



Key Facts For Fairtrade Fortnight 2023

These facts and quotes can be used in communications for the full year of 2023, up until February 2024. You can use them in the lead up to Fairtrade Fortnight, or for the period itself, from 27th February – 12th March.

Summary: Key facts and stats

These are a few headline stats and facts that demonstrate the threat climate change poses to our favourite foods, and the communities who produce them. Also included is information that shows how choosing Fairtrade helps build a fairer, greener and more sustainable future for our food.

Sources and further details for all facts can be found below.

- By 2050, in fact, **up to half of the world's land currently used to farm coffee may be unusable.**
- Between 2012 and 2017, Coffee Rust (aka La Roya) **caused more than \$3 billion in damage and lost profits and forced almost 2 million farmers off their land.** Changing weather has created conditions that has made coffee farms more vulnerable to the disease.
- **93% of the Fairtrade coffee farmers in Kenya surveyed** are already experiencing the effects of climate change.
- In India, research has shown that **Fairtrade tea growers are reporting more flooding, along with extreme temperatures and water scarcity, as a result of climate change.**
- Recent drought events in 2015 and 2017 in East Africa, a key coffee growing region, have been attributed to human-caused climate change. Similarly, the **extreme rainfall and floods in Peru in 2017**, which led to mass agricultural losses, including crops such as bananas, were made more likely by human-caused climate change
- Research has shown areas where many Fairtrade products are produced, including Central America, East Africa and the Caribbean, are very likely to experience increasingly extreme weather which will negatively affect their ability to grow crops
- In a recent survey **with Kenyan coffee farmers**, 72% of farmers surveyed agreed that the Fairtrade price they receive for their coffee harvests helps them to invest in their farms to prepare for climate change
- In 2022 **Fairtrade producers across Latin America and the Caribbean have planted more than 300,000 trees** in a six-month tree-planting drive, with more than 100 Fairtrade organizations across 20 countries getting involved. They used the Fairtrade Premium generated from Fairtrade sales to fund this project.



- Despite experiencing negative effects of climate change, **Kenyan coffee farmers** surveyed by Fairtrade are already preparing to protect their farms, livelihood, and coffee harvests: over 80% of farmers reported feeling prepared for climate change.
- In 2019/20, **Fairtrade Premium spent on projects with an environmental impact** included: clean water and sanitation facilities, composting programmes, crop diversification programmes, investment in energy infrastructure, community environmental programmes and farmer training in pest management, product quality improvement, productivity improvement, soil management and water management.
- As well as the impact of the Fairtrade Minimum Price and Premium, Fairtrade partnerships with government agencies and businesses have introduced big scalable projects like our Fairtrade Climate Academies and agroforestry projects that put farmers in the driving seat and enable them to swap skills and knowledge so they adapt to the climate crisis.

Climate change and extreme weather is already affecting farmers' lives

- Between 2012 and 2017, Coffee Rust (aka La Roya) caused more than \$3 billion in damage and lost profits and forced almost 2 million farmers off their land. Changing weather has created conditions that has made coffee farms more vulnerable to the disease. [Coffee Rust Is Going to Ruin Your Morning - The Atlantic](#)
- Research shows that farmers in key **cocoa growing regions in Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire** are likely to experience challenging climatic changes which require them to adapt their farming methods. These changes include both more days with heavy precipitation, as well as increased risk of heatwaves and drought in some areas (Feurer et al. 2021- Fairtrade International 'Fairtrade and Climate Change' Systematic review, hotspot analysis and survey. [FAIRTRADE AND CLIMATE CHANGE](#)).
- The impact of climate change on agricultural production and the future of food is well-known with commodities such as coffee having long been in the climate spotlight. Studies suggest that by 2050, in fact, **up to half of the world's land currently used to farm coffee may be unusable**. [Fairtrade Farmers Increasingly Threatened by Climate Change, Warns 'Alarming' New Study - Fairtrade Foundation](#)
- Fairtrade coffee farmers in Kenya are already facing the effects of climate change: a recent Fairtrade survey of coffee farmers in Fairtrade co-operatives demonstrated that **93% of the Fairtrade coffee farmers in Kenya surveyed** are already experiencing the effects of climate change.
- Some of the changes these farmers reported experiencing included more erratic rainfall and an increase in pests and diseases, like thrips and coffee berry disease (Fairtrade Foundation, FairVoice Mobile Survey, Kenya 2022).
- **80 percent of the world's food comes from 500 million family farms, where people are increasingly facing the worst effects of the climate crisis**. Furthermore, small-scale



family farmers often lack access to the resources they need to adapt to a changing climate (source: UN Food and Agriculture Organisation)

- In India, research has shown that **Fairtrade tea growers** are reporting more flooding, along with extreme temperatures and water scarcity, as a result of climate change. (Feurer et al. 2021- Fairtrade International 'Fairtrade and Climate Change' Systematic review, hotspot analysis and survey. [FAIRTRADE AND CLIMATE CHANGE](#)).
- Recent drought events in 2015 and 2017 in East Africa, a key coffee growing region, have been attributed to human-caused climate change ([Funk et al. 2018](#); [Funk et al. 2016](#); [Herring et al. 2015](#)).
- Additional research shows that some East African countries where **Fairtrade coffee** plants are grown, for example Rwanda, are at additional risk of **future droughts in certain climate scenarios** (Feurer et al. 2022- Fairtrade International hotspots report).
- Coffee farmers in the Caribbean and Central America, such as the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua are also at risk of increased heatwaves and droughts as a result of climate change. (Feurer et al. 2021- Fairtrade International 'Fairtrade and Climate Change' Systematic review, hotspot analysis and survey. [FAIRTRADE AND CLIMATE CHANGE](#)).
- The **extreme rainfall and floods in Peru in 2017**, which led to mass agricultural losses, including crops such as bananas, were made more likely by human-caused climate change ([Christidis et al., 2018](#)).
- **Banana farmers** are also required to prepare for increased risks of heatwaves and droughts: for example, producers in Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Nicaragua are likely to experience increased hot and dry days due to climate change (Feurer et al. 2021- Fairtrade International 'Fairtrade and Climate Change' Systematic review, hotspot analysis and survey. [FAIRTRADE AND CLIMATE CHANGE](#)).

In seeking to balance the climate, trade- and economic balance sheets – the 92% of global-north historic emissions – compared to the 8% historic emissions from global-south – should be the reference point in defining adaptive strategies for different parts of the world. [Report by Fairtrade Ireland based on Research by Dr Oliver Moore](#)

Farmers must be at centre of solutions to adapt to economic and climate change, but they need financial support to do so

Research shows that the challenges of COVID-19 and rising costs undercut many farmers' ability to invest in tackling environmental issues and this is particularly worrying when we know climate change is severely impacting their ability to grow many crops (Source - [Assessing the Impact of Fairtrade on Poverty Reduction and Economic Resilience through Rural Development -](#))



- In a recent survey **with Kenyan coffee farmers**, 72% of farmers surveyed agreed that the Fairtrade price they receive for their coffee harvests helps them to invest in their farms to prepare for climate change (Fairtrade Foundation, forthcoming: FairVoice Mobile Survey Kenya 2022).
- During out of season months, greenhouse gas emissions from producing **Fairtrade roses in Kenya** were 5.4 times lower than their Dutch counterparts, even taking into account air transport to Europe. ([PDF](#)) [Life Cycle Assessment Cut Roses Migros-Genossenschafts-Bund \(MGB\), Switzerland Fairtrade International Imprint Title Life Cycle Assessment Cut Roses \(researchgate.net\)](#)
- In 2019/20, **Fairtrade Premium spent on projects with an environmental impact** included: clean water and sanitation facilities, composting programmes, crop diversification programmes, investment in energy infrastructure, community environmental programmes and farmer training in pest management, product quality improvement, productivity improvement, soil management and water management. (Fairtrade FairLens research)
- With higher incomes farmers can take positive steps. For example, in 2022, using their Premium to cover their costs, (cost of the trees, labour and preparing the soil) **Fairtrade producers across Latin America and the Caribbean have planted more than 300,000 trees** in a six-month tree-planting drive, with more than 100 Fairtrade organizations across 20 countries getting involved. ([Fairtrade producers plant more than 300,000 trees, highlighting urgent need for climate action -](#))
- Fairtrade is also **supporting coffee, tea, and flower farmers in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Rwanda** to improve their resilience to climate change and adapt to future changes through the Fairtrade Alliance for Climate-Smart Supply Chains in Africa programme. As part of this ongoing programme, over 500 Fairtrade coffee farmers and 490 tea farmers have increased their knowledge about climate change, climate mitigation and how to best prepare their farms for climate change through sustainable agricultural land management (SALM) practices. (FACSCA Annual Report, 2022). This programme is financially supported directly by several Fairtrade Foundation partners.
- Despite experiencing negative effects of climate change, **Kenyan coffee farmers** surveyed by Fairtrade are already preparing to protect their farms, livelihood, and coffee harvests: over 80% of farmers reported feeling prepared for climate change. (Fairtrade Foundation, forthcoming – FairVoice Mobile Survey, Kenya 2022).
- To prepare, coffee farmers are doing work to manage water on their farms, like terracing and mulching. They are also planting shade trees to reduce heat stress for their coffee plants and planting new climate-resilient varieties of coffee (Fairtrade Foundation, forthcoming – FairVoice Mobile Survey, Kenya 2022).
- Farmers surveyed reported that, despite experiencing climate change, they had high hopes for the future of coffee farming, but only if prices were high enough to support their farms and help them to invest (FairVoice Mobile Survey, Kenya 2022).



- As well as the impact of the Fairtrade Minimum Price and Premium, Fairtrade partnerships with government agencies and businesses have introduced big scalable projects like our Fairtrade Climate Academies and agroforestry projects that put farmers in the driving seat and enable them to swap skills and knowledge so they adapt to the climate crisis.

Fairtrade helps to protect smallholder farmers through better incomes

- Research has demonstrated that Fairtrade and the broader Fair Trade movement helps farmers increase their incomes, making adaptation more affordable, as well as increasing farmers' social capital and access to the international community to improve the efficiency of their adaptation efforts ([Borsky & Spata, 2018](#)).
- 90% of Fairtrade farmers surveyed in a recent study in Kenya reported using climate-friendly agricultural practices, including appropriate amounts of fertilizer and pesticides, water management, using solar driers for their coffee harvests, and planting new varieties of coffee trees (Fairtrade Foundation: FairVoice Mobile Survey Kenya 2022).
- Producers can also invest their Fairtrade Premium – the extra money they get for selling on Fairtrade terms – in projects aimed at restoring natural areas or in low-carbon solutions. Between 2015 and 2021, over £49.5 million of Fairtrade Premium was spent on projects with a direct or indirect environmental impact (FairLens Premium Expenditure data, 2021).
- In a survey with Kenyan Fairtrade coffee farmers in 2022, farmers discussed their co-operatives having invested in **solar driers and hiring agronomists to provide support to farmers as they prepare for climate change. Over 76% of farmers surveyed reported feeling that their co-operative spent the Fairtrade Premium on projects which helped them prepare for climate change** (Fairtrade Foundation: FairVoice Mobile Survey 2022).

Cost of Living

- Grain, oil and fertiliser shortages during the pandemic and the war in Ukraine have exposed people in low-income countries to food poverty and hardship and without resilience, it's very tough to deal with.
- Research proves that farmers that are members of Fairtrade certified organisations report greater economic resilience than non-Fairtrade farmers. Fairtrade's safety nets – including the Minimum Price and Premium, low- or no-interest loans, co-operative support for its members, and support in income diversification and other trainings – are essential during such catastrophes (resilience studies cited below)

More sources

- [Fairtrade certification and producer resilience in times of crises -](#)
- [Assessing the Impact of Fairtrade on Poverty Reduction and Economic Resilience through Rural Development -](#)



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- [Fairtrade and climate change: Systematic review, hotspot analysis and survey -](#)