

## EURO COOP POSITION PAPER ON FAIR TRADE

### 1. Consumer Co-operatives work to make 'Fair Trade' sustainable

Consumer Co-operatives aim to put 'Fair Trade' products into the mainstream of shopping. We aim to provide a varied range of 'Fair Trade' products in our shops so that consumers may choose 'Fair Trade' products as part of their everyday shopping. In this way, Consumer Co-operatives will be working to make 'Fair Trade' sustainable.

### 2. Consumer Co-operatives educate their members, staff and consumers generally about 'Fair Trade'

Consumer Co-operatives recognise that education and awareness raising of 'Fair Trade' is important in securing the success of 'Fair Trade'. Consumer Co-operatives will 'spread the message' about 'Fair Trade' to Co-op members, Co-op employees and consumers in general. How this educational activity takes place will depend on national circumstances but could include the publishing of articles and leaflets about 'Fair Trade'; undertaking promotional activity around 'Fair Trade' in our shops; holding educational conferences and meetings on 'Fair Trade'; and developing websites which promote 'Fair Trade'.

### 3. Consumer Co-operatives will work with 'Fair Trade' organisations to promote 'Fair Trade' at a national level and to prevent any abuse of 'Fair Trade'

Consumer Co-operatives will co-operate with the International Fair Trade movement.

Whilst we do not detect much abuse of 'Fair Trade' labelling at present, we are concerned that such abuse could take place as 'Fair Trade' becomes more successful. Consumer Co-operatives will help monitor this and report any abuse to their relevant national authorities and national 'Fair Trade' organisations.

### 4. Consumer Co-operatives will lobby at the European Union level in favour of 'Fair Trade'

Consumer Co-operatives will lobby the European Commission, European Parliament, Council of the European Union and Member States to take action to provide some support to 'Fair Trade' by:-

- a. Establishing a platform with all stakeholders that respect and work on 'Fair Trade', such as 'Fair Trade' organisations and Consumer Co-operatives, for regular dialogue with the EU institutions.
- b. Improving co-ordination between the European Commission services dealing with 'Fair Trade' to achieve greater coherence among EU policies.
- c. Implementing development education and awareness-raising programmes among consumers.
- d. Setting up guidelines for public authorities on how to include 'Fair Trade' criteria in public procurement contracts.
- e. Funding projects that aim at linking disadvantaged producers to international trade under 'Fair' conditions.
- f. Conducting global research on how to provide further market access to 'Fair Trade' producers, for instance via WTO-compatible mechanisms to support 'Fair Trade' initiatives in a non-discriminatory way.
- g. Improving market access and access to information for disadvantaged producers from developing countries.
- h. Providing practical producer assistance, including capacity-building and training.
- i. Protecting the 'Fair Trade' system from abuse, by publicly recognising 'Fair Trade' and 'Fair Trade' organisations.
- j. Setting-up a guarantee system encouraging European organisations and companies importing under 'Fair Trade' conditions to provide pre-financing and investment credits to their partners in the developing countries.
- k. Evaluating the need to establish a European body for import-promotion from developing countries.

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## ANNEX

The annex provides an overview of some of the actions taken over the years by some of Euro Coop's member organisations on Fair Trade products.

**DENMARK-** Our Danish member, FDB, is developing teaching materials for school children and information and discussion kits to be used at the members' meetings. FDB collaborates with Max Havelaar DG. In summer, during the big musical events, FDB installs a coffee lounge which serves only Fair Trade coffee, sugar and chocolate.

**PORTUGAL-** "Mó de Vida" is a consumer co-operative member of FENACOOOP that develops several projects in the area of Fair Trade and Ethical Tourism. "Mó de Vida" develops projects and different types of information and education sessions in schools and universities, explaining what Fair Trade is and raising awareness among young citizens about the importance of a responsible consumption.

**SPAIN-** Eroski, a Spanish member of HISPACOOOP, offers Fair Trade products in the shops, and has worked together with Intermón-Oxfam in order to inform consumers and to facilitate their purchase of Fair Trade products. Eroski has created the 'Eroski schools', where specialists explain what Fair Trade is to interested consumers during one hour sessions. In addition to that, Eroski has also developed and launched the first Fair Trade certified football ball, which represents the first and pioneer experience with Fair Trade certified products with Private Labels in Food Retail in Spain.

**FINLAND-** Fair Trade products have been proposed in SOK's supermarket assortment since 1999. Sales of Fair Trade products have soared and in 2007 the S Group was the leading retailer for Fair Trade products in Finland. The range comprising of 35 products includes bananas, coffee, tea, sugar, honey, pineapple etc. In 2006 the Fair Trade Award was granted to the S Group's ABC petrol station chain. In October 2006, the chain decided to serve only Fair Trade coffee in all its cafes and restaurants and in 2007 over 20 million cups of Fair Trade coffee was served. On 21st of October in 2008 the world's largest Fair Trade coffee break was organized by the Finnish Fair Trade Association and 51 754 Finns participated in that event. Over 8 500 of them had their cup of Fair Trade coffee in S group's ABC petrol stations and Coffee Houses.

**UNITED KINGDOM-** In the UK, our member organisation, the Co-operative Group, has been at the forefront of the development of Fair Trade and is the UK leading supermarket support of FAIRTRADE Mark products. The Co-operative Group started supporting Fairtrade in 1994 when it became one of the first retailers to sell products bearing the newly launched FAIRTRADE Mark. In 2008 the Fairtrade range stands over 200 products - the widest offered by any UK supermarket - and every single Co-op store offers a core range of products including fruit, tea, coffee, chocolate, wine, cakes and sugar. All stores also sell Fairtrade certified cotton bags which the Co-op launched as another first to market in 2006. The Co-operative Group maintains an innovative approach to Fairtrade products and has recently launched new lines including fruit smoothies, ice lollies and the very first sparkling wine. As well as selling around a quarter of all Fairtrade products sold through supermarkets, the Co-op continues to support the

social movement through Fairtrade Towns and Schools. The Co-operative Group has also recently converted its entire own-brand hot beverage range, worth over £16 million annually - as well as sugar and more recently cotton wool - to Fairtrade.

**ITALY-** In 1995, Coop Italia introduced its first own-branded Fair Trade product (coffee). Since that year, Coop has extended its Fair Trade line and now the products they sell range from coffee, tea, cocoa, cream, chocolate, honey, cane sugar, bananas, pineapples, orange juice and rice. The Fair Trade line also includes non-food products, like footballs and volleyballs as well as women's and men's wear (T-shirts, shirts, sweatshirts, jeans etc.) With regard to its Fair Trade clothing line, in 2005 Coop won the Ethic Award for its project "Polo Solidal Coop", and in 2006 it won the same award for the project "Camicie Solidal" (Fair Trade shirts).

**SWEDEN-** Coop Sweden sells different Fair Trade products, some of them under their own brand Änglamark: tea, chocolate drink and bars, coffee and bananas. Coop Sweden policy ensures all of them are certified organic.

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