



## FAIR TRADE LEBANON

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### **Why “Fair Trade” in Lebanon?**

Far from Beirut and coastal cities, the farming world is isolated from mainstream economy. It holds some of the poorest populations in the country, especially those living in Akkar, Hermel and South of Lebanon, who find themselves forced to migrate to the cities. Although fertile, lands are abandoned for lack of sufficient work force and inability to pay foreign labor.

One of the solutions to these problems was the introduction of fair trade. It helps fight against the farmers’ poverty and tends to improve their economic and social situation by the establishment of viable commercial systems, according to the "trade, not aid" principle. It takes place through the strengthening of the production units’ capacities and the establishment of new outlets for their products on both, the domestic and foreign markets.

#### **What is the role of FTL in the fair trade movement in Lebanon?**

The 2000s marked the beginning of the practice of fair trade in Lebanon, but it was not until September 2010 that Fair Trade Lebanon became the first Lebanese fair trade association to join the membership of the World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO). The World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO) has as its main mission the promotion of this trade and the networking of all related organizations. In December 2011, Lebanon became the sixty-fourth "producer" country to integrate the sphere of FLO-Fairtrade International. The grapes and wine of the Heliopolis cooperative were in fact the first Lebanese products to obtain the "Fairtrade-Max Havelaar" certification, issued by the Fairtrade Labelling Organization - Fairtrade Certification Body (FLO-CERT).

In May 2012, the olives and olive oil of Qleyaa in South Lebanon received in their turn this certification. FTL plans to have other products certified in the months or years ahead. Today FTL is currently the only Lebanese organization to have taken action to enter the international fair trade networks by joining the WFTO, the Fairtrade International-FLO-CERT group and by initiating partnerships with many Fair Trade importers. However, if FTL is the only association that claims to belong to the world of fair trade, other Lebanese associations have also implemented this type practice, without this being their main activity.

#### **With which producers does FTL work?**

FTL works with both producers of raw materials and with “processors” who produce storable products from raw materials. The type of production unit is either a family business (10 people maximum) or a cooperative (50 people maximum, subject to exceptions). Currently, FTL works with about fifteen production units representing around 500 producers (adding to that about 500 seasonal workers). With whom FTL has long-term partnerships. These production units are located primarily in the Bekaa Valley, but also in the south of Lebanon and to a lesser extent in northern Lebanon.

For more information, check out our section: PRODUCERS (<http://fairtradelebanon.org/producers>).



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#### **What are the benefits of entering the fair trade network for the Lebanese producers?**

Fair trade gives producers a number of benefits:

- Increases significantly sales in local and international markets.
- Provides work and better incomes for rural populations by improving their production capacities (equipment, transport facilities ...) and increasing their sales.
- Avoids social exclusion of rural populations. The prospect of employment reduces rural exodus, their economic role makes them more visible at national level and their ability to have a viable work strengthens their voice in civil society.
- Promotes and enhances gender equality. Women cooperatives can improve their social status through better wages, better social recognition and greater autonomy.
- Improves cooperation between producers by facilitating dialogue and strengthening solidarity between different religious communities.
- Better pay, better equipment and greater social recognition allow producers to improve their living conditions and their social conditions.
- Gives the producers a greater dignity.

#### **Who is Fair Trade and Tourism Lebanon (FTTL) and why are there two organizations?**

Fair Trade and Tourism Lebanon (FTTL) is a Lebanese company founded in July 2011. Its main activity is to market the products made by the production units supported by Fair Trade Lebanon (FTL), being its commercial wing. It also has the mission of raising awareness to the values and concepts of fair trade among the general Lebanese public.

#### **What is the role of Fair Trade and Tourism Lebanon (FTTL) in the commercial chain?**

FTTL provides the packaging, carton boxes and labels to the production units. The company also takes in charge the transport of products from their place of production to its warehouses. In the Lebanese market, FTTL sells the products to distributors (supermarkets), hotels and restaurants. It also does some direct sales from within its premises. As for the market overseas, FTTL sells either to fair trade importers or directly to affiliated fair trade distributors.

#### **What does the brand « Terroirs du Liban » represent?**

In 2006, Fair Trade Lebanon developed its own socially engaged brand “Terroirs du Liban” that offers authentic and traditional Lebanese food products free from artificial additives and preservatives. Terroirs du Liban is made of more than 50 artisanal and natural products prepared by rural cooperatives. Grown under the warm Mediterranean sun, these products reflect the richness of Lebanon’s culture as well as its generous and welcoming cuisine.

For more information, visit: [www.terroirduliban.com](http://www.terroirduliban.com)



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#### **What are the marketed products?**

Check the page: [www.terroirduliban.com/en/productslist](http://www.terroirduliban.com/en/productslist)

#### **To whom are the products sold?**

Internationally, the products are sold under private labels, either to fair trade importers or directly to affiliated fair trade distributors. In Lebanon, the range “Terroirs du Liban” is commercialized in several supermarkets, hotels and restaurants; as well as at the “Terroirs du Liban” boutique located in Hazmieh, Beirut.

For more information, check out our section: COMMERCIAL PARTNERS  
(<http://fairtradelebanon.org/partners/commercial-partners>)

#### **Are Fair Trade products also organic?**

Although Fair Trade encourages improved environmental practices and the use of responsible production methods, “Fair Trade” and “Organic” certifications remain nevertheless distinct without being necessarily simultaneous.

#### **How big is the Fair Trade market worldwide?**

According to the Fairtrade Foundation ([www.fairtrade.org](http://www.fairtrade.org)), in 2015:

- More than 1.65 million farmers and workers were in Fairtrade certified producer organizations.
- 26% of all farmers and workers in Fair Trade are women.
- 1226 Fairtrade certified producer organizations in 74 countries.
- Small producer organizations spent 31% of their Fairtrade Premium on investment supporting productivity or quality improvement.
- In 2013-2014, 106.4 million euros in Fairtrade Premium were paid to producers.
- On plantations, workers spent 26% of their Fairtrade Premium on Education.

#### **Can someone from Fair Trade Lebanon present the Fair Trade topic at our school, university or company?**

Fair Trade Lebanon is constantly raising awareness for the Fair Trade concept and its practices; you may check our TAKE ACTION section (<http://fairtradelebanon.org/take-action/volunteer-us>) for more information and contact our marketing department to fix a meeting. T: +961 5 952 153.