

The Dolores Huerta Foundation focuses on community organizing. Can you tell us about the program called Vecinos Unidos?

This is our organizing group that we have. These are people in the community who come together to organize. They decide what issues they want to take on in their community, and then they take on the work that is needed to make it happen. It is a volunteer-based organization.

The movements you have organized with have made so much progress, yet so many of the same battles are being fought

again. The current administration is rolling back so many protections; white supremacy, for example, is becoming more visible. Do you have any advice on how to keep up the struggle?

We have to keep organizing and also be hopeful that this time will pass. The fact that white supremacists are revealing themselves as they are makes it a lot easier in some ways. People of color have always been faced with racism; women have always been faced with misogyny and sexism. The one thing that has come out of this is that by seeing who someone is, you can tackle it head on and call upon all of our public and private organizations and corporations to say “this is part of your responsibility” to make sure that we get at racism.

There is a long-standing perspective in some quarters that labor and environmentalists are in opposition, and even today, there is a growing movement around regenerative and organic agriculture, yet once again, farmworker justice is not always included in the discussion. But you have brought these two things together in your work for a long time. Can you talk a bit about what shaped your perspective?

There is one strawberry grower in the Bay Area who grows organic strawberries and also has a contract with the UFW, complete with paid health insurance and pension benefits for workers, but he is probably the only one I know who does that. A lot of organic farmers are small farmers, and, while I do not want to speak for them, I think many of them feel that they do not have the resources to be able to pay farmworkers the kinds of benefits that they would get under a UFW contract.

There are some so-called “organic” farmers that are huge, but they are usually agricultural employers who set aside some of their land for organic farming. We have to remember that farmers who grow fruits and vegetables do not get subsidized the way that the meat and poultry industries do. It would be good if we could get subsidies for organic farmers and get our Department of Agriculture more in tune with sustaining the planet. It would make it easier for some of these farmers, who

serve Mother Earth, to do organic farming – they really do not get the kind of help they should get from our government.

There are several labor justice certifications available to help consumers make better choices. Yet most of these certifications do not require unions or worker representation in the fields. How do you feel about certification in place of unions or worker representation in the fields – do you think it can ultimately undermine workers' organizing if it is not required? Do you see red flags with the certification model, or is this the next step for the labor justice movement?

I think that it is more complicated than that. It takes a lot of time and resources to get union contracts for workers so they can have representation on the job. We know that the evil corporate forces in the agricultural industry in this country are doing everything they can to keep farmworkers from organizing. So, in the meantime, farmworkers need to work in places where they are not being poisoned and are treated somewhat decently.

There are many different models of organizing happening. The Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) in Florida are campaigning to get better wages for workers, and there are other groups like the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) in Ohio. There are different standards by farmworker organizations with different goals, but they are all trying to make life a little bit better for farmworkers, and I think that is probably better than nothing.

To get full union contracts, like the UFW has, with pension plans, medical insurance, grievance and arbitration procedures, etc., is a much more difficult goal. Any organizing that makes life a little bit better for workers and consumers is good, and I do not think that we should put down any of them. Having been with the UFW, I know what it takes to get those contracts. It takes a lot of resources and is very difficult. We know that the ultimate goal for workers is to be able to have those union contracts but we also know what it takes.

The other thing we have to remember is this: the only reason that the UFW can get those contracts is because the state of California has the Agricultural Labor Relations Act. Other states do not have laws that guarantee collective bargaining rights to farmworkers, so it is very difficult. In fact, very few states in the U.S. have laws to protect farmworkers' right to organize. California has those protections because of the hard work of the UFW.

We really cannot put down these other groups if they do not have the final goal of a union contract with all of these benefits, because they do not have the legislative support that they need to get them. To have an impact for farmworkers, at the very least the key agricultural states with the biggest farmworker populations would have to pass those laws, and there is a lot of political

opposition. It is very difficult. Maybe someday they will get there, but without legislative support it is very difficult for those labor groups to get union contracts.

In the movie, it is very clear that sexism played a major role in making Cesar Chavez the face of the UFW. Can you say what you have learned from confronting sexism and racism throughout your career, and how you counsel others to deal with it?

Well, the only way to handle racism and sexism is to confront it directly, whether it is sexist policies in the workplace or individual behaviors – just calling them on it brings it to their attention. Of course, if it is very egregious, you can always file a lawsuit. In California and in the U.S., we do have laws that protect workers against racism. I know that with the present administration there will not be a lot of enforcement, but many states also have good laws that protect people from racism and sexism. But the main thing is to encourage people, especially working people and women, to have the courage to speak out. Many times women are hesitant out of fear of violence, but, at least in California, they can make complaints and it can be kept very confidential. So, I think people have to look into their own state laws.

Racism is more difficult. It is important to document the behaviors and keep very careful logs of those things people say and do. Then, especially if you get fired and lose your job, and you think it is because of those two elements, then you definitely have a course of action. It is a little bit more difficult, however, when you have to deal with friends and family. Often, we do not want to bring this up because we do not want to embarrass somebody that we know, but one good way to do it is just to take them aside and tell them about their behavior. There are a lot of times people do not realize that they are making sexist remarks, especially with older people. I know my kids are always saying "Oh, so-and-so said this; he called me 'honey,'" and that is sometimes what older people used to do and did not mean it to be offensive, so I think the intention is very important. Also, it is important to know that we do not need to keep silent, because if we do, nothing will change – things will not improve.

Can you tell us what is the most significant social change you have seen in your lifetime?

What is happening now with social media and digital technology is transformative. Information can be transmitted and people can research just about anything in a few seconds. It is a great tool that really gives people the type of research they need to work on a particular issue. But it does not replace the person-to-person type of organizing either, going back to your first question that you asked me about organizing. It is good to disseminate information and use it as a tool to bring people together. But when it comes to building an organization, that person-to-person recruiting and educating is vital.

Look for *Dolores* in theatres in the U.S. in September of 2018, and learn more at: doloresthemovie.com.

PHOTO CREDIT: EFE/AL DÍA



Her Labor, His Land?

HOW INSECURE LAND RIGHTS UNDERMINE WOMEN AND CONTRIBUTE TO FOOD INSECURITY IN KENYA



WRITTEN BY MEGAN OLSON

Katherine* wiped the sweat off her brow as she labored under the blistering Kenyan sun, planting 100 new mango seedlings. Katherine lives with her husband, son and daughters on a parcel of land her husband inherited from his father. With the decline of the cotton industry a few years prior, her husband had decided that the family should begin cultivating mango trees. In the semi-arid Machakos County of Kenya, there were few other options that the family could consider for a cash crop.

Nine years later, Katherine's mango trees are now producing the popular apple mango variety, a sought-after variety in the fresh export and domestic market. In addition to tending the subsistence crops her family depends on for food, she spends her time taking care of the mango trees: applying fertilizers and pest control, fending off animals, and harvesting at the season's end.

Despite her efforts, Katherine is not able to enjoy the fruits of her labor at harvest time. In Katherine's community, men are customarily viewed as the land and farm owners; as the owners, they can decide what gets planted, what the crop is sold for, and how that income is used. Her husband arranges a sale with a buyer and pockets the proceeds. Though he tells her that the money has been deposited into their shared bank account, she finds only a small amount there. Although he does not say it directly, she is quite sure he has squandered most of her hard-earned income on a popular drug, khat.

Katherine's experience is not unique. Kenya's constitution recognizes equal rights to land and property for women. In practice, however, women have weaker rights to land than their male counterparts. And why does this matter? Strong rights to own, use, control and transfer land can empower a woman within her household, giving her a greater say in decision-making, such as over how to spend proceeds from crops grown on the land.

Katherine's experience is also not unique to Kenya. In too many places, women's claim to the land they rely on for food, income and shelter is through their relationships with male relatives. Even when laws recognize gender equality, customary norms and practices can entrench upon women's insecure land rights.

This gap between policy and practice continues to drive gender inequality in many parts of the world. Closing the gap could have major implications for post-harvest food spoilage, which reduces the incomes of smallholders like Katherine and adds pressure to food systems that are already overextended – indeed, more than 40% of fruits and vegetables in developing regions spoil before they reach the table.

As part of its YieldWise Initiative, the Rockefeller Foundation is addressing post-harvest losses across four value chains in three African countries (Kenya, Tanzania and Nigeria). In Kenya, the initiative is working with mango farmers to help reduce food losses by at least 50% to help farmers achieve more sustainable livelihoods.

Through the YieldWise Initiative¹, Katherine recently registered to participate in a new program to learn additional skills in pesticide application, harvesting techniques and post-harvest storage. The program also promised to connect her to new buyers and teach her about credit options. Katherine hopes that, with the new skills and opportunities she gains through the program, her family can use the increased income to purchase an irrigation tank and pay for her children's school fees.

In conversations with Katherine and women like her, it is clear that many women believe the YieldWise Initiative is helping mango farmers like them understand how to use pesticides and gain access to buyers. But they also articulate that there are some underlying challenges and structural barriers that need to be addressed for them to fully take advantage of the initiative.

It is not only married women like Katherine who feel the impacts of structural barriers like insecure land rights. As women's rights to land are dependent on male relationships, those rights may be vulnerable when those relationships change. In some communities where there are stronger customary rights for widows to inherit plots of land held in their husband's name, widows reported that mango sales were an invaluable income source to support their households. Where such provisions for widows do not exist, however, women reported being chased off the land (often by brothers-in-law) after their husband's death – denying them a critical asset for earning a livelihood.

In an assessment commissioned by the Rockefeller Foundation to better understand how land-related challenges could impact YieldWise Initiative implementation, Landesa identified insecure land rights of women as one of the biggest risks the initiative should consider.

Some project implementers are already taking measures to address these challenges. Initiative partner TechnoServe.org implements a participation quota to ensure the participation of women in project activities. Some conscientious buyers will require multiple members of the household to be present at the point of sale; others have worked out informal arrangements with several families to make mango payments directly to the children's schools, sometimes by setting up installment payments.

As one implementing partner noted, greater empowerment in household decision-making could help women like Katherine to finally enjoy the fruits of their labor.

*Note that the name and some personally identifiable details have been modified to protect the subject's identity.

¹Learn more about the initiative: bit.ly/YieldWise

Additional sources available online at FairWorldProject.org



KEEPING THE STRUGGLES OF Peasant Women Alive

WRITTEN BY ELIZABETH MPOFU

Food production, harmonious social relations and balance with nature is the fabric of life that is entwined with and embodied in women. The onset of patriarchy, a structural system of domination more pronounced in capitalist relations, has disrupted balance in social relations. Now, women are exploited for profit. Their economic, social, legal and political rights are not fully recognised, and public policies fail to guarantee their equal social and economic participation. Yet, they are the majority of food producers and continue to do unpaid food-related care work (processing, preparing, storing, seed saving, etc.). Their rights — access to land, support services and legal recognition — receive minimal policy attention and are overlooked by many researchers and experts.

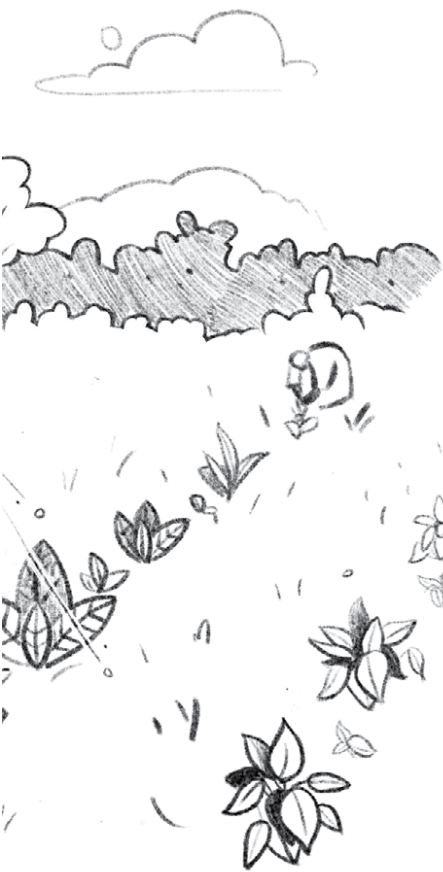
With the current deepening crisis of global capitalism, peasant women continue to lose their lands, territories and natural resources, and their work, lives and bodies are increasingly being exploited for profit. They are now more vulnerable to prostitution, human trafficking and sexual exploitation as a result of displacement and forced immigration.

Peasant women have, however, not been passive when faced with this economic and social aggression. They have organized to fight and resist, and their actions have manifested in various forms: confrontational and militant, celebratory, restitutive and emancipative, transformative and reassuring. Women in La Via Campesina are part of this struggle. Since 1993, they have been

fighting for their rights and against patriarchy and capitalism. They are at the forefront of generating local knowledge, building and shaping social justice, promoting identity and culture, and strengthening the vision of a new society founded on gender relations based on dignity, justice, equality and equity.

In the current deepening crisis of global capitalism, peasant women...are increasingly being exploited for profit.

The key point that differentiates the struggle of peasant women inside La Via Campesina from other feminist movements is called “Popular Peasant Feminism,” named by Latin American women inside La Via Campesina. Peasant women demand the right to equal participation with peasant men in the struggles to defend rural life and Mother Earth, and to build a different and more just society. They do not want a separate women’s movement; rather,



they want to be recognized as central to the larger struggle for a different society, with different relations between women and men, and between humanity and nature.

CREATING ALLIANCES TO FIGHT FOR NEW GENDER RELATIONS AND TO ERADICATE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Women have made combating violence against women a key priority of La Via Campesina. The movement has set November 25th as its “International Day against Violence against Women.” This campaign launched in 2008. Through calls to action on March 8th, International Women’s Day, as well as on November 25th, women are building alliances and strengthening the campaign to pressure governments to comply with agreements and international treaties, and to implement public policies to eradicate violence against women.

In 2012, women in La Via Campesina prepared a booklet to guide and encourage debate and discussion on the subject of violence against women. Other materials, such as the Rural Women Manifesto, have been prepared to define the struggle of

women and strategies for action. The women have ensured that their issues are present in all campaigns, giving more visibility to the violence that rural women suffer, and denouncing and carrying out actions against such violence.

WHAT IS POPULAR PEASANT FEMINISM?

Peasant feminism differentiates itself from other forms of feminism that are urban-centered, middle-class, and/or from wealthy countries. The Latin Americans say their feminism is “peasant” because it comes from the countryside and not from the city, and “popular” because it is a feminism of the “popular classes” (peasants, family farmers, indigenous people, farmworkers, etc.) and not of the middle and upper classes. They do not want to be separate from men; rather, they want women and men to walk together as equal partners in a larger struggle. They do at times struggle against men – but inside of their movement, not separate from it – to have their leadership and participation be fully recognized. In this struggle, they have won the right to equal representation and participation (gender parity) in all spaces of debate, decision-making, representation and training inside La Via Campesina.

ADVANCING AGROECOCLOGY, FOOD SOVEREIGNTY AND SEED STRUGGLES

Peasant women have been confronting patriarchy and capitalism through their collective fight for food sovereignty and feminism. Women are key in the struggle to defend peasant land and territory. When land grabbers send police, thugs and private security companies to evict peasants, it is often women who are on the front lines of confrontation. Their bravery in the face of physical violence has won them respect in the peasant struggle. Women have been central to La Via Campesina’s definition of food sovereignty, helping ground it in the production of healthy food for a peasant family’s

own consumption. And they have used their voices inside peasant households, communities and organizations to stop the use of dangerous pesticides and to lead the agroecological transformation of peasant family farming.

Women are building resilient agricultural systems based on agroecological farming practices that not only improve food production but that are also in harmony with nature. Through agroecology, women’s rights are protected and realized, and not just as mothers and caregivers in the home. Agroecology implies their full participation in the social and political life of the community, ensuring equal and equitable access to and control over land, water, seeds and other means of production with autonomy and freedom. Horizontal learning as a result of agroecology promotes collectiveness, which improves social integration and cohesion, a key societal foundation. This creates social conditions that erode patriarchal barriers and promote new gender relations.

Agroecology has fostered shared decision-making in households, as it promotes complementary roles for both women and men as they seek to improve their livelihoods and family well-being, thus breaking patriarchal barriers that confine women to domestic roles. Through the co-creation of knowledge, women continue to assert their rights to strengthen their roles. By sharing ideas and knowledge, women gain the capacity to organize and lobby for favorable agricultural policies and to understand how government structures operate.





• Women are forging new alliances with other farmers, peasants and progressive researchers to rethink the ways of farming that do not harm the environment and Mother Earth.

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN SEED STRUGGLES

Women are the custodians of seeds and play a big role in keeping cultural eating habits and traditional practices alive. As we face climate change in Africa, Asia and Latin America, women are leading the fight against hunger and poverty through food diversification and sustainable farming. They know the best varieties and their importance to family health, as well as how to preserve heirloom seeds. Women have been brave in the struggles of saving and exchanging seeds, irrespective of national and regional seed laws that criminalize such activities.

Women are key in the struggle to defend peasant land and territory.

Women's experiences with these crops in their communities and families is a formidable tide that goes against corporate seed industries seeking to control and homogenize our food systems. The corporations want to exploit local indigenous seed knowledge systems and introduce their own hybrid and GMO seeds to the developing world. Based on their experiential knowledge of peasant seeds and their uses, women in La Via Campesina are at the forefront of the struggle to protect seeds, the heritage of their people, for the good of humanity. They hold seed campaigns at all levels in their respective countries and are continuously organizing seed exchanges and participating in conferences and marches, at times being arrested and jailed, or even killed, for speaking out.

Women are at the forefront of preserving the invaluable community-based seed systems, where the bulk of seed diversity is

found and evolving. Through La Via Campesina, women are engaging their governments and United Nations bodies, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), to recognize the Seed Treaty (International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture) and the Convention on Biodiversity.

Through agroecology, women's rights are protected and realized, and not just as mothers and caregivers in the home.

CONCLUSION

Women successfully transformed the organizational structure and internal functioning of La Via Campesina and have evolved new gender relations over the years. Women in the movement are now able to shape their identities and define their struggles through collective, practical actions to end violence against women everywhere. They have contributed to the feminist struggle and theory with the concept of Popular Peasant Feminism. They have built a universal, broad, democratic movement committed to the defense of peasant agriculture, food sovereignty and the struggle for land, territory, justice, equality and dignity for women and men in the countryside.

Women's rights to land, inheritance and decision-making have all improved in Africa, Latin America and Asia. Their struggles forge important alliances and build unity within the central struggle against the capitalist and patriarchal system for a new, truly fair society based on equality among men and women. Despite the ideological, political and legislative progress made to date, more work is required. Structural violence against women is on the rise due to worsening global economic and ecological crises. Recent increased criminalization and killings of women pose new obstacles, but they are not stopping the movement. We must all – men and women – work together to achieve a new society based on food sovereignty.

PHOTO CREDIT: La Via Campesina



FAIR TRADE FOR Women's Health

INTERVIEW BY ROSE HYDE INTERVIEWEE ABIDÉ AWESSO

Since 2006, Alaffia has funded maternal health care for disadvantaged women in our fair trade supplier communities in West Africa. In 2012, we expanded the program to ensure prenatal and delivery care are available specifically to women who have undergone female genital mutilation (FGM). Abidé Awesso, a licensed midwife and director of our maternal program at the time, identified FGM as the leading contributor to pregnancy and birth-related complications and deaths in the Bassar region of Togo. At first, our goal was to make sure these women got the care and support they needed to have a healthy pregnancy and delivery, but after the first year Abidé convinced us of the additional benefit of conducting FGM eradication and awareness activities in our communities.

Last year, I sat down with Abidé to talk about our FGM program and asked her to give a little background on the practice in Togo, and why the work Alaffia is doing in the communities is so important to women's health now and in the future. These are excerpts from our conversation:

CAN YOU SPEAK A LITTLE ABOUT THE HISTORY OF FGM, OR "EXCISION" AS IT IS KNOWN IN TOGO, IN THE BASSAR REGION?

Excision can happen in any of the ethnic groups in Bassar. There is no age for excision; it can be done from birth to eighteen. It is usually due to tradition, to prevent the woman from desiring men other than her husband. The older

women in the communities perform FGM on their children and grandchildren because it is believed that they will find better husbands.

WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF FGM FOR THE GIRLS/WOMEN?

We midwives see that excised women often have problems during childbirth. When an excised woman comes to the hospital to give birth, we know that the scarring from excision will impede the stretching of the vagina, which complicates childbirth. The baby cannot come out, which causes fatal oxygen deprivation for the baby, and the baby dies or is disabled. When a woman forces the baby out, it is she who will tear, suffer and possibly die either from bleeding or infection.

HOW DOES ALAFFIA APPROACH FGM AWARENESS OUTREACH IN THE COMMUNITIES?

To help these women, Alaffia organizes awareness training on the dangers and consequences of excision. From time to time, we go from house to house to talk to women individually, because when we train in a group, they are ashamed to ask questions. In her own house, a woman can freely ask questions and tell us what

happened when she was excised. We always conduct awareness training on the consequences of excision, including the physical consequences of infection, sterility and even death, as well as the psychological consequences of shame and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

HOW HAVE ALAFFIA'S ACTIVITIES BEEN RECEIVED IN THE COMMUNITIES?

In the beginning, we saw a lot of resistance, especially with the older women who thought that we were judging their traditions. Now that their daughters and granddaughters have been saved, their attitudes are changing. Actually, many people have understood why they should no longer excise women. We even have young men explaining to community elders that they do not want this to happen to their wives.

DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER THOUGHTS YOU WANT TO TELL US ABOUT FGM?

In Togo, we have seen that there are too many maternal and infant deaths because of FGM and poverty. We are encouraged to see young people changing their minds about FGM. We also see that women, who have their own money from participating in the fair trade collectives, are making the decision to refuse FGM, for themselves and for their daughters. So, we are hopeful and encouraged that we will eventually be able to reduce FGM to 0% in Togo.



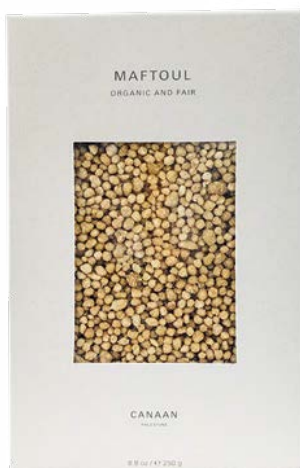
Product Picks



DIASPORA CO. TURMERIC

Turmeric rice is one of my favorite pairings with a homemade Indian meal, and this organic turmeric takes the dish to the next level – not only does it impart the trademark yellow color, it perfumes my kitchen with its fresh, earthy yet floral smell. While the turmeric is amazing and the packaging is cute, what first drew me in is their mission: a queer, woman-of-color-owned business “here to put money, equity and power in the hands of Indian farmers, and to disrupt and decolonize a colonial, outdated commodity spice trading system that profits only the trader.” – ANNA diasporaco.com





CANAAN FAIR TRADE MAFTOUL (COUSCOUS)

This couscous is a favorite of mine, as its pearls are much larger, giving it real texture yet remaining light and fluffy. When I lift the lid off the pot, I breathe in deeply. I feel the warm Middle Eastern sun, smell the fresh organic farm air, imagine the ancient olive groves, and taste the Mediterranean Sea. My favorite way to eat it is as a side salad, mixed with fresh parsley, tomatoes and lemon dressing, making a fresh-tasting and healthy dish, packed full of protein. Couscous is made from wheat that is boiled, sun-dried and rolled – and Canaan's couscous is extra-special because it is made by a women-owned cooperative in Palestine. – **STUART**
canaanusa.com



EQUAL EXCHANGE DRIED MANGOES

These delicious organic mangoes are grown by farmer cooperatives in Burkina Faso, and processed in a facility run almost entirely by women. This project is such a good example of how fair trade supports producers doing more processing activities—and earning more money—in their communities. Naturally sweet but with a touch of tartness, they are so easy to eat—one of my favorite hiking snacks or a nice afternoon treat. – **KERSTIN**
shop.equalexchange.coop



DIVINE'S DARK CHOCOLATE HAZELNUT TRUFFLE

Divine Chocolate's label stands out on the shelf and stops me in my tracks. The sophistication of the packaging design matches the sophistication of the flavor of their fair trade chocolate. My favorite is their Dark Chocolate Hazelnut Truffle, suitable for vegans, so I can show my compassion for animals and farmers at the same time! Moreover, Divine Chocolate is co-owned by the 85,000 farmer members of Kuapa Kokoo, the cooperative in Ghana that supplies the cocoa for each bar they make. As owners, they get a share in the profits, a say in the company, and a voice in the global marketplace. The label emphasizes the organizing power of women cocoa farmers. It reads: "Hear our voice!" Well, I'm listening! – **FLETCHER**
shop.divinechocolateusa.com

TRIBE ALIVE FOLDOVER CLUTCH

I love that this clutch is so versatile: it can be worn as a bag, or the strap can be removed and then can be carried as a clutch. The patterns are also versatile and can be swapped around, making this a multi-use product. And, even more importantly, Tribe Alive is women-owned, women-designed and women-made by fair trade artisan projects around the world. This clutch was made by a foundation working with Mayan women in the highlands of Guatemala who focus on traditional backstrap weaving that provides artisan training and capacity building as well as scholarships for the weavers' children. – **DANA** tribealive.com



HOW WORKER-DRIVEN SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IS *Ending Gender-Based Violence*

WRITTEN BY NOELLE DAMICO

Sexual assault, harassment and other forms of gender-based violence threaten millions of women workers around the world and violate their human rights. Lacking power and resources, none suffer more than low-wage women workers. And in the isolated, under-regulated environment of U.S. agriculture, gender-based violence is severe and ubiquitous. In California's Central Valley, 80% of farmworker women surveyed reported being sexually harassed or assaulted.¹ Fearing retaliation and facing barriers to filing legal complaints, many women elect to suffer abuse rather than report it and risk the consequences. For those few complaints successfully filed, judgments take years and are often uncollectable from defunct employers. Women are left with little choice but to accept humiliating treatment in order to earn a meager living.

Until now.

Through the Coalition of Immokalee Workers' (CIW) Fair Food Program, sexual assault has been eliminated from farms in seven states where 35,000 U.S. farmworkers labor. Yes, you read that right. Eliminated. And there is more. Sexual assault and other forms of

gender-based violence are being actively prevented.² This stunning achievement, in an industry notorious for sexual violence, comes from a powerful new paradigm of human rights protection: Worker-driven Social Responsibility (WSR).

Worker-driven Social Responsibility was born in the crucible of crushing demand by global retail brands for cheap produce and products, that exerts a downward pressure on prices that renders workers at the bottom of supply chains ever more vulnerable. Change was possible, however, when workers in Immokalee realized that this market force could be channeled to enforce their human rights.

Worker-driven Social Responsibility has achieved unprecedented results because it originated from workers whose lives and livelihoods depend on ending these abuses, and because consumers of conscience are standing shoulder-to-shoulder with them, demanding that corporations guarantee humane working conditions. Its hallmarks are:

- Legally-binding agreements between global brands and worker organizations;
- Worker participation in program design, monitoring and enforcement;

- Deep-dive auditing by an independent monitor; and
- Market consequences for suppliers who fail to comply.

Importantly, WSR did not begin as a theory; it grew from the Coalition of Immokalee Workers' Campaign for Fair Food and the operation of its Fair Food Program. Through the campaign, thousands of consumers united with farmworkers in vibrant, massive, direct actions and public argument convincing brands to sign legally-binding agreements with the CIW. These first-of-their-kind agreements form the bedrock of the Fair Food Program.³ Worker-driven Social Responsibility was further strengthened through the design and implementation of the Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh, underscoring the new paradigm's replicability and exponential potential for realizing human rights for millions of workers.

Worker-driven Social Responsibility stands in stark contrast to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Developed without worker participation, CSR's generic, voluntary standards lack mechanisms for serious monitoring or rigorous enforcement. Constructed to

protect brands, not workers, CSR has taken its toll on workers' lives with grueling exploitative conditions.⁴ But consumers are seeing through these schemes. Even now, hundreds of thousands of consumers are boycotting Wendy's, demanding that the company join the Fair Food Program.⁵

The Worker-driven Social Responsibility model's achievement in ending gender-based violence in the Fair Food Program offers some key lessons for ending it elsewhere:

- **Redress the imbalance of power through legally-binding agreements with consequences.** The root cause of sexual violence in the workplace is the imbalance of power between workers and employers. The Fair Food Program corrects that imbalance by backing up workers' rights with the purchasing power of some of the world's biggest-name brands like Wal-Mart and McDonald's. The risk of losing the ability to sell to fourteen of these massive retailers creates true accountability for growers by making the costs of not policing and correcting abuses skyrocket.
- **Provide worker-to-worker training on rights and the ability to report without fear of retaliation. Sexual assault and harassment are crimes of power and opportunity.** Workers are present in the field where abuses occur, whenever they occur. Trained in their rights, equipped with the ability to report problems through multiple channels, including a 24x7 confidential hotline, and protected from retaliation, thousands of farmworkers have become front-line monitors of their own rights, leaving bad actors nowhere to commit their crimes.
- **Set serious consequences for perpetrators and bystanders.** Since the program's inception in 2011, thirty-six supervisors have been disciplined for sexual harassment, and twelve of those supervisors have been terminated and are therefore no longer able to work on Fair Food Program farms. The removal of notorious supervisors who preyed on women increased worker confidence in the confidential complaint system. The program also requires field supervisors who witness sexual abuse to intervene and report it, or else face disciplinary action.⁶
- **Monitor conditions; swiftly investigate; require and assist with compliance.** The Fair Food Standards Council oversees the Fair Food Program, undertaking deep-dive audits (interviewing 50-100% of workers on farms), conducting investigations of complaints immediately and swiftly (usually within three weeks), rendering judgments, and offering compliance assistance.

Worker-driven Social Responsibility is spreading. The Equal Opportunity Commission's Select Taskforce singled out the Fair Food Program, calling it a "radically different accountability mechanism," and adopted many of those mechanisms as core recommendations in its landmark 2016 report.⁷ Worker-driven Social Responsibility's power to protect rights inspired the launch of Migrant Justice's Milk with Dignity program.⁸ And the Model Alliance is exploring how to deploy Worker-driven Social Responsibility in the fashion industry.⁹

We now know that sexual assault and harassment are not inevitable, even in the harshest of working environments. At a time when our nation – and indeed the world – is searching for solutions, a proven one is already at hand in Worker-driven Social Responsibility.

For more information, see the recent report *Now the Fear is Gone*, which goes into greater detail on how the WSR model is advancing gender justice: wsr-network.org/resource/now-the-fear-is-gone.

¹ Cited by Human Rights Watch in "Cultivating Fear: The Vulnerability of Immigrant Farmworkers in the U.S. to Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment," 2012.

² See the Fair Food Program 2017 Report, p. 20, at fairfoodstandards.org/reports/ (accessed May 7, 2018).

³ See ciw-online.org and fairfoodprogram.org. Fourteen retail food corporations currently participate in the Fair Food Program.

⁴ The Rana Plaza building collapse, which killed 1,138 workers in 2013, was the deadliest (but not the first) disaster in the garment industry to demonstrate the perilous cost of the CSR approach. See wsr-network.org.

⁵ See boycott-wendys.org.

⁶ See the Fair Food Program 2017 Report at fairfoodstandards.org/reports/ (accessed May 9, 2018).

⁷ See ciw-online.org/blog/2016/07/eeoc-singles-out-fair-food-program/ and eeoc.gov/eeoc/task_force/harassment/report.cfm (accessed May 7, 2018).

⁸ See wsr-network.org/success-stories/milk-with-dignity/ (accessed May 7, 2018).

⁹ See modelalliance.org.





Reference Guide

FAIR TRADE AND WORKER JUSTICE PROGRAMS

Use this guide to differentiate program claims and help you match your purchasing practices to your values.

KEY **CREDIBLE PROGRAM** **NOT CREDIBLE PROGRAM** **APPROACH WITH CAUTION** **— NOT APPLICABLE**

FAIR TRADE AND SOLIDARITY LABELS

Fair trade is intended to benefit small-scale farmers and ensure fairness for producers. The principles of fair trade include*:

- Long-Term Direct Trading Relationships
- Prompt Payment of Fair Prices
- No Child, Forced or Otherwise Exploited Labor
- Workplace Non-Discrimination, Gender Equity and Freedom of Association
- Democratic & Transparent Organizations
- Safe Working Conditions & Reasonable Work Hours
- Investment in Community Development Projects
- Environmental Sustainability
- Traceability and Transparency








LABEL	FAIR TRADE PROGRAM	GLOBAL NORTH SOLIDARITY PROGRAM	ANALYSIS
	—		The Agricultural Justice Project (AJP) sets standards for the “Food Justice Certified” label and includes strong requirements for the buyer/farmer relationship for U.S. farms of all sizes, focusing on empowering farmers to negotiate with buyers on fair terms.
	—		The Domestic Fair Trade Association (DFTA) is a North America-based solidarity membership organization that brings together all sectors of the domestic agriculture system to advocate for social justice.
			Fair for Life (FFL) is a fair trade labeling program developed by the Institute for Marketecology (IMO) and now held by Ecocert. The program has strong eligibility requirements, with a focus on marginalized producers.
		—	The Fair Trade Federation (FTF) is a North America-based fair trade membership organization exclusively for brands and retailers dedicated to fair trade for all products and practices. Members may use the membership logo on products even though supply chains are not audited.
		—	Fair Trade USA (FTUSA) is a standard-setter that has attempted to expand the fair trade model into new areas (such as the U.S.) and new sectors (such as seafood).
		—	Fairtrade America is the U.S. fair trade labeling member of Fairtrade International (FTI), a strong standard-setter for organized small-scale producers in the Global South.
		—	The Small Producers' Symbol (SPS) is the only farmer-led fair trade certification. The program has strong requirements for eligibility and focuses on farmer empowerment.
		—	The World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO) is a global fair trade membership organization requiring strong internal control systems, peer review and external audits to guarantee that members comply with fair trade standards. Members must be fully committed to fair trade principles in all of their trading practices and may use the “WFTO Guarantee” label.

*These fair trade principles apply to traditional South-to-North trading. A similar set of principles has been adopted for North-to-North trading in the U.S., and we refer to these North-to-North fair farmer programs as “Global North Solidarity Programs” in this guide.

Voluntary labor certifications allow companies to opt into following a set of standards to improve pay and working conditions for farm and factory workers. The principles of worker justice include:

- Inclusion of International Labor Organization (ILO) core conventions
- Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining
- Improving Wages with the Goal of Living Wages
- No Child, Forced or Otherwise Exploited Labor
- Workplace Free of Discrimination, Abuse and Harassment
- Safe and Healthy Workplace
- Reasonable Working Hours
- Clear and Adequate Grievance Mechanisms with No Retaliation
- No Termination Without Just Cause

Though Fairtrade America, Fair for Life and Fair Trade USA may have different levels of credible farmworker and factory worker justice programs, they are misleadingly labeling products complying with their programs as “fair trade.” This guide evaluates the standards used for these programs, but does not address the misuse and co-option of the term “fair trade.”

LABEL	FACTORY (APPAREL)	DOMESTIC FARMS	INTER-NATIONAL FARMS	ANALYSIS
	—	✓	—	The Agricultural Justice Project (AJP) sets standards for the “Food Justice Certified” label and includes strong requirements for the farmer/farmworker relationship for U.S. farms of all sizes, focusing on empowering farmworkers to negotiate fair wages and employment conditions.
	—	✓	—	The Domestic Fair Trade Association (DFTA) is a North America-based solidarity membership organization that brings together all sectors of the domestic agriculture system to advocate for social justice.
	—	✓	⚠ *	The Equitable Food Initiative (EFI) sets standards for the “Responsibly Grown - Farmworker Assured” label for food safety and farmworker justice. There is a strong leadership development component, but democratic worker committees and collective bargaining are not required.
	—	✓	—	The Fair Food Program (FFP) sets and oversees a legally-binding code of conduct for employment conditions on farms and a direct economic transfer from end buyer to farmworkers as part of their “penny a pound” program. Starting with farmworkers on tomato fields in Florida, FFP has developed a successful monitoring and accountability program to address abuses and increase wages.
	—	⚠	⚠	Fair for Life (FFL) focuses its farmworker justice program on marginalized workers and includes living wages and democratically administered premiums. These products would more accurately be labeled as “fair labor.” FFL is neither farmworker-led, nor includes farmworker representatives in formal governance positions and should therefore be approached with caution.
	✗	⚠	⚠	Fair Trade USA (FTUSA) includes health and safety requirements and democratically administered premiums in its hired labor standards but lacks collective bargaining and living wage requirements. Its apparel standards do not include all steps of the supply chain. FTUSA is not a farmworker-led program and should therefore be approached with caution.
	✓	—	✓	Fairtrade America and its international umbrella organization Fairtrade International (FTI) include collective bargaining and benchmarks for living wages in their worker justice standards, applicable to apparel factories and a limited number of agricultural commodities. These products would more accurately be labeled as “fair labor.”

*EFI was started by domestic farmworker organizations and it is not yet clear whether its international expansion will include collaboration with local farmworker organizations.

HOW TO CHOOSE AUTHENTIC FAIR TRADE PRODUCTS

Five steps to choose fair trade products in line with your values.



EVALUATE. Look for full company commitment, membership organizations and strong fair trade certifications to distinguish products made by dedicated fair trade brands.



AVOID BAD ACTORS. Do not buy from corporate bad actors who happen to have a few fair trade products.



LOOK BEYOND CERTIFICATIONS. Learn which brands positively impact the communities where they operate and source from.



READ LABELS. Determine which ingredients (and what percentage of those ingredients) in the product are certified fair trade.



BE AN ACTIVIST. Ask your local grocer to carry more authentic fair trade products and get involved to change policy.



PHOTO CREDIT: Dr. Bronner's



SMALL-SCALE FARMERS

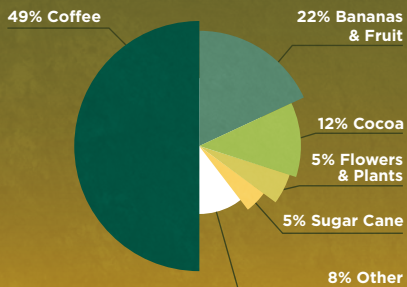
FEED THE WORLD

70%

of the world is fed by
small-scale farmers

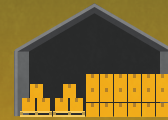
FAIR TRADE SUPPORTS SMALL-SCALE FARMERS

Fair trade farmers SELL DIVERSE CROPS

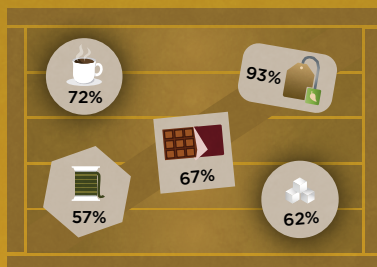


of fair trade farmers are
CERTIFIED ORGANIC

Fair trade co-ops vote on how to INVEST THEIR PREMIUM FUNDS



Large amounts of fair trade crops go **UNSOLD**



Companies and consumers can
all buy more fair trade.

Fair trade is more than **A FAIR PRICE + A PREMIUM**



Democratic organizations, opportunities for
women and long-term trading relationships

From the new Fair World Project Report *Fairness for Farmers: A Report Assessing the Fair Trade Movement and the Role of Certification*

FOR SOURCES & TO SEE THE FULL REPORT:

WWW.FAIRWORLDPROJECT.ORG