**What is Fair Trade?**

Fair Trade is a voluntary program utilized by coffee importers and food companies to create an alternative market for traditionally disadvantaged producers in developing countries, usually small scale farmers. The components include:

* Targeted purchasing of coffee through democratically organized farmer co-operatives.
* Agreed upon commodity floor prices that provide for a dignified livelihood.
* Direct exports by producers.
* A promise by importers to make affordable credit available to the farmer cooperatives.
* A world-wide network of non-profit certifying organization.
* A fee paid by importers and wholesalers to cover the cost of certification.
* A seal that assures consumers that the product was fairly traded.

Your purchase of fairly traded coffee/chocolate helps build pride, independence and community empowerment for small farmers and their families. A coffee processing plant in El Salvador, community stores in Colombia, the training of doctors in Mexico, new schools in Peru - these are examples of initiatives co-ops have taken in their own communities with the income from Fair Trade.