

Cotton on to Fairtrade and take action for trade justice

Do you know that your everyday shopping purchases can help trade justice? It's simple and easy to do – just look for products with the Fairtrade logo and buy these. Not only will you ensure that farmers in developing countries receive a fair and stable price for their products, but you will be contributing to a social premium that the farmers' democratically elected representatives decide how to spend: eg a new water well, health clinic, solar street lamps or business training.

To quote Moussa Keita, a Fairtrade cotton farmer in Mali "Since selling our cotton as Fairtrade, we are able to eat every day and all my children go to school. With the premium we have built two classrooms".

Over 4,500 products now carry the Fairtrade logo. There's a huge selection of Fairtrade teas, coffees and chocolate, but did you know that you can also buy a wide range of fruit (not just bananas), wine, honey, biscuits, herbs and spices, ice cream, sports balls, beauty products, olive

oil, rice, nuts, flowers, cereal bars, cotton wool, cotton clothing and much more...

If your church, school or local shop is not already using Fairtrade products you can encourage them to make the switch. This will help them meet some of the criteria for becoming a 'Fairtrade church', 'Fairtrade school', or 'Fairtrade town'.

The Fairtrade Foundation is responsible for Fairtrade in the UK and co-ordinates the Fairtrade church, town and school schemes. Bradford is a Fairtrade Zone and has active Fairtrade 'town' groups such as Shipley, Bingley,

Haworth, Thornton, Burley, Baildon and Ilkley. Fairtrade Bradford would like to see the diocese become a 'Fairtrade diocese' where 50% of the churches are registered as a 'Fairtrade church'.

Fairtrade Fortnight 2011 will run from 28th Feb – 13th March. The theme is 'Show off your label' with a special focus on Fairtrade cotton.

We rely on cotton every day and an

estimated 100 million rural households in 65 countries around the world rely on producing cotton to get them through today and hopefully through tomorrow. Two thirds of cotton is produced in developing countries and cotton makes up 40% of West Africa's export income. Small scale farmers have to face unstable and low



prices as cheap, subsidised cotton from China, the US and EU is dumped on world markets. Europe, China and America pay \$4.8 billion annually in subsidies to their cotton farmers. African and Indian cotton farmers are simply not able to compete. **Fairtrade Fortnight 2011 aims to create the world's longest string of bunting.** The Fairtrade Foundation is providing free Fairtrade cotton bunting kits to decorate. **The bunting will be sent to the World Trade Organisation Ministerial Meeting in Nov 2011 to show the UK's support for Fairtrade and trade justice for the farmers behind the label.**

Fairtrade Bradford would like to gather all the district's decorated bunting for a **mass photo at 2pm on Saturday, 12th March on Darley Street, Bradford.** Karen Palframan, chair of Fairtrade Bradford and a member of St. John's Ben Rhydding, said:

"We want to show the whole Bradford district that we care about trade justice and want action taken to address the issues that keep so many people poor"

For more information, or to offer help, please email karen.palframan@talktalk.net or call **01943 607334.**

Other ideas for Fairtrade Fortnight include creating a display of Fairtrade packaging, having a baking competition for the best cake made with Fairtrade ingredients or organising a Fairtrade fashion show. The ideas are limitless, but the main aim is to promote Fairtrade and encourage people to buy Fairtrade products.

For more information and free leaflets, Fairtrade Fortnight action guides and event packs with free bunting, visit the website at: www.fairtrade.org.uk or call **020 7440 7676**