

MORE DOUGH FOR COCOA FARMERS

Ice cream icon Ben & Jerry's pioneers holistic approach to living incomes for cocoa farmers, in partnership with Fairtrade

Embargoed 12.01am, 18th November, Ireland Cocoa farmers in Cote D'Ivoire are set to earn higher prices for their beans, as Ben & Jerry's ramps up its living income approach for farmers, in partnership with Fairtrade.

From October 2020 onwards, around 5,000 Fairtrade cocoa farmers in Ben & Jerry's supply chain will receive approximately an additional \$600,000 over the next year. This amount is on top of the annual Fairtrade Premium of around \$970,000¹ and the Ivorian government's minimum price for cocoa that all companies are required to pay. The extra money that farmers will now receive is an important part of Ben & Jerry's wider efforts to support farmers towards closing the living income gap.

Cocoa farming is an incredibly unpredictable business, and farmers bear the risk of losses caused by climate change and extreme weather patterns. Smallholder cocoa farmers also have virtually no control over global market prices and are at the mercy of price volatility. Inequality in the cocoa chain means farmers are trapped in extreme poverty and can't afford to invest in more progressive farming methods to improve their income or adapt to a changing climate. In turn, rural communities are held back and the natural environment suffers. A living income is enough to provide decent housing and health care, clean water and education, plus a little extra for unexpected events, helping to break the cycle.

The higher prices Ben & Jerry's will be paying are the latest step in a package of living income interventions that they have implemented together with Fairtrade since 2015. These activities include productivity, diversification and co-operative strengthening which together support a living income strategy for the future. The higher prices will be closely monitored through partners on the ground to understand exactly how they contribute towards a sustainable livelihood for farmers.

Ben & Jerry's Global Values-Led Sourcing Manager Cheryl Pinto said: "We're committed to working for economic justice through our ice cream, and now we're making history by ramping up our commitment with the cocoa we buy. Starting with the cocoa in our chocolate ice cream mix, we're working towards the Fairtrade Living Income Reference Price² for cocoa farmers, and this is the beginning. We are exploring living incomes in our other global supply chains, too."

Ben & Jerry's purchases across all commodities are significant and have generated \$3.6m in Fairtrade Premiums in 2019 for farming communities to spend as they choose. Many have funded schools, and invested in climate resilience and local infrastructure.

Peter Gaynor, Executive Director, said: "It's complex work to advance towards a living income, but our organisations are committed to this vision. Ben & Jerry's recognises the role of business in addressing the challenges in the cocoa sector and this commitment sets a great example for other companies to follow. So next time when you're scooping up a tub of delicious Ben & Jerry's chocolate ice cream, remember you're helping supporting farmers to build better futures."

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- Notes to Editors

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1. The annual amount varies according to volumes sourced, and relates to the chocolate ice cream base mix only.
2. Fairtrade's Living Income Reference Price indicates the price needed for an average farmer household with a viable farm size and an adequate productivity level to make a living income from the sales of their crop. Fairtrade has set this reference price at \$2.2 per kilo of cocoa at farm gate price (the amount a farmer sells their cocoa for).
3. Fairtrade provides a framework and guidance to support so that commercial partners who choose to ultimately pay the higher prices towards a living income are supported to do so
4. Fairtrade has been working in partnership with Ben & Jerry's since 2005. In that time, farmers have benefitted not only from the safety net of Fairtrade's prices and Premium, but other attributes too: Fairtrade is a 50% farmer-owned organisation, so producers have an equal say in decision making and can choose how they invest their money. Fairtrade is the only certification scheme to have publicly campaigned since 2017 for farmers' right to a living income. Fairtrade believes a decent price for farmers operating in democratically-run cooperatives forms the basis on which other sustainability goals can be achieved.

About Fairtrade

Fairtrade changes the way trade works through better prices, decent working conditions and a fairer deal for farmers and workers in developing countries.

Fairtrade International is an independent non-profit organization representing 1.7 million small-scale farmers and workers worldwide. It owns the FAIRTRADE Mark, a registered trademark of Fairtrade that appears on more than 30,000 products. Beyond certification, Fairtrade International and its member organizations empower producers, partner with businesses, engage consumers and advocate for a fair and sustainable future. Find out more at <http://www.fairtrade.net>

About Ben & Jerry's

As an aspiring social justice company, Ben & Jerry's believes in a greater calling than simply making a profit for selling its goods. The company produces a wide variety of super-premium ice cream, yogurt and sorbet using high-quality ingredients. Ben & Jerry's incorporates its vision of Linked Prosperity into its business practices in a number of ways including a focus on values-led sourcing. In 2015 the company completed its transition to using entirely non-GMO (genetically modified organisms) ingredients by source as well as to fully source Fairtrade-certified ingredients wherever possible, which benefits farmers in developing countries. Ben & Jerry's products are distributed in 35 countries in supermarkets, grocery stores, convenience stores, franchise Ben & Jerry's Scoop Shops, restaurants and other venues. Ben & Jerry's, a Vermont corporation and wholly owned subsidiary of Unilever, operates its business on a three-part Mission Statement emphasizing product quality, economic reward and a commitment to the community. Ben & Jerry's became a certified B Corp in 2012. The Ben & Jerry's Foundation's employee-led grant programs totaled \$3MM in 2019 to support grassroots organizing for social and environmental justice around the country.