



How to Implement a Fair Trade College or University Campaign

A Guide for Campus Dining and Food Service Staff



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What is Fair Trade Colleges & Universities?

Fair Trade Colleges & Universities, part of Fair Trade Campaigns, currently works with over 150 college and university campuses across the U.S. to raise awareness of Fair Trade and increase purchasing of Fair Trade products on campus. Increasingly, higher education institutions across the U.S. are seeking to source socially responsible products that deliver economic, environmental and social impacts. Implementing a Fair Trade Campaign on your campus is a great way to not only meet your company's sustainability commitments but also to partner with students to help your campus meet their sustainability goals.

Criteria for Becoming a Fair Trade College or University

There are five goals that campuses must achieve to become a designated Fair Trade College or University. These goals aim to strengthen collaboration between staff and students, generate positive impact for farmers and workers around the world through sourcing of Fair Trade products, educate the campus community about Fair Trade and secure a commitment from campus administration to source and promote Fair Trade. Sustainable leadership for long-term engagement and ensuring that Fair Trade has a lasting presence on campus are key.

1. Build Your Team

The goal: Recruit at least five committee members, including at least one non-student.

One of the first steps you should take when starting a Fair Trade Campaign on your campus is building a strong and diverse team. Consistent student involvement is key to any successful Fair Trade campaign, particularly if dining-led. Students can help generate support among the student body for dining sustainability initiatives, increase event turnout and provide volunteer support. Does your team have a student intern position? If so, consider dedicating some of their hours to supporting your campus' Fair Trade campaign. Which student organizations on your campus are working on issues related to Fair Trade and sustainability? Consider reaching out to them to partner on events or join your Fair Trade campaign team. Student involvement and buy-in is critical to achieving Fair Trade College or University status for your campus.

- [Campus Advocacy for Long Term Impact Guide](#)
- [Campaigner's Guide: Sustainable Leadership](#)
- [Sustainable Leadership 101](#)

2. Reach out to Campus Outlets

The goal: Ensure a minimum of two Fair Trade products are available in all campus-owned and operated venues.

By sourcing more Fair Trade products, your campus has an opportunity to leverage its purchasing power to generate positive impact for farmers and workers around the world. For each Fair Trade product sold, a portion goes directly to farmers and workers in the form of Community Development Funds. Fair Trade Campaigns only recognizes Fair Trade products that are certified by one of four third party verified organizations ([Fair Trade USA](#), [Fairtrade America](#), [IMO Fair for Life](#) and the [Fair Trade Federation](#)).

Some of the most common and easiest products to switch to Fair Trade on campus are coffee, tea, sugar and cocoa. It's especially important to ensure that the products offered on campus have corresponding signage so students and staff know that the products are Fair Trade, what Fair Trade means and why it's important. Fair Trade USA has story cards, cup sleeves, table tents and other promotional materials available for campuses to order [here](#).

- [Fair Trade Product & Labels List](#)
- [Fair Trade Purchasing Guide](#)

3. Enroll Offices and Catering

The goal: Provide at least three examples of campus offices, departments and/or campus-run meetings and events using Fair Trade products.

Offering Fair Trade products at campus offices/departments and institutional meetings and events through catering services is a great way to make an impact on the campus community and guests visiting the institution. Consider making Fair Trade coffee and/or tea the default option through catering and utilizing marketing resources to help raise awareness of the switch. In addition, consider large-scale events on campus where Fair Trade products can be offered. For example, sustainability fairs, new student orientation and commencement.

4. Commit to Fair Trade Education and Events

The goal: To drive awareness of Fair Trade on campus, at least four educational activities must be completed each academic year.

Raising awareness about Fair Trade on campus through events and education ensures that the campus community understands what Fair Trade means and why it's important. It's also a great way to promote dining's sustainability commitments. Aim to host events in high-traffic areas on campus such as dining halls and cafes. Each fall and spring, Fair Trade Campaigns offers a program called Fair Trade Finals where campuses can sign up to receive free promotional materials and Fair Trade product samples. Food service is uniquely positioned to highlight the Fair Trade products already available on campus through this program, utilizing our Fair Trade 101 factsheets and promotional materials. [Sign up for our newsletter](#) to stay informed. Student partnership and participation are particularly important in driving awareness and attendance among the student body.

- [Fair Trade Colleges & Universities Event Guide](#)
- [Fair Trade Film & Book List](#)
- [Fair Trade 101 Factsheets](#)

5. Pass a Fair Trade Resolution

The goal: Pass a resolution in support of Fair Trade through the appropriate decision-making bodies on campus.

The final step towards becoming a Fair Trade College or University is developing and passing a Fair Trade Resolution through campus administration. Consider partnering with another body on campus, such as the Student Government Association or Sustainability Office, to co-sponsor a resolution and bring it to administration. Ensure that you have strong student support and involvement throughout the resolution process as they are crucial stakeholders in moving the resolution process forward.

- [Sample Resolution Template](#)



Testimonials from Dining-Led Campaigns

Aramark

“The Fair Trade Colleges & Universities designation program provides a unique and supportive platform to engage students, faculty, staff and the community, sharing the benefits of sourcing and purchasing Fair Trade products. Unlike many other third-party certifications based primarily on the environment, sourcing Fair Trade allows our campus to also provide for the equality of the people who produce many of the products used daily at UNCW. From simple product samplings to a Fair Trade chocolate pop-up shop for Valentine’s Day, we continue to find creative ways to educate and foster a better understanding of the value behind the Fair Trade label. It’s really impactful when you can redirect institutional buying power for the greater good and create the opportunity to foster sustainably conscious consumers.”

Marie Davis, Sustainability Coordinator, UNC Wilmington Dining Services

Chartwells

“Quinnipiac Dining touches the lives of nearly everybody on campus in some way daily. This exposure and our resources makes dining services a perfect department to organize a Fair Trade campaign. Our resources include corporate marketing and product sourcing support. Our management team with the help of the student interns made the process easy to understand and attainable. The Fair Trade goals complement our sustainability platform. The Fair Trade campaigns experience has been very educational and positive. We look forward to spreading the Fair Trade message to our campus and influencing next generations purchasing decisions!”

Leean Spalding, Director of Dining Services, Quinnipiac University

Sodexo

“Berea College Dining worked with the campus organization People Who Care to source and provide Fair Trade chocolate bars in our retail Café and grains, sugar and tea for campus dining and catering. A Berea College Dining Manager attends Fair Trade Committee meetings organized by students and supports several annual campaign awareness tabling events each year in the resident dining hall on campus.”

Caitlin McClanahan, Sustainability Manager, Berea College Dining Services

Bon Appétit Management Company

“Bon Appétit Management Company teams are proud to support any of our campuses seeking to pass a Fair Trade resolution. We share the values of students, faculty and staff who are passionate about Fair Trade and want to support smallholder farmers and workers around the world. Fair Trade Colleges & Universities provides a clear framework, tracking system and support to get there.”

Nicole Tocco Cardwell, Manager of Strategic Initiatives, Bon Appétit Management Company

Independent

“Being a Fair Trade University is a great way to engage and educate students on the importance of sourcing Fair Trade products. We are proud of our Fair Trade University designation at UCLA and highlight it at our new Housing & Hospitality Services employee orientation sessions.”

Erin Fabris, Sustainability Manager, UCLA Housing & Hospitality Services