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Long version

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Canaan Fair Trade & the Palestine Fair Trade Association visit Pakka AG in Switzerland

About Canaan Fair Trade and the Palestine Fair Trade Association

Canaan brought the concept of fair trade to Palestinian farming communities; it was the driving force to organize small scale Palestinian farmers in collectives that produce according fair trade standards. In 2004 Canaan started with advocacy workshops, organizing production for 12 cooperatives in 2005, building the Palestine Fair Trade Association (PFTA), as union of fair trade cooperatives and processors in its founding conference in January 2005. Canaan supported the growth and development of the association, guiding their organization, their trade relations, and their farming practices towards organic production and enabled these cooperatives numbering 350 farmer members to certify *Fair for Life* and *Organic production* by the end of 2006. All throughout Canaan was the only outlet to the world market.

Canaan further organized women producers to process fair trade food goods and helped integrate them into the PFTA fair trade union. Long-term marketing opportunities were offered and products were brought to markets worldwide.

Today there are 34 organized farmers in the supply chain, and 9 farmer cooperatives in transition, and 6 certified women cooperatives plus 3 women cooperatives in transition. In addition there is one wild collection cooperative. The total number of producers is exceeding 1500 members.

Canaan's commitment to fair trade producers goes beyond market and includes among others development of farming capacity, yield increase, supporting farmers with trees through *Trees for Life program*, raising awareness to their political challenges through events such as *Run Across Palestine* or the allocation of 10 university scholarships every year to children of farmers. Furthermore, Canaan consciously organizes events that integrate Palestinian farmer communities into the world fair trade movement creating a dynamic movement of cultural exchange that lifts up the community and create a sense of pride and hope.

About the people that come to visit us: Manal Abdallah and Mahmoud Samara

Manal Abdallah grew up in the town of Zababdeh, close to Jenin, in the North of Palestine. She graduated in Multi-Media technology at the Arab American University. She worked as a producer in a local news network, and directed a documentary film as well as several short features, whereas one of them is about Canaan Fair Trade. She has a passion for food, photography, and fair trade. At Canaan Fair Trade she is responsible for product promotion and media communication.



Mahmoud Samara grows organic olives and almonds. His farm locates near to Burqin, a village close to the city of Jenin. Each year he produces around 5 to 6 tons of olive oil. Ever since he became a member of the Palestinian Fair Trade Association, his life has changed.

The purpose of visiting Switzerland

Manal Abdallah and Mahmoud Samara come to Switzerland to speak to people about the importance of a project like Canaan in a place like Palestine, the impact Fair Trade has on Palestinian farmers, how it changed their lives. Mahmoud Samara wants to tell first-hand stories and share his experience in participating in FairTrade. Their talks will be illustrated with pictures, events should become interactive, and cultural, and end up with product tasting.

„Our objective is to spread the message of the farmers to the world, to get more people to support fair trade, to get more people to know about what Canaan is and what we do, to get more people to support our farmers by buying our products through Pakka.“, says Manal Abdallah.

It is kind of impossible to exclude politics, as it is an inseparable part of the Palestinian’s lives, and it has an important impact on PFTA farmers, in terms of denial of access to their lands, water resources and in terms of land confiscation as well as daily and continuous attacks from Israeli settlers. Hence, our visitors will definitely talk about the challenges farmers go through in order to be able to produce products that are now exported all over the world, but they will not speak about political issues that are not related to farming life and agriculture in Palestine.

Links and resources

Canaan Fair Trade: www.canaanfairtrade.com

Palestine Fair Trade Association: www.palestinefairtrade.org

Partnership Pakka AG – Canaan Fair Trade: www.pakka.ch/suedpartner_7_canaan

Trees for Life program: <http://www.canaanfairtrade.com/trees-for-life.php>

Run Across Palestin: <http://www.canaanfairtrade.com/run-across-palestine.php>

Mahmoud Samara speaking about the olive harvesting season:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KoUjlMoypUY&feature=related>

Manal Abdallah and Mahmoud Samara:

