



## RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENTS

*Making a difference in the global community*

### Fair Shake Through Fair Trade



The Adrian Dominican Sisters approved a loan in 2002 to TransFair USA in support of efforts to alleviate poverty for small farmers in developing countries.

TransFair

USA, a member of the Fair Trade Labelling Organizations (FLO), is an intermediary non-profit organization based in Oakland, California. FLO operates in 17 countries with TransFair USA being the only U.S. representative.

TransFair USA's primary role is to provide farmers with "market access." Use of the fair trade label indicates that the producer has met FLO inspection requirements and guarantees that, among other things, they receive a higher-than-commodity price for products. Not only does this mean a fair wage for workers but an equal wage for men and women, with no child labor.

Coffee is one of the world's largest commodities, second only to oil. And while coffee is the largest and first of fair trade products, FLO offerings include tea, chocolate, bananas, mangos, pineapples and grapes.

The fair trade movement took hold in Europe during the 1990s as a way to bolster coffee farmers' incomes as prices collapsed and living conditions worsened. Since fair trade began, more than a million coffee growers and other farmers in Latin

American, Asia and Africa have joined cooperatives to sell their products through fair trade channels instead of commercial producers.

TransFair USA works closely with the producer organizations to ensure farmers receive the

support they need to successfully sell their goods to the fair trade market. Through the cooperatives, TransFair USA ensures that the American vendors and wholesalers have access to the international supply of Fair Trade Certified products, eliminating the multinational exporters and middlemen, who take most of the profits. Through the increased media and marketing initiatives of TransFair USA, industry giants have begun to incorporate small lines of fair trade coffee. Fair trade is a way to

help people to help themselves.

Since TransFair USA opened their doors just over five years ago they have certified over 60 million pounds of coffee, tea, cocoa, and fruit which translates into millions of dollars in additional income for farmers and their families to improve their lives.

"By earning a fair trade price, I was able to send my children to high school and improve my home by adding electricity and potable water."

— Juan Zacarias, Las Colinas/APECAFE member in El Salvador.

**How can you support fair trade?** Serve Fair Trade Certified coffee, tea and cocoa; purchase fair trade products in your local supermarkets, restaurants, coffee cafés; give it as gifts, educate friends and co-workers. The Weber Center Gift Shop now offers fair trade coffee, tea and cocoa. Visit [transfairusa.org](http://transfairusa.org) for a variety of sites and store listings in your area who sell fair trade products.

— Lura Mack  
Coordinator of Alternative Investments

*"We walk in solidarity with people who are poor and challenge structures that impoverish them."*

— General Chapter '04