

SIT DOWN FOR BREAKFAST - STAND UP FOR FARMERS AND WORKERS!

FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT 2016 LAUNCHES WITH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS & BIG BREAKFAST IN DUBLIN CITY HALL.

Annual two week event focuses on the achievements, opportunities and challenges faced by Fairtrade farmers, workers and supporters

Fairtrade Fortnight kicked off with a Big Breakfast served to friends old and new in Dublin's City Hall this morning (29th February), and marks not only the first event of the two week programme of activities which will run until the 13th March; but also Fairtrade Ireland's 20 year anniversary!

This year, Fairtrade Ireland has asked Irish retailers to publicly disclose their respective percentages of Fairtrade bananas, and are encouraging Irish consumers to also ask this question both in store and across social media.

The international and annual event will deliver a programme of national events to acknowledge Fairtrade supporters, producers and farmers throughout the two weeks of activity, and highlights the positive benefits implicit in choosing to purchase products bearing the Fairtrade Mark.

Some of the highlights taking place throughout the 2 weeks are;

- Bewley's announcement to double its commitment. From its present base of 50% of all coffee beans currently sourced through the Fairtrade certification system, Bewley's will now convert all of its branded fresh coffee products to Fairtrade Certified coffee by year-end, which will amount to US\$6 million in business for Fairtrade coffee farmers in developing countries..
- Inishbofin will officially be awarded Fairtrade Island status.
- Insomnia Coffee celebrates their 10 year anniversary by revealing details of the building of an infirmary and dispensary at a girls' school in Tanzania through funds raised by Insomnia's Fairtrade.
- Cook and Food Writer Rozanna Purcell created her own Fairtrade Breakfast menu.
- Limerick celebrates 10 years as a Fairtrade Town with an exciting programme of events.
- A street parade in Carrick-on-Shannon to welcome the Fairtrade visitors.
- A Fairtrade birthday cake bake-off in Clondalkin.

Fairtrade are asking towns and schools around the country to get involved and prepare their own Fairtrade breakfast, simply using some of the commodities like tea, coffee, bananas, sugar, spices (and even chocolate if you like!) to highlight the value of Fairtrade farmers and producers to our every day lives.

Fairtrade have also welcomed two distinguished guests as part of the

fortnight's activities, who will travel to events nationwide to speak firsthand to the supporters and fans of Fairtrade;

Honduras based fourth generation coffee farmer, Jose 'Omar' Rodriguez Romero, who through diversification and innovation has transformed the lives of and safeguarded the financial future of coffee farming families in Honduras.

Maria Genao is a banana farmer from the Dominican Republic, after spending time working as a medical assistant in the US, she decided to return home and work in the Banelino Co-op, which is a Fairtrade certified banana co-op.

As part of the year long 20 year birthday celebrations, Fairtrade Ireland have launched a website which charts the last 20 years of progress and achievements by Fairtrade, and Fairtrade supporters.

Fairtrade have also launched an initiative for Fairtrade Ambassadors, and are seeking positive spokespersons and advocates for human rights, individuals who are interested in promoting global economic justice, ultimately leading to greater impact for farmers and workers in developing countries.

For more information on any of the activities taking place, or to find out how to become a Fairtrade Ambassador, simply log on to www.fairtrade.ie. Become a fan on www.facebook.com/FairtradeIreland, follow the conversation on @Fairtrade_ie

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Note to Ed:

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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