

FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT 2014
IRISH CONSUMER SPEND ON FAIRTRADE PRODUCTS INCREASED 15% FROM €174 IN 2012 TO €200 MILLION IN 2013.

LIDL IRELAND TOPS IRISH RETAILERS' COMMITMENT TO FAIRTRADE BANANAS.

- Discounter Lidl sells 44% of all Fairtrade certified bananas sold in Ireland.
- Just 7.7% of bananas sold in Ireland are Fairtrade. In the UK the corresponding figure is 30% while in Switzerland 50% of bananas are Fairtrade certified.
- 25% of the bananas sold by Lidl Ireland are Fairtrade certified. Irish retailers excluding Lidl sell on average just 5% of their bananas as Fairtrade certified.
- Irish consumer spend on Fairtrade products increased by 15% from €174 million in 2012 to €200 million in 2013.
- Irish awareness of Fairtrade is second highest globally, and at 82% is second only to the UK.

Lidl Ireland has revealed that one in four bananas sold in its 140 stores nationwide is certified Fairtrade, which positions the discounter at the top of the leader-board of Fairtrade commitment compared to other Irish retailers. In fact Lidl sell 44% of all Fairtrade bananas sold in Ireland.

The remaining Irish retailers sell on average just 5% of their bananas as Fairtrade certified.

Retailers have the capacity to alter the landscape for Fairtrade farmers and workers in the developing world. In the UK, major retailers, Sainsbury's, Waitrose and the Cooperative Group have switched to 100% Fairtrade bananas. The result is that 30% of all bananas now consumed in the UK are Fairtrade certified. In Switzerland the figure is even higher at 50%, as a result of commitments by Coop and Migros supermarket chains. The overall market share of Fairtrade bananas in Ireland is just 7.7%.

Speaking about the importance of a commitment to Fairtrade from Irish retailers, Executive Director of Fairtrade Ireland Peter Gaynor commented,

"The companies with the greatest power to harness our spending power to help lift people out of poverty are the retailers – and in Ireland they seem either blissfully unaware or indifferent to both the opportunity and responsibility to do so...."

Research conducted by Globescan* found that awareness and appetite for Fairtrade in Ireland is very high: 82% of people surveyed were aware of Fairtrade. Worldwide, this figure was second only to the UK. This level of awareness and interest is reflected in a positive trend in growth of sales for Fairtrade products in Ireland. Sales of Fairtrade products increased by 15% from €174 million in 2012 to €200 million in 2013, with a 21% rise in Fairtrade banana sales, 14% rise in Fairtrade coffee sales and 22% rise in Fairtrade chocolate sales.

Gaynor continues;

"This customer trend is not being met by the Irish retailers. The same Globescan report found that 95% of Irish people believe companies play an important role in protecting the environment, 89%

think companies can reduce poverty through the way they do business (Ireland ranked highest in the world), and 71% of people surveyed believe shopping choices can make a difference to farmers/workers in poor countries. At Fairtrade Ireland, we hope that our indigenous businesses and in particular, our retailers, rise to the challenge of making that recovery work for the poorest in their supply chains – who for too long have been invisible, nameless, business partners.

Further positive news reveals the value of Bewley's Fairtrade coffee sales has risen by 9%. Bewley's has also purchased its first container of Fairtrade coffee from the Gumutindo Co-op, Uganda, some of which will be sold through Topaz service stations. The value of the Insomnia coffee chain's Fairtrade coffee sales has risen by 18%.

Fairtrade Fortnight takes place from 24th February – 9th March, and focuses on the work and current challenges of Fairtrade, and the supporters of the organisation. Fairtrade farmers from Belize and El Salvador will travel throughout the country to talk to supporters of Fairtrade, and each official Fairtrade Town will host events and activities. Derry and Clondalkin will be awarded official Fairtrade City/Town status respectively. See powerofyou.fairtrade.ie for more details.

www.fairtrade.ie

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-Ends-

Notes to Editor:

Information about Fairtrade Ireland:

Fairtrade Ireland awards a consumer label, the Fairtrade Mark, to products which meet internationally recognised standards of Fairtrade. It is supported by ActionAid Ireland, Amnesty International (Irish Section), Christian Aid, Comhlámh, Concern, Friends of the Earth, Irish Congress of Trade Unions, Oxfam Ireland and Trócaire. It is active throughout Ireland via a network of dedicated volunteers involved in the promotion of Fairtrade, the Fairtrade Towns project, and Fairtrade certified products.

Fairtrade Ireland is the Irish member of the Fairtrade International.

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