

## Topical Lunch- Mary Jo Dudley

### Opportunities for Fair Trade in New York State

November 12, 2010

12:00- 1:00 PM

300 Rice Hall

#### Attendees

Host- Mary Jo Dudley	<a href="mailto:farmworkers@cornell.edu">farmworkers@cornell.edu</a>
Lance Compa	lac24
Alison M De Marree	amd15
Bradley J. Rickard	b.rickard@cornell.edu
Fouad Makki	fmm2
Wendy W. Wolford	www43
Maire R. Ullrich	mru2
Craig J Kahlke	cjk37
Susan K. Brown	skb3
Ashley Marchesi	aem225
Rachel Kay Kurtzleben	rkk47
Paula G Euvrard	pge3
Paul Berry	pgb52
Kathy Sexsmith	kjs256
Rebakah Minarchek	rd364
Caroline McInerney	cem227
Sarah Alexander	sma53
Linda McCandless	Linda.mccandless@cornell.edu
Chris Barrett	cbb2
Tom Maloney	trm5
Andrew Curley	apc55
Mark Lawrence	mal64

#### Regrets

Kate Griffith	<a href="mailto:kategriffith@cornell.edu">kategriffith@cornell.edu</a>
Jennifer Lynn Wilkins	jlw15
Rodrigo Alatríste-Díaz	<a href="mailto:ralatristediaz@gmail.com">ralatristediaz@gmail.com</a>
Jennifer Anne Dean	jad368
Helene Schember	hrs6
Philip McMichael	pdm1
Anna Angel	afa23
Robin Blakely	rmb18

# Summary of Discussion- Opportunities for Fair Trade in NYS?

November 12, 2010

## **Mary Jo Dudley, Director of the Cornell Farmworker Program (CFP):**

Opened discussion with overview of Cornell Farmworker Program research on Fair Trade, and the goals for the topical luncheon.

The CFP's primary goal was to bring together a group of faculty, extension professionals, and agricultural producers to discuss future research directions on fair trade opportunities for NYS. This discussion focused on three synergistic research components that will offer evidence-based observations on the perspectives of consumers, farmworkers, and producers.

### **I. Opportunities for Fair Trade in NYS ?**

- Why explore domestic fair trade?
  
- Who benefits? (farm workers, producers, consumers)
  
- Cornell Farmworker Program research to date
  - Onion industry in Orange County
  - Apples in New York State
  
- National promotion of domestic fair trade
  - Domestic Fair Trade Association/Agricultural Justice Project
  - Oxfam/Farm Worker Caucus
  - Coalition for Immokalee Workers
  
- Consumer interest
  
- Production trends

### **II. A Case Study of the Orange County Onion Industry**

**Caroline McInerney** (2009 CFP intern) presented an overview of CFP research with Orange County CCE:

#### CFP/ CCE Case Study of the Orange County Onion Industry

- Growing farmworker population
- Added value of black dirt onions
  - Cooking onion, rich flavor, added health benefits
- A unique agricultural region
  - Close to urban markets
  - Infrastructure within the region
- The win-win-win

### **III. Principles of Domestic Fair Trade according to the Domestic Fair Trade Association**

**Ashley Marchesi** (2010 CFP intern) presented an overview of the Principles of Domestic Fair Trade according to the **Domestic Fair Trade Association (DFTA)**, an association of 35+ organizations representing growers, processors, researchers and farm worker advocates. Some of the organizations currently involved are the Agricultural Justice Project, Equal Exchange and the Pesticide Action Network.

:

- Family Scale Farming
- Capacity Building for Producers and Workers
- Democratic and Participatory Ownership and Control
- Rights of Labor
- Equality and Opportunity
- Direct Trade
- Fair and Stable Pricing
- Shared Risk and Affordable Credit
- Long-Term Trade Relationships
- Sustainable Agriculture
- Appropriate Technology
- Indigenous Peoples' Rights
- Transparency and Accountability
- Education and Advocacy

#### **IV. Oxfam Farm Worker Caucus and Coalition of Immokalee Workers**

**Rachel Kay Kurtzleben** (CFP volunteer) presented an overview of the Oxfam/Farm Worker Caucus's approach to fair trade:

The Farm Worker Caucus is a group of organizations including, United Farm Workers, Farmworker Justice, the Farm Labor Organizing Committee, Northwest Tree Planters United and the National Farm Worker Ministry. They are working in conjunction with Oxfam America to develop and implement a set of enforceable voluntary certification standards to ensure farm workers receive decent wages, work free of discrimination and a safe dignified work environment, while also improving food safety and the environmental conditions of food production.

**Oxfam and the Farm Worker Caucus hope to:**

- Improve conditions for farm workers
- Create a more productive and sustainable work force for agribusiness
- Provide positive marketing and promotion for participating food companies
- Address issues of highly toxic pesticides in our environment
- Enable consumers to feel better about the conditions under which the food they are buying is produced

Rachel gave a description of the **Coalition of Immokalee Workers(CIW)** and their campaign to address farmworkers' needs.

The CIW is a Florida-based farm workers group organized around a campaign focused towards fast-food and food-service companies to pressure them to pay a premium on tomatoes to improve the working conditions of farm workers.

The **CIW** has a signed agreement with Pacific Tomato Growers, and made agreements with the following companies:

- Taco Bell
- McDonalds
- Burger King
- Subway
- Sodexo
- Aramark
- Whole Foods

#### **Content of CIW Agreement:**

Penny per pound premium on tomatoes paid by buyers to be distributed to farm workers

Premium used to:

- Increase workers pay
- Establish external complaint resolution system
- Provide shade and protective equipment to workers
- Provide worker-to-worker education process

#### **V. Consumer Willingness to Pay for Domestic Fair Trade**

- A body of research does not currently exist that directly shows consumer willingness to pay for domestic fair trade. This is largely because there *is no official standards agreement* and so domestic fair trade produce is not available in grocery stores.
- Linkages with BuyFresh, BuyLocal and "Locavore" campaigns
- Research indicates that efforts to establish domestic fair trade markets should begin by targeting consumers that *already* buy organic regularly and/or consider the environment when purchasing.
- Willingness to pay does not always translate into actual behavior! After all, willingness to pay depends on ability to pay.

#### **VI. Research on Producer Interest**

**Alison DeMaree** (CCE Wayne County) gave an overview of the research considerations for next steps. We have not conducted research on producer interests to date, but are seeking funding to conduct research that will analyze profitability and producer experiences with other fair trade products.

### Future Research:

- Producer certification requirements and alternatives
- Current commodity production trends
  - Compile current publications indicating producer investment in a high density apple planting (900 – 1300 trees per acre with support system & trickle irrigation)
  - Onion production
- Analyze producer annual operating costs and returns over a 5 year period;
  - Conduct a survey of typical storage, packing and marketing charges for fruits & vegetables of interest
  - Compile publications indicating 10 year projected supply & demand for fruits & vegetables of interest
- Fair trade marketing and producer incentives
- Producer interest in fair trade and lessons from “confidence-building” steps
  - to address producers' initial concerns to see themselves as the third winner in a "win-win-win" dynamic with consumers and workers

### Discussion

After some clarification on the current labor force, there was discussion of how this effort could overlap with current organic producers. There was also further elaboration about how this would function with apples, onions and some of the constraints.

Future research areas include:

- Consumer willingness to pay
- Examine how the premium would be distributed to workers
- Examine best descriptor – “domestic”, “local”, “fair trade”

### Next steps:

- 1) Faculty/graduate student working group with students who have practical experience in international fair trade.
- 2) Circulate a list of research efforts underway and future research to get feedback on who is willing to collaborate,
- 3) Contact farms that already have good labor practices to assess how they meet DFT standards, or what would be necessary to meet those standards.