

Fair trade coffee

Popularity of coffee

Coffee is an important part of everyday life for many people. Coffee production around the world is predicted to reach a record high of 171.2 million bags produced in 2019. In the UK, almost 100 million cups of coffee are consumed every day.

Not only is it one of the world's favourite beverages, but millions of people worldwide depend on coffee farming for their income. Coffee is grown in more than 70 countries. Most coffee comes from Brazil, Vietnam, Colombia, Indonesia and Honduras.

The money from exporting coffee is used to support health, education and other social services. For example, in Ethiopia, over 15 million smallholders rely on coffee for their livelihoods. A smallholder is someone that uses land for farming that covers a much smaller area than a farm.



Challenges for coffee farmers

Although the coffee industry is worth over £75 billion worldwide, coffee farmers only see a fraction of the price of a cup of coffee sold in a café in Europe or North America. Farmers are also the worst affected by how world coffee prices change. When prices fall below what it costs to produce coffee, farmers struggle to feed and clothe their families.



Fair trade coffee facts

- The coffee plant originated in the Kaffa region of Ethiopia.
- The first fair trade coffee from Mexico was sold in Dutch supermarkets in 1989.
- The Fairtrade Foundation currently works with more than 795,457 coffee farmers globally, through 537 coffee producer organisations that are certified as fair trade.
- 80% of coffee is produced by 25 million smallholders.



Importance of fair trade

Fair trade was first set up to ensure coffee farmers receive a fair and stable price for their coffee. The money they receive must cover at least what it costs farmers to grow their crops. The Fairtrade Minimum Price is the lowest amount that farmers receive for their coffee, with a higher amount if the coffee is organic. The Fairtrade Premium is an extra sum of money that is paid to farmers so they can invest in projects to improve their farms and communities. The Fairtrade Foundation also provides important training and support to farmers.

