



Bring Fair Trade Rice and Trade Justice to *YOUR* Community

- **STEP 1:** Get Fair Trade rice served at your campus, institution or other organization
- **STEP 2:** Mobilize your community members to buy Fair Trade rice
- **STEP 3:** Work to put Fair Trade rice on grocery store shelves
- **STEP 4:** Campaign for trade justice
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Step 1: Get Fair Trade rice served at your campus or organization

An important part of Fair Trade is the relationship it builds between producers and consumers. Within this relationship exists the potential for expanding the very meaning of the Fair Trade movement. Currently, many campuses, churches and other organizations carry Fair Trade coffee. This serves as a natural entry point for getting these institutions to serve Fair Trade rice. ENGAGE works to connect students and other groups to Fair Trade rice, which increases the diversity and accessibility of the Fair Trade movement in the United States. By bringing Fair Trade rice to your own campus or community, you can help expand the positive impact of Fair Trade for both producers and consumers.

Convince your college or university to serve Fair Trade rice

- **Meet with your school's dining services.**
 - Ask them to sell Fair Trade rice right away. Who knows, they might just agree! Explain to them why Fair Trade is important. Give them a copy of the Product Information sheet which gives details of suppliers.
- **Launch a petition.**
 - Aim to get several hundred students to sign a petition before you present it to your Dining Director. Use the Sample Petition Letter in this packet, and collect signatures in common areas.
- **Organize a protest.**
 - Even a small protest outside the main cafeteria will attract attention and build pressure on your target. Try to make your protest as colorful as possible — dress up as Fair Trade products or exploited farmers. Remember to take photos and print them in your school newsletter or display them on notice board.
- **Become a member of United Students for Fair Trade**
 - Log onto www.usft.org, read about the experiences of other students campaigning around Fair Trade on their campuses, use USFT materials, and get connected to other students in your area.

Top Tip

When lobbying your school's dining staff, remain polite yet firm. It is possible that staff at some schools and universities may not want to make the effort to start selling Fair Trade rice the first time you ask. The key to success is to be organized and persistent. **Don't take no for an answer!**

Persuade churches, temples, institutions, and organizations to serve Fair Trade rice

- **Set up meetings.**
 - Call the institution you believe would be receptive and set up a meeting with key people.
 - Show the video or PowerPoint presentation (available at www.engagetheworld.org) or explain to them how Fair Trade rice is different than conventional rice. Tell them how you became passionate about the issue and develop a relationship. Detail how Fair Trade fits with the institutions code of conduct or bylaws. Give them the Grains of Change article and the Product Information sheet.
- **Follow up.**
 - After your meeting, follow up. If they are not ready to begin serving Fair Trade rice, ask them how else they could support the campaign. Could they arrange for a slide show presentation for their members? Could their members write letters to supermarkets? Would they place an article in their newsletter?

Step 2: Mobilize your community members to buy Fair Trade rice

Most people have never heard of Fair Trade rice, don't realize the issues surrounding rice trade, and don't know how little of the price they pay at the checkout goes to the farmer harvesting the grain. Organizing awareness-raising activities is a fun way to get to know people in your community while promoting Fair Trade rice. Below is a list of ideas. Feel free to change them to fit your community or to think of entirely new tactics!

Hold a video screening of *Grains of Change* or a PowerPoint presentation (available for download at www.engagetheworld.org)

- **Set up an event.**
 - Find a community space (a church, a classroom at school, outside a grocer, your house, etc.) to hold the presentation or connect it with another event (an Asian cultural night, an abroad program convention, etc.). Try to make the location and time as accessible as possible. For example, hold in near a university cafeteria during a heavy lunch time and allow people to eat while watching.
- **Advertise for the event.**
 - Create fliers with the date, time, and location of the event. Put ads in local newspapers, bulletin boards, or internet sites. If at a university, tell professors so they can get the word out in their classes.
- **Practice presenting the slide show.**
 - Review the presentation and text. Change or add things as you see fit to make it your own.
 - Figure out how you will give the presentation. Do you have hookups for your television from your computer? Do you have a projector? Can you order these things? Can you use just your computer?
- **Table at the event.**
 - Bring campaign materials and distribute them at the event.
 - Have a sign-up sheet for people to sign-in with their contact information, asking them if they want to be a part of the Fair Trade Rice Campaign. Use this to set up meetings and hold events in the future.
- **Encourage audience to purchase Fair Trade rice.**
 - If there are local stores selling Fair Trade rice, be sure to let the audience know and encourage them to buy it in the future. Let them know about the option of purchasing the rice online from Amazon.com.
 - Tell people to ask for Fair Trade rice in the stores that are not selling it.

October is Fair Trade Month, a great time to introduce your community to Fair Trade rice.

Contact other groups in your area campaigning around Fair Trade and trade justice. Visit the United Students for Fair Trade website www.usft.org to see if colleges in your area have Fair Trade groups. Search on the internet for other organizations working on similar issues in your community. Once these individuals and groups have been identified, set up a meeting to discuss events for Fair Trade Month. Think about getting a producer to come and talk about Fair Trade. **For information on ENGAGE sponsored Farmer Speaker Tours, visit the ENGAGE website at www.engagetheworld.org/FarmerTours.html.**

Set up a Fair Trade rice stand

- **Find a good location.**
 - Set up a stall at your school or in your community in high traffic areas and at a time when people have time to stop (e.g. lunch break).
- **Decorate the stall.**
 - Make colorful posters and fliers to attract attention.
 - Give Grains of Change and the Fair Trade Rice Recipes to people who stop.
- **Encourage people to purchase Fair Trade Rice.**
 - Try to persuade everyone who stops to buy Fair Trade and let them know which stores sell it in your community. Tell them to request Fair Trade rice at stores that don't sell it yet. Before they leave, ask people if they will buy Fair Trade in the future, and if not try to address their concerns.
- **Create a local Fair Trade rice group.**
 - Ask people who seem really interested to become part of the ENGAGE campaign and set up a meeting to discuss how to bring Fair Trade to your community.

Write a letter to the editor

- **Find an audience.**
 - Think of all the groups in your community that would find the story of Fair Trade farmers interesting. Church groups, teachers, students, specific majors at schools, non-profit organizations, local businesses, etc. Find out where to send submissions to the newspapers and newsletters these groups read. Another idea is to print your own one-page newsletter and hang it in common places.
- **Get your letter published.**
 - Use the sample letter-to-the-editor to write your letter. Adapt it to the audience you are trying to reach. Follow the publication's guidelines for the number of words and other submission rules.
 - Send your letter. Follow up by calling the editor and telling him/her why the letter is important to print.

Step 3: Work to Put Fair Trade Rice on Grocery Store Shelves

Meet with the buyers of local cooperatives and grocers to ask them to stock Fair Trade rice. Getting more cooperatives and grocers to sell Fair Trade rice is essential. It enables members of your community to take action and buy Fair Trade rice so that farmers benefit immediately.

- **Find local food co-ops and grocers in your area**
 - Use the Internet or your local yellow pages and create a list of co-ops and grocers in your area.
- **Review the issues**
 - Before you visit stores, educate yourself by reading through the Organizer Packet. Get comfortable explaining why stores should carry Fair Trade.
 - If the store is part of national chain, find out if Fair Trade rice is carried in stores outside of your area.
- **Meet with store buyers**
 - Meet with the buyer and tell them about Fair Trade rice. Give them a copy of Grains of Change and the Fair Trade Rice Product Information sheet
 - Tell them that you will be holding Fair Trade event in the future and will mention their store if they start stocking Fair Trade rice. Offer to set up an awareness-raising stand outside of their store.

Join the Oxfam & Co-op America Adopt a Supermarket Campaign

Oxfam and Co-op America have teamed to call on consumers to adopt their local supermarket. By building up local community pressure, you can help get supermarkets to stock, market, and display more Fair Trade products. Go to www.checkoutfairtrade.org for more information.

Top Tip

There probably are other groups, individuals, and organizations already working to bring Fair Trade and trade justice to your community. Contacting them and creating a coalition effort makes each person's job much easier and generates momentum. To find out if students in your area are working on a Fair Trade campaign, go to www.usft.org or search the clubs list on university websites. Contact ENGAGE members in your area and research what other organizations are working on similar campaigns. Remember, Fair Trade can be approached from many angles, so environmental, human rights, developmental, and cultural organizations can all be part of the Fair Trade Rice Campaign.

Step 4: Campaign for Trade Justice

While the Fair Trade alternative has many benefits for farmers and consumers, the current policies and practices of international trade disadvantage and exploit small scale farmers in the global south. Fair Trade calls on us as consumers to support a just alternative; trade justice calls on us as citizens to focus on the inequalities that make Fair Trade necessary. Unfortunately, the situation facing rice farmers is not unique to their product or region. Dumping, intellectual property rights, and subsidized competition affect workers and farmers in every country. And each FTA that passes sets a precedent for furthering an unequal and destructive system of trade. Therefore, it is important to lobby against other FTAs and WTO agreements. Activists coming from a diversity of backgrounds work for trade justice in many countries, creating a host of campaigns that you can join.

Campaign for trade justice

- **Review the issues.**
 - Educate yourself by reading Trading Away Livelihoods and other resources available on the ENGAGE website. Visit the websites listed under the Free Trade section on the website resources page.
- **Give out fliers.**
 - Hand out Trading Away Livelihoods and Top Ten Reasons to Oppose the Thai-U.S. FTA. Decide how to approach these subjects. It might not be appropriate while tabling outside a store that has agreed to start selling Fair Trade rice, but could be very powerful at a rally, at the slideshow presentation, etc.
- **Contact your Congressperson.**
 - Urge your congressperson to oppose Free Trade Agreements that are harmful to workers, farmers, and the environment.
- **Write a Letter to the Editor.**
 - Write about Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and the Thai-U.S. FTA. Educate your local community.
- **Join other campaigns and coalitions opposing harmful trade agreements.**
 - Meet other groups working on trade justice issues in your community. National campaigns include Stop CAFTA and the FTAA, anti-sweatshop work, and Oxfam's The Big Noise. To find groups working on these issues near you, visit: www.stopcafta.org/groups.php
 - Join Oxfam's rice campaign at: www.maketradefair.com/en/index.php?file=rice_home.htm

Step 5: Tell ENGAGE About Your Progress

Fair Trade and trade justice are strengthened step by step, store by store, and purchase by purchase. So we want to know about all the amazing work you are doing to bring Fair Trade to your community and the responses you are receiving. This will not only help us keep track of the growth of Fair Trade rice, but will allow us to make our materials more affective and helpful. Send updates by email to fairtraderice@engagetheworld.org

- After visiting local stores, let us know how buyers are responding.
- When a store decides to start selling Fair Trade rice, let us know the name, location, and contact person.
- Keep us informed about slideshow presentations, Fair Trade rice stands, and other events.
- Send us clippings or links from any newspaper and/or newsletter articles.
- Contact us with questions you encounter during your awareness-raising activities.
- Tell us what institutions and organizations you are building relationships with.
- Inform us of your trade justice campaigning.

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