

FAIR TRADE CRITERIA

(Carta Europea dei Criteri del Commercio Equo e Solidale)

for European World Shops, importers of Fair Trade products sold in European World Shops, and suppliers/producers of Fair Trade products

INTRODUCTION

The 2.500 World Shops in Europe, affiliated in the Network of European World Shops NEWS! sell products which have been traded fairly with respect for people. Fair Trade mainly supports groups of producers who are economically and politically disadvantaged. Besides selling products, World Shops also organise activities and campaigns to inform their customers and the public about world trade. The European World Shops work together to improve the market share of producers, mainly but not exclusively from the South, in world-wide trade. They organise joint campaigns aimed at the public, the media, politicians and companies with the long-term objective of bridging the gap between the South and the North, developing and developed countries and sectors within countries. The annually organised European World Shop Day in May is an example of these activities. It is intended that European-wide commitment to these criteria will provide consumers with assurance that the products in the World Shops have been fairly traded (and so, increase the World Shops' share of the market for fairly traded products, thereby providing more support to producers).

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

Each of the 15 national associations of World Shops in Europe has its own criteria for defining Fair Trade. These criteria are not harmonised across Europe. NEWS! has studied all the criteria that have been developed in Europe and, based on that study, has drawn up the following list of criteria which is offered to the national associations of World Shops as minimal standards by which shops, importers, suppliers and producers may be evaluated as Fair Traders. The NEWS! conference will recommend that these criteria be adopted by the National Associations of World Shops. The World Shops will continue to be free of course to adopt stricter criteria for their own organisations if they so wish.

DEFINITION OF FAIR TRADE

Fair Trade is a partnership between producers, traders and consumers who are working to remove the disadvantages suffered by producers, to increase producers' access to markets and promote the sustainable development process. Fair Trade works to create means and opportunities for producers, especially disadvantaged, small-scale producers, to improve their living and working conditions. Its mission is to promote social equity, environmental protection and economic security through trade, awareness-raising and campaigning.

KEY PRINCIPLES

embraced by all partners in Fair Trade and practised to the best of their abilities, are:

1. Respect and concern, for people and the environment, putting people before profit.
2. Provision of good working conditions and payment of a fair price to producers and other trading partners. A fair price takes into account the costs for a reasonable income, environmental protection and economic security.
3. Openness and transparency about the structures of their organisations and all aspects of their activities; mutual feedback among partners in the fair trade chain, on their products and marketing methods.
4. Involvement of producers, volunteers and employees in decision making affecting them.
5. Protection and promotion of human rights in particular of women's, children's and indigenous people.
6. Awareness of the situation of women and men as producers and traders, and promotion of equal opportunities for women.
7. Concern for the environment and sustainable development as part of all activities.

8. Promotion of sustainable development by striving towards long-term and stable trade.
9. Provision of information, education and campaigning.
10. Favouring products for which as many steps as possible of the production process have been completed in the country of origin.

WORLD SHOPS IN THE NETWORK OF EUROPEAN SHOPS

In order to be admitted into a national association of World Shops that is a member of the Network of European World Shops (NEWS!):

1. The shop endorses, through its own mission or values statements, publicity material and actions, the definition and principles of Fair Trade given above.
2. The primary purpose for existing as a shop is to promote Fair Trade. Fairly traded products therefore take up the most important share of the shop's stock.
3. The shop reinvests the profits from its sale of products into the Fair Trade system.
4. The shop informs the public about its aims, the origin of the products, the producers and about world trade. It supports campaigns to improve the situation of producers, as well as to influence national and international policies.

FAIR TRADE IMPORT ORGANIZATIONS

An import organisation supplying fairly traded products to World Shops that belong to NEWS! member associations:

1. Endorses, through its own mission and values statements, publicity material and actions, the definition and principles of Fair Trade given above.
2. Applies the following trade instruments when required by the producers:
pre-financing or access to the other forms of credit
organising trade as directly as possible to cut costs and create better understanding
working for a secure market for producers
providing capacity building support to producers: training, technical advice, market research, product development
providing feedback to producers on products and markets.
3. Provides assistance to the World Shops in the form of information about the products being sold and the producers who have made them, plus reasonable access to other expertise not directly available in the shops.
4. Ensures that its suppliers get to know the definition and principles of Fair Trade and works with its suppliers to implement these.

SUPPLIERS OF FAIR TRADE PRODUCTS (EXPORT ORGANIZATIONS) AND PRODUCER ORGANIZATIONS

An exporter of Fair Trade products and/or producer organisations supplying fairly traded products to World Shops that belong to associations, members of NEWS!, endorses, through its own mission and values statements, publicity material and actions, the principles of Fair Trade as given above.