

Fairtrade Fortnight 2011 Launched at Stormont Parliament



1 March 2011

Belfast, NORTHERN IRELAND: Junior Minister Gerry Kelly MLA, Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMdFM), launched Fairtrade Fortnight 2011 in Northern Ireland today at Stormont Parliament.

Fairtrade Fortnight 2011 runs from Monday February 28 to Sunday March 13 and this year's theme is: "Show Off Your Label".

You can show off the Fairtrade label any way you want. Just take part and make a real difference.

Fairtrade Fortnight is about promoting Fairtrade in Northern Ireland and to maintain Belfast's accreditation as the Fairtrade Capital City. Fairtrade is an initiative that guarantees a minimum price to the most disadvantaged small scale farmers and co-operatives, primarily from African, Caribbean and Pacific countries.



L-R:

Hannah Reed – UK Fairtrade Foundation; Gerry Kelly MLA - Junior Minister, Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister; Anna Michael Mlay – Tanzanian Fairtrade Coffee Cooperative KDCU Ltd; Dr Christopher Stange – Chair of Fairtrade Belfast and Hon. Consul for St. Vincent and the Grenadines in Northern Ireland

UK sales of Fairtrade products increased by 40% in 2010 to an estimated retail value of £1.17 billion, compared with £836 million in 2009. Consumers continue to purchase Fairtrade, demonstrating strong ethical values, despite tough economic times.

Dr Christopher Stange, Chair of Fairtrade Belfast, explained: “We are delighted with the support from both the public and private sector in their commitments to Fairtrade, which offers 7.5 million people in the developing world a more secure future. The challenges of global poverty and inequality, where 2 billion of the world’s population exist on less than £1.35/day, is a stark reality. We can all make a difference by choosing Fairtrade when shopping or through procurement, with the confidence it is helping the most disadvantaged developing world farmers.”

Across Northern Ireland there will be various scheduled events highlighting and creating further awareness of Fairtrade and the Fairtrade Towns Campaign, including Fairtrade product sampling and coffee mornings.

Fairtrade certified growers will be touring the province during the fortnight. They will be visiting schools (primary, secondary and university level), government, charities, businesses and churches, providing a first-hand insight of what Fairtrade means and provides for the most marginalised farmers and producers in developing countries.

Fairtrade Belfast will be hosting their own Fairtrade Fortnight events over the next two weeks. For more information please visit our website: www.fairtradebelfast.org

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NOTES FOR EDITOR:

- Fairtrade Fortnight 2011 is being organised and facilitated by the Belfast Fairtrade Committee, whose remit is to promote Fairtrade.
- The Belfast Fairtrade Committee, as a voluntary organisation, includes members of Local and Foreign Government, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) community, supermarkets, educational institutions, retailers, business and private individuals.
- In June 2005, Belfast was awarded its first Fairtrade City status from the UK Fairtrade Foundation. In March 2006, Belfast was awarded its second Fairtrade City status by Fairtrade Mark Ireland. The accreditation has to be renewed every two years.
- Fairtrade Fortnight is a platform for supporting groups, retailers and commercial partners to promote the Fairtrade Mark and the Fairtrade products on which it appears.
- Every day in the UK, we consume 9.3 million cups of Fairtrade tea, 6.4 million cups of Fairtrade coffee, 2.3 million chocolate bars, 530,000 cups of Fairtrade drinking chocolate and 3.1 million Fairtrade bananas. New categories are also growing with over 1 million cosmetic products using Fairtrade ingredients.
- Sales of Fairtrade chocolate confectionery have quadrupled in 2010 to an estimated retail value of £342 million, making chocolate the leading Fairtrade product by value in the UK.
- Sales of Fairtrade drinking chocolate have trebled to an estimated retail value of £34 million.
- For more information on Fairtrade Fortnight 2011 please visit:
Fairtrade Belfast: www.fairtradebelfast.org
UK Fairtrade Foundation: www.fairtrade.org.uk Fairtrade Mark Ireland: www.fairtrade.ie
- Media queries to Fairtrade Belfast please contact Dr Christopher Stange:
Tel: 028 9187 4697 Mobile: 07803 897 487 E-mail: consul@svgconsulate.co.uk

