

**FAIRTRADE AMERICA'S SECOND ANNUAL "CHOOSE FAIRTRADE. CHOOSE THE WORLD YOU WANT." CAMPAIGN RAISES AWARENESS OF FAIRTRADE'S POSITIVE IMPACTS ON PEOPLE AND THE PLANET**

*Fairtrade America partners with three retailers and acclaimed artists to create murals that celebrate the farmers behind the products we enjoy everyday*

*The murals are part of a larger digital campaign kicking off today for Fair Trade Month. Through the campaign, conscientious shoppers will have a variety of ways to voice their choice for Fairtrade and win various Fairtrade prizes.*

**WASHINGTON**, Oct. 1, 2021 – In honor of October as Fair Trade Month, [Fairtrade America](https://www.fairtradeamerica.org/) is launching its second annual, national campaign to generate broader awareness for how a simple action, like purchasing a Fairtrade certified product, can be a powerful way to make a difference in the lives of the almost 2 million farmers and workers participating in Fairtrade across the globe. The 'Choose Fairtrade. Choose the world you want.' campaign features murals in three major U.S. cities -- Austin, Minneapolis, and Tacoma, Wash. -- that connect stories of the people who produce the things we enjoy every day, such as cocoa, bananas, coffee and more, to the positive impacts of Fairtrade. Now in its second year, this campaign brought inspiring murals to Denver, Los Angeles and Nashville in 2020. Throughout October, consumers can participate in online giveaways and learn more about Fairtrade via educational resources at [choosefairtrade.org](https://choosefairtrade.org). When shoppers see the Fairtrade America label on a product, it means farmers were fairly compensated and the ingredients were sourced in compliance with Fairtrade's rigorous gender equality, fair wage, climate change and child labor standards.

Fairtrade America partnered with notable mural artists and key retailers in three major metropolitan cities where mural art is already a prominent part of the culture. Each mural features real farmers and a key benefit of choosing Fairtrade. While consumer awareness and purchase intent of Fairtrade products is increasing in the U.S., this campaign is intended to reach more Americans and educate them about the value of purchasing Fairtrade certified products. Visit Fairtrade's new [Product Finder](#) to easily identify and purchase thousands of certified products.

"We are thrilled to continue a campaign that beautifully celebrates and honors the hardworking farmers and workers who produce the goods we enjoy everyday, while overcoming tremendous challenges to do so," said Peg Willingham, Executive Director of Fairtrade America. "We hope this positive expression of Fairtrade's mission inspires shoppers to give more thought to the people behind the foods they purchase, and opt for Fairtrade certified products when possible. Choosing Fairtrade certified products actively supports initiatives that fight poverty, foster gender equality and more across the globe."

Fairtrade is an alternative approach to trade based on partnership instead of exploitation, a partnership between those who grow our food and we who consume it. The producers featured in the murals represent millions of farmers in the Fairtrade system who receive fair

compensation for their goods and assistance producing them in compliance with rigorous gender equality, climate change and child labor standards. Fairtrade's model includes a Premium fund that farming cooperatives receive on top of the price of the product. Co-op members vote to determine how the money is spent; typically deciding on community programs such as access to education or healthcare. In 2019, Fairtrade Premium funds contributed more than \$228M to farming communities.

### **About the 'Choose Fairtrade. Choose the world you want.' Murals**

*Carmen Mueses Mural, by Mari Shibuya, located at Central Co-op, Tacoma, Wash.*

In Tacoma, Fairtrade America partnered with Central Co-op, a full-service grocery store that empowers its customers to make ethical choices when it comes to food purchases, to create a mural featuring a Fairtrade cocoa farmer. Local artist Mari Shibuya portrayed Carmen Mueses, a member of a Fairtrade certified cocoa cooperative, CONACADO, in the Dominican Republic. Cocoa from CONACADO makes its way into a variety of Fairtrade certified items, including chocolate from Washington's beloved local purveyor, Fran's Chocolate. Carmen has demonstrated resilience and ingenuity to make a living from her cocoa crops, and even started a small business selling sweets and liqueurs made with her cocoa pods and coffee beans to diversify her income. Mari's mural is inspired by the strength and determination of the female leaders in farming communities, like Carmen.

*Tony's Chocolonely Cocoa Cooperative Leaders Mural, by J Muzacz, located at Wheatsville Food Co-op's Guadalupe store, Austin*

Fairtrade America joined with the Wheatsville Food Co-op, voted 'Best Neighborhood Grocery' by the Austin Chronicle's Readers Poll for eleven years running, to commission a mural by local artist J Muzacz. This mural celebrates three female farmers and cooperative leaders who grow cocoa used in Fairtrade certified goods, including Tony's Chocolonely bars available at the local Co-op. Sarah Larweh is a cocoa farmer and board member of her cooperative in Ghana where she works to address and resolve instances of child labor, an injustice that is rooted in poverty. A cocoa farmer in Côte d'Ivoire, Eugenie Lago leads a women's association that helps members diversify their crops to increase profits and alleviate poverty within the community. Lastly, Assata Doumbia, cocoa farmer and president of her cocoa cooperative, has led her cooperative to become one of the top 3 in Côte d'Ivoire. J hopes the strength, humanity and drive of the farmers depicted inspires current and future generations to shop ethically and sustainably.

*Johnny Gabriel Navas Aquim Mural, by Reggie LeFlore, located at the Twin Cities Co-op Partners' Wedge Co-op, Minneapolis*

The Minneapolis mural is located at the Twin Cities Co-op Partners' (TCCP) Wedge Co-op. TCCP was excited to partner with Fairtrade America because of their shared values, including supporting farmers and educating community members about the importance of equity for the people producing our food and sustainability for our planet. Local mural artist Reggie LeFlore captured Johnny Gabriel Navas Aquim, a 26 year-old, third-generation, small-scale banana farmer in Ecuador who has implemented aquaculture techniques to farm more sustainably.

Johnny is a proud member of the Fairtrade certified AsoGuabo Cooperative, a grassroots organization of banana farmers committed to improving their quality of life. Reggie is inspired by Johnny and his fellow farmers who work hard to take care of their communities. Bananas from AsoGuabo are sold, in part, through Equal Exchange, a key vendor partner of TCCP, once again taking the story from farm to store via these murals.

Fairtrade's local retail partners donated wall space for the murals because of a shared passion for ensuring producers are paid fairly for their crops, as well as the other socioeconomic and environmental benefits of Fairtrade. During Fair Trade Month, each store will offer special promotions on Fairtrade certified goods, as well as host a variety of in-store and online events and giveaways. The acclaimed mural artists commissioned to create the murals are all committed to cause-based art.

Fairtrade partnered with National Co-op Grocers (NCG) food co-ops nationally to extend the reach of this campaign, including through the selection of the three retail partners where murals were installed this year. As part of this month-long campaign, NCG plans to celebrate the benefits of choosing Fairtrade in its consumer-facing channels, and more than 20 NCG co-ops across the US plan to develop special promotions and merchandising of Fairtrade certified goods in their stores, further extending the reach of the Choose Fairtrade campaign.

### **Fairtrade Areas of Impact**

Farming is the single largest employer in the world -- two out of every five people farm. Purchasing goods with the Fairtrade America mark is an easy way to make a difference in the lives of people who grow our food. The 'Choose Fairtrade. Choose the world you want.' campaign highlights two of [Fairtrade's key areas of impact](#): fighting poverty and promoting gender equality. Fairtrade's work also impacts ending child labor, combating climate change, and supporting workers' rights.

- **Fighting Poverty:** The Austin and Minneapolis murals emphasize Fairtrade's commitment to fighting poverty. Many farmers and workers around the world live on less than \$2 per day. Fairtrade breaks down the systems that trap producers in cycles of poverty by addressing them at their core - price. The Fairtrade Minimum Price acts as a safety net for farmers when prices fall below a sustainable level. The Fairtrade Premium fund also enables farming cooperatives to improve quality of life in their communities.
- **Gender Equality:** The Tacoma mural is themed around Fairtrade's focus on promoting gender equality. A large proportion of the world's food is produced by women, yet gender inequality remains prevalent in farming communities worldwide. Fairtrade America tackles unequal power relationships by strengthening women's and girls' human, social, financial and physical capital. Because the Fairtrade Standards require all cooperative members to vote on how to use their Premium funds, female Fairtrade producers often have a greater voice in their communities.

In addition to the murals, Fairtrade will offer 20 giveaways in October. Follow [@fairtrademarkus](https://www.instagram.com/fairtrademarkus) on Instagram and visit [choosefairtrade.org](https://choosefairtrade.org) to learn more and participate in Fairtrade certified product giveaways. The prize pack includes one mural art print of the winners' choosing, a bag of Nature's Path Love Crunch Granola, La Riojana Olive Oil, Reese Artichoke Hearts, a Divine Chocolate's Deliciously Smooth Dark Chocolate Bar, Conscious Step's Socks that Protect Toucans, Kicking Horse Café Moulou Ground Coffee and a Fairtrade cotton tote bag. Winner selection is randomized.

"Now, more than ever, we must listen to and raise the voices of the farmers and workers around the globe. As public art has inspired change for generations, we hope this year's murals bring positive awareness to farmers and provides Americans a variety of reasons to choose goods at the store that support people and our planet," shared Willingham.

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#### About Fairtrade America

Fairtrade America betters the lives of farmers and workers in developing countries by inspiring businesses to implement ethical production practices and assisting shoppers in making informed purchasing decisions. Fairtrade America is the US chapter of Fairtrade International, the original and global leader in fair trade certification with over 30 years of experience working to make trade fair, with headquarters in more than 30 countries across the globe. A non-profit 501(c)3 organization, Fairtrade America is the world's largest and most recognized fair trade system—part of a global movement for change. Learn more at [www.fairtradeamerica.org](https://www.fairtradeamerica.org), and by connecting with Fairtrade America on [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/fairtradeamerica) and [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/fairtradeamerica).

#### About National Co+op Grocers (NCG)

National Co+op Grocers (NCG) is a business services cooperative for retail food co-ops located throughout the United States. We represent 148 food co-ops operating over 200 stores in 38 states with combined annual sales over \$2.3 billion and serving over 1.3 million consumer-owners. NCG provides the capacity of a chain while maintaining the autonomy of each individual co-op. We help unify natural food co-ops in order to optimize operational and marketing resources, strengthen purchasing power, and ultimately offer more value to natural food co-op owners and shoppers everywhere. Learn more about NCG and connect at <https://www.grocery.coop/> and [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/nationalcoopgrocers).

#### About Central Co-op

Established in 1978, Central Co-op is a community-owned natural foods cooperative with locations on Seattle's Capitol Hill and in Tacoma's North End. With over 14,000 members, Central Co-op is a full-service grocery store, open to all, that encourages its shoppers and community members to "Bring the Bigger Story to Your Table," and works to highlight the crucial connection between the food we eat and the producers, farmers and food systems that provide it. The Co-op is dedicated to supporting over 140 community partners, championing small

farmers, vendors & producers, and working to increase access to quality foods for all, while offering exceptional products that reflect our commitment to health eating, sustainable agriculture, fair wages and safe worker conditions, conscientious ranching and fishing practices, and more.

#### About Twin Cities Co-op Partners

Twin Cities Co-op Partners (TCCP) connects the Minneapolis community to local growers, suppliers, farmers and producers through healthy, sustainable, ethically produced goods. TCCP's mission is to provide access to real food made by real people that makes a difference in people's lives and for the planet. TCCP is a welcoming and convenient market stocked with trusted products and services emphasizing delicious local and organic food. The co-op works to strengthen the local food system and pioneer a model of sustainable, profitable cooperatively-owned business.

#### Wheatsville Food Co-op

Wheatsville Food Co-op is a full service, natural foods cooperative grocery store serving the central Austin community since 1976. Its primary mission is supplying high-quality food and unbiased information about food to the Austin community. The only retail food cooperative in Texas, Wheatsville Co-op has more than 24,000 invested owners and operates two locations. It has been voted 'Best Neighborhood Grocery' by the Austin Chronicle's Readers Poll for eleven years running.