

Food and Communities

Resource pack for a 3-hour taster



Taster Pack 4



Supporting Communities
Creating Change



Care For Your Area
Shop Ethically

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Introduction to the taster packs

The Federation for Community Development Learning (FCDL) is the national membership body promoting and supporting community development work learning for all those involved in community development as defined in the National Occupational Standards.

Community development work aims to collectively to bring about social change and justice, by working with communities to:

- Identify their needs, opportunities, rights and responsibilities
- Plan, organise and take action
- Evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the action

all in ways which challenge oppressions and tackle inequalities.

As part of the Federation's work we produce a range of resource packs to support tutors and trainers. All of the packs contain sample session plans, handouts, trainer's guidance notes, worksheets and exercises.

This is a trainer's resource pack to support short, non-accredited taster programmes for activists within their communities, community development workers and those who are using a community development approach to their environmental work.

This pack is one of a series being produced to support the Federation's contribution to DEFRA's Every Action Counts programme, which aims to raise awareness of environmental issues amongst voluntary and community groups and the wider community. DEFRA has been charged by our current government with taking action to tackle the bigger environmental issues of climate change and natural resource depletion. For more information, and details of the whole programme, see the four-page leaflet on our website and the Every Action Counts website (www.everyactioncounts.org.uk).

The Federation has become involved with this programme because it recognises that environmental justice is a key part of social justice – one of the core values of community development work. Poor and marginalised communities are on the receiving end of many social injustices, and likewise they are more likely to live in degraded environments and be adversely affected by current environmental changes.

All the courses designed by the Federation within the Every Action Counts programme are informed by the values of community development work, and aim to support communities and those who work with them, by promoting an environmental justice approach.

Trainer's packs, by their very nature, provide material on a particular topic, which is aimed at people involved in community development. It is not possible in packs that are being released nationally to provide material that relates to all the local situations: It is the trainer's responsibility to customise the material to their particular audience and contexts; the packs contain suggestions on where to find local material.

Some of the exercises can easily be extracted from this three hour session and used within more informal session with groups, provided they are contextualised appropriately.

The tasters are designed to raise awareness of particular issues within the Every Action Counts programme. They can provide progression to the National Open College Network (NOCN) unit on Community Development and Environmental Action, an optional unit at levels 2 and 3 within the national Community Development Work (CDW) awards. Details are provided in a handout at the end of this pack. The full CDW learning and qualifications framework is available on our website.

We have also created a sample unit suitable for adding to programmes within Higher Education; details of this are on our website.

We will be developing part of our website to encourage all trainers using the materials we create to feed back their views and suggestions. This pack is a revised version of an earlier edition, which has been substantially amended in response to the workshops of autumn 2006. We hope it is now a really useful resource to support your training, and look forward to hearing your views.

The Federation for Community Development Learning
January 2007



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Outline Session Plan

Session Title	Food and Communities
Target Audience	Members of community groups, partnerships, voluntary organisations, community workers and people working in communities
Links to other Sessions	Care For Your Area Community Buildings and Environmental Action Climate Change Communications Community Development and Environmental Action Strategies and Policies to Support Environmental Action
Session Length	Three hours including a break
Session Aims	To explore how community food projects can contribute to improving the communities and the environment
Session Outcomes	At the end of the session participants will: Understand the importance of food to communities Actions communities can take, and issues of social justice around food
Indicative Content	Exploring the relevance of food to communities The importance of quality food The barriers to getting good food Actions communities can take Local food initiatives Food and the environment Community food growing projects Food and social justice

Time	Content	Exercise/Method	Resources	Notes
00	Welcome, housekeeping, groundrules, session aims	Trainer input	Trainer Guidance Note 1 Prepared flipchart Outline session plan	
10	Introductions / warm-up game	My favourite food	Trainer Guidance Note 2 Flipchart and pens Post-it notes	
20	Why is food important to you and your community?	Trainer led whole group round robin	Trainer Guidance Note 3 Flipchart and pens	
30	Why is quality food important? – health and well being	Whole group quick flip and discussion	Trainer Guidance Note 4 Flipchart and pens	
40	Barriers to getting good quality food locally	Pairs to think of barriers and whole group discussion	Trainer Guidance Note 5 Flipchart and pens	
55	What can we do about it?	Small working groups	Trainer Guidance Note 6 Flipchart and pens	
70	Local Food Initiatives Benefits to individuals/ community	Pairs/ trios to fill in the worksheet, followed by whole group discussion to bring out other ideas	Trainer Guidance Note 7 Worksheet 1 (cut into cards) Scissors Handout 1	
90	Break			
105	Environment and food	Whole group quick flip on environmental issues Four buzz groups on environmental benefits	Trainer Guidance Note 8 Cards from last exercise Flipchart and pens	

Time	Content	Exercise/Method	Resources	Notes
120	Action plan to start a food growing project Where to get information and resources	Small groups preparing an action plan Time for sharing knowledge of other resources	Trainer Guidance Note 9 Prepared flipcharts Handout 2 Worksheet 2	
145	Social Justice and food	Make link with CD work issues and the local -global links e.g. health inequalities in communities abroad using pesticides to produce cheap food for us Small group activity - fair trade	Trainer Guidance note 10 Handout 3 Handout 4 Flipchart and pens	
165	Other support available	Trainer input	Resource list and Every Action Counts leaflet	
170	Evaluation	Individuals to complete	Evaluation sheets	
180	End			

Detailed Session Plan

Trainer Guidance Note 1

Introduction to the course

As you welcome people to the session you need to give them information about the venue: for example -

1. Fire exits and procedures. Ask if anyone is leaving early to let tutors know so they can amend the register
2. Toilets
3. Break times and where refreshments served

Remember to make a notice for the door of the training room so people can find you easily.

As this is a short course there will not be time to prepare ground rules as a group, so we recommend that you write down some ways of working together on a flipchart. Talk through the proposed rules, asking for any additions and that people agree to working within them.

Some examples:

- We will keep to the starting and finishing times, and the timetable set by the trainer
- All mobile phones to be switched off during the session
- We will respect each other and our different views. We will take care not to offend others by our language and/or behaviour
- We can challenge each other's statements, but we will not do this as a personal attack
- We will listen carefully to each other and allow people to finish. We will try not to hog the conversation
- We will keep personal and organisational information confidential to the group
- People must take responsibility for their own learning – so if necessary you should ask for clarification about comments or instructions

Trainer Guidance Note 2

Icebreaker - My favourite food

Get the group to form a circle and ask each person to tell the group what their favourite food is and (briefly) why it is their favourite.

Put up a flipchart and give everyone a pen and a post-it note and ask participants to write where their favourite food comes from in the world: e.g. bananas from the Caribbean or curry from Thailand (the spices will come from South East Asia), baked beans from Europe or the USA, pasta from Italy, wine from Australia or Chile.

If you want, you could copy the outlines of the map below onto a flipchart and get people to stick their post-it in the appropriate place.

Explain that food is of fundamental importance to us all. Everybody, and every creature, in the world and throughout history has had to eat. Getting people more involved in where their food comes from and how it gets to them is immensely empowering. Reflect on the variety of places that people's favourite food comes from.



Trainer Guidance Note 3

Food and its relevance to our lives

Relating to the last exercise about how important food is to everyone, get people to think about an occasion when food is central to the event – weddings, family meals, picnics, festivals etc..

Draw out, from the examples given, that food plays a part in most important events in people's lives.

- Celebrating achievements – e.g. passing exams, getting a new job or celebrating getting funding!
- Marking life milestones - e.g. birthdays, weddings, funerals, Bat/Bar Mitzvah
- Sharing intimacies - e.g. candle-lit dinner for two
- Celebrating religious events

Activity: Round Robin

Get people to think of an occasion or instance where food was important to them or their community/group. Ask each person in turn to share their example. Summarise this exercise by drawing out the links between food and what holds communities together, using the examples that people have given to show the importance of cultural events in building and sustaining communities.

You could give an example from the Women's Environmental Network website (www.wen.org.uk) about the part played by food in social cohesion. Culture Kitchen events are fun - networking opportunities, where people bring some food to share with others. Complementing this 'feast' there are often storytellers, herbalists, and fruity beauty specialists who run practical workshops to explore rituals, traditions and attitudes to food in different cultures.

Trainer Guidance Note 4

Why is quality food important – health and wellbeing

Ask people why they think having good quality food is important.

Record their answers on a flipchart.

Pick up on the comments around “healthy food = healthy people” and introduce the following facts:

1. Cheap food is often highly processed and contains unhealthy ingredients – sugar, saturated fats and refined flour – all of which contribute to obesity in adults and children. Low income families find it harder to have a healthy diet because of these additions to the food they can afford. This has contributed to Britain being the fattest nation in Europe and obesity related diabetes is dramatically increasing in the UK.
2. The build up of chemicals in the food chain – sometimes called bio-accumulation – which is basically the result of the water, air and vegetation being contaminated by chemicals and other pollutants. Animals eating the vegetation ingest some of the chemicals. As small animals are eaten by bigger animals further up the food chain the concentration of potentially harmful material increases, and eventually the animals are eaten by humans. There is quite a lot of research showing the impact of oestrogen accumulating in fish, which is having an impact on human male fertility. It is thought that the source of increasing amounts of oestrogen in fish is the hormone being released into the water cycle through human waste, particularly related to the increasing numbers of women using the contraceptive pill.
3. Fresh fruit and vegetables may contain traces of pesticide, and meat may contain traces of antibiotics, even though they're not supposed to. This is why people want to eat organic food although the price may make it unobtainable for low income families..
4. In reality, much 'fresh produce' often travels a long way and tends to be harvested before it is really ready. It is then kept for a long time in cold storage; which means that the levels of vitamins and other 'micro nutrients' are lower than in produce eaten fresh at its place of origin.

Summarise some of the other points from the flipchart which are not just about the healthy food = healthy people aspect of quality food.

Trainer Guidance Note 5

Barriers to getting good quality food locally

In this exercise ask participants, working in pairs, to think about what the problems are for people to get good quality food in all areas.

When you take the feedback you can expect some of the following answers (add in others that don't get mentioned).

- People can only eat the food that is actually available - some poor areas and rural settlements in Britain are described as 'food deserts' because it is so hard to buy good food locally. Many poor people don't have access to cars and many places that sell good quality local food are in areas inaccessible by public transport (farmers markets, wholesalers etc.).
- Can everyone afford healthy food? Healthy food is more expensive than the cheap processed meals sold by many supermarkets under their own brand name, which have higher levels of salt and sugar.
- Does everyone have the skills needed to prepare healthy foods? People don't buy fresh food because they think it is going to be hard work and they won't have time to prepare it.
- Sometimes there is a lack of locally grown food because small farmers may be offered such a poor deal by the powerful supermarkets that they plough the crops back into the ground, or go out of production altogether.
- Shops in poorer areas will tend to stock cheap food because that is what their customers demand.
- Cheap food is often produced in countries which don't have as strict health and safety rules as the UK e.g. more pesticides may be used, and lower welfare standards enforced.

Trainer Guidance Note 6

What can we do about it?

Divide participants into three or four groups. Allocate the items on the “barriers list” from the previous exercise to the groups so they are all covered. Ask each group to think about ideas they have, or have heard of, that might help to overcome each barrier. If people are struggling you could give them some of the following ideas from recent workshops of what other people are already doing:

- Running community cafes which use good quality food in community centres
- Community centres running cooking classes
- Bulk buying of fruit and vegetables from local wholesale markets and distributing them to families around the estate
- Organising fruit and vegetable box schemes
- Supporting local food growing schemes
- Provision of good quality meals on wheels for older people
- Promoting farmers’ markets
- Community gardens
- Putting on local food events - e.g. potato days

Take the feedback from each group in turn and, after each short presentation, open up the discussion to the whole group about ways to overcome that particular barrier.

Trainer Guidance Note 7

Local food initiatives

We are now going to look at local food initiatives and their benefits to individuals and communities. Community food projects take many forms. It could be about improving access to food and food growing; but cooking and eating are also important.

Food projects tend to link together:

- People start growing vegetables, then want to learn more about cooking
- People start a cooking course, and problems of access to ingredients become obvious.

Why we might run a project is because:

- We all need food, so it's not 'something extra' to think about.
- Good food is essential for good health.
- Taking control of aspects of our own food and eating is very empowering.
- Working together can bring significant benefits.
- Most communities have some skilled cooks and gardeners who could become mentors, giving personal development opportunities.

Form small groups, give out the cards created from the Worksheet 1 about food projects and ask people to think about social and community benefits. Some of the answers you might be looking for are listed below.

Projects	Social/Community Benefits
Food Co-op	Useful if no local shop, or if shop doesn't stock these goods. Membership encourages loyalty and gives control of the organisation to those using it (empowerment).
Food stall /market	Useful if no local shop, or if shop doesn't stock these goods.
Local produce stall / market	Low food miles. Fresh produce. Traceable food. Supports local producers, amateurs and community allotment projects.
Delivery round, e.g. vegetable boxes	Convenient, especially for those without cars. Efficient use of transport. Can encourage people to eat more vegetables.
Transport to shops	Particularly useful for elderly and Disabled people and/or in rural areas.
Community café	Can be a useful training resource for people who are unemployed, have learning difficulties or mental health problems. Social meeting place.
In-house catering / luncheon club	Enables participants to have access to quality, healthy meals at a reasonable price.
Healthy takeaways	Useful for people who have difficulty preparing fresh food (e.g. elderly people, Disabled people).

Worksheet 1

Improving access to affordable healthy food

Fill in the social/community benefits of each of the projects outlined below:

Projects	Description	Social/ Community Benefit
Food Co-op	Food bought in bulk and sold to co-op members at low cost. Focus is often on fruit and vegetables but can include other goods such as flour, rice and pulses. All customers must become members of the organisation.	
Food stall /market	Food bought in bulk (Bulk buys could be from wholesalers but fresh produce could be cheaper and fresher bought directly from a farm/ market garden, or via a farm shop, or from a community growing project) and sold at low cost, as above. Run by a local organisation, or an outside body, as a service for local people.	
Local produce stall/market	Selling locally grown fruit & vegetables, and possibly other produce. Could be independently run, part of the Country Markets (formerly WI Markets) network, or a farmers' market.	
Delivery round, e.g. vegetable boxes	Vegetables, or other bulky items, are bought in bulk and delivered to people's homes or convenient local drop-off points. It may be possible to get existing small shops to start offering deliveries to a community, if you can demonstrate a demand.	
Transport to shops	Lifts in cars, or even by minibus, arranged for those without transport; or as a car-share to cut down on car use.	
Community café	A not-for-profit café is set up to serve a community, often in an area lacking facilities. Healthy foods can be served at low cost.	
In-house catering/ luncheon club	A meals service is set up for a group of people e.g. elderly people meeting for lunch and a chat. A centre for Disabled people sets up a canteen.	
Healthy takeaways	A community café or catering scheme provides healthy meals for customers to take home and cook easily.	

Handout 1

Food projects case studies

1. Fruit & Vegetable Scheme

People on a Bradford housing estate had to do their food shopping at a supermarket some distance away. Many didn't have cars and tended not to buy much fresh fruit and vegetables, as they were heavy and bulky to carry home on the bus.

As a result, the local Community Association set up a scheme to purchase fruit and vegetables wholesale. They took weekly orders from customers and dropped off the bags of goodies at a collection point on the estate. Elderly and Disabled people could get home deliveries.

Because the produce was cheaper than the supermarket and easier to take home, many families started eating more fruit and vegetables and even trying new things. The Association started looking at the possibilities of buying other foodstuffs direct from local farms and running cookery courses so people could learn what to do with unfamiliar ingredients.

2. The Good Food Project

The Good Food Project began with the partnership of Daneshouse & Stoneyholme Sure Start and the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics at Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale Primary Care Trust, to help improve the eating habits of local residents.

The project is funded by The Lancashire Children's Fund, Sure Start and Lancashire County Council National Institute of Adult Continuing Education Fund. The team working on the Good Food Project includes a dietician, a community food co-ordinator, seven multilingual community food workers and two community gardeners. Sure Start also works alongside a wider network of support organisations, such as schools, nurseries, local producers and community groups.

The Good Food Project teaches children to appreciate the whole life cycle of the food they eat, and includes a healthy schools programme, with gardening clubs, cookery clubs and healthy snack schemes to help improve knowledge of and exposure to good food. Also available are baby food preparation demonstrations and a healthy and ethical catering service - a social enterprise run by local women. Holiday activities for children and parents are organised - including visits to farms, gardens, markets and bakeries.

Lancashire County Council has now also joined the partnership to develop the Learning Through Allotments Project, which teaches children, and also their parents, about growing food, as well as healthy cooking and eating habits. This work addresses diet in the Daneshouse local ward after high incidences of diet related diseases were identified. The community paediatric dietician believes that teaching healthy habits at an early age can help prevent many diseases in later life. Activities such as cooking classes and gardening help foster independence, responsibility and creative thinking. The repercussions of the project in the wider community are also beneficial - it generates profit for the local economy by helping the school to purchase local food; the local environment has been enhanced through the new and improved allotments; increased cultural awareness is taught by drawing on cuisine from different cultures; and disadvantaged people have found work opportunities and new support.

A recent evaluation of the project by the Centre for Evaluation Studies and the Nationwide Children's Research Centre found that considerable improvements in the diets of children related to the number of food project sessions attended. Plans are now underway for expanding the Good Food Project, and working with the Burnley Community Farm to introduce livestock tending to the scheme. The project

Handout 1 (continued)

Food projects case studies

team also hopes to develop a nature trail along the banks of the canal between the new farm and the allotments and set up a barge classroom to travel the canal.

3. *Growing your own school dinners*

A village school in Lincolnshire, surrounded by fields of crops being grown on a massive scale for sale to supermarkets decided to grow its own vegetables and fruit for school dinners. It acquired a piece of land near the school to develop as two allotments and planted them partly with fruit bushes and partly with daffodil bulbs producing flowers that they can sell in the spring to raise money for the venture.

The rest of the land is sown with vegetables and cultivated by the children as part of their curriculum. They have classes in food science where they learn to cook and prepare the food produced from the plots and have taste comparison tests. Surplus food gets passed on to the school kitchens to be used in school dinners. The project is achieving the twin objectives of teaching children about the origin of their food and providing them with healthy food to eat. One issue they have to deal with is growing organically in an area that is regularly sprayed with pesticides.

Trainer Guidance Note 8

Food and the environment

Most of us take our food for granted. As long as there is plenty in the shops we don't think much about how our food is produced or how it gets to us.

Food production and distribution have huge environmental impacts, and are themselves affected by environmental conditions.

Climate change could seriously impair the world's ability to produce enough food as crops are affected by unpredictable weather patterns that can cause, floods, hurricanes, droughts and desertification. The impacts on farming across the world could seriously affect us in the UK if we continue to import our food.

In this part of the session, we are going to look at some of the ways food issues contribute to environmental problems. We will not be looking at how to tackle these directly, but we will be thinking about how community-based activities which directly benefit the community will also help alleviate these wider environmental problems.

Let's think about some of the environmental issues that affect our communities. Some examples might be:

- Do you live near a busy road near a supermarket (24 hour deliveries and traffic)?
- Do you live near a working farm where pesticides are sprayed?
- Do you live near a landfill site?
- Do you live near an incinerator or proposed incinerator?
- Do you live near an out-of-town development that was built on greenfield land and saw trees and green spaces threatened/ destroyed?

Ask the group to think of some other examples and record them on a flipchart.

Ask people to get their cards from the pre-break exercise out again, split into four buzz groups and give each group two of the food projects e.g. food coop and food store, local market and veg box etc. Ask them to think about the environmental benefits of each of these.

Take the feedback. Some of the answers you would be looking for would be:

- Reduced pollution from less traffic – buying direct from the farmer (cutting out the middle person)
- Less pesticide use from local organic farming benefits wildlife
- Less packaging from bulk buying
- Reduced energy use in eating together (more efficient cooking)

Summarise this exercise by saying that food projects can contribute to improving the environment in both small and large ways.

Trainer Guidance Note 9

Planning a food growing project

Using the headings on the next set of cards about food growing projects - write a number of relevant ones on a flipchart and ask people which one they want to work on. Give out the relevant cards to the group along with Worksheet 2.

When taking feedback ask the participants to say what the environmental benefits of their projects were.

Check if any of them were about reducing waste e.g. through composting, reducing transport costs, creating green spaces, creating better places for wildlife.

Give out Handout 2 so that people who want to follow-up any of these ideas have a starting point.

Community food projects

Demonstration allotment
Community allotment
Community orchard
Community composting scheme
Home gardening scheme or club
Competitions & shows
Seed and plant exchange
Gardening skills exchange/ mentoring scheme
Gardening tool library
Home composting scheme
Community farm
Farm-Community link
Community supported agriculture(CSA)

Handout 2

Resource list

www.funnyweather.org cartoon guide to explaining the science of climate change.

www.reflect-action.org good resources on working visually, among other things.

FARMA www.farma.org.uk

National Farmers' Retail & Markets Association – for details of where to find farmers' markets and farm shops.

Country Markets (formerly WI Markets) www.country-markets.co.uk

To find a local market or get information on starting one.

Soil Association www.soilassociation.org

Charity promoting sustainable & organic farming.

Local Food Works www.localfoodworks.org.uk

A partnership project between the Soil Association and the Countryside Agency, fostering sustainable local food systems through the development of local food networks. Website provides a comprehensive information service.

Cultivating Communities www.cuco.org.uk

A Soil Association project, promoting community based local food initiatives and community supported agriculture.

Garden Organic (new name for HDRA) www.gardenorganic.org.uk

The national charity for organic growing.

Common Ground www.england-in-particular.info/orchards

Information about community orchards.

Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens www.farmgarden.org.uk

Representative body for city farms, community gardens, and similar community-led organisations.

The Allotment Regeneration Initiative www.farmgarden.org.uk/ari

Organisation to increase allotment uptake by individuals and community groups.

National Allotments and Leisure Garden Society www.nsalg.org.uk

Organisation for the promotion, protection and preservation of allotment gardening.

Thrive www.thrive.org.uk

A national charity that makes use of gardening to change the lives of disabled people.

Community Composting Network www.communitycompost.org.uk

The Community Composting Network supports and promotes the community management and use of waste bio-degradable resources.

Fair Trade Foundation www.fairtrade.org.uk

Information about fair trade principles and business.

Sustain www.sustainweb.org

Handout 2 (continued)

Resource list

The alliance for better food and farming. Information, campaigns and support on a range of food issues.

Sauce www.sauce-toolkit.org

Sustains social enterprise toolkit for community food projects.

Big Barn www.bigbarn.co.uk Find your local food producers.

Worksheet 2

Community food growing project action plan

Project that you are planning
What you want to achieve?
Who do you want to involve?
What information do you need and where can you get it from?
What resources do you need and where can you find funding and other resources?
Networking opportunities – who else can you work with?
What are the environmental benefits?

Trainer Guidance Note 10

Food and social justice

The purpose of the last exercise in today's session is to relate the work participants have done to the key purpose of community development work. This is about collectively working for social justice; part of social justice is environmental justice (see Handout 3).

Earlier we talked about cheap food coming from countries with less stringent health and safety rules: workers in poorer countries may have to use dangerous chemicals without the right protection, and so get pesticide poisoning just to give us cheap food.

People in poorer countries are growing cash crops and out of season fruit and vegetables for us instead of using the land to grow food for themselves and their families.

In this exercise we are going to look at a case study. Split people into groups and give out Handout 4 and ask them to read it through then discuss the questions at the end of it.

After about 10 minutes, get the groups to report on what they discussed.

There are no right or wrong answers - the exercise is intended to get people thinking. The decisions reached may depend on what sort of 'community group' the participants envisage (this has deliberately been left vague). If time allows, you could let groups comment on each other's decisions.

Explain that if they want to follow-up any of this then Handout 5 gives details of other training opportunities. Encourage them to visit the EAC website (www.everyactioncounts.org.uk) and register their actions.

Handout 3

What is social justice

Environmental justice means:

- Quality of life for all

Everyone should have a safe and healthy place to live, work and play.

- Enough for us - and the future

We need to make sure there are enough resources for the present and future generations.

Unfortunately, there are many examples of environmental injustice.

Source: www.foe.co.uk

What is Social Justice?

Social Justice can be seen in the practice of community development where they:

- Respect and value diversity and difference
- Challenge oppressive and discriminatory actions and attitudes
- Address power imbalances between individuals and groups and society
- Commit to pursue civil and human rights
- Seek to promote policies and practices that are just and enhance equality whilst challenging those that are not.

Reference: National Occupational Standards in Community Development Work see www.fcdl.org.uk

Handout 4

Fairtrade

“Millions of farmers depend on selling their crops to survive. But it’s a risky business – when prices drop it can spell disaster. If they earn less than it costs to run the farm, they face real hardship – struggling to buy food or keep their children in school. Ultimately they may lose their land and their livelihood.

Fairtrade guarantees producer organisations a fair and stable price for their products that covers their costs and enables them to support their families and invest in a better future.”

(Extract from a Fairtrade Foundation promotional leaflet)

Case Study

Extract from Fairtrade Foundation website www.fairtrade.org.uk

Francisco, José and William are small coffee farmers in Costa Rica. They live in a remote mountain community where people ‘start the day working, end the day working’.

There’s no source of income in the remote valley other than growing coffee. ‘We have no choice,’ says José. ‘Our plot of land is too small to make money in any other way. Coffee is our only way of getting out of poverty.’ However, for the last two years, the price of coffee has been very low – below the cost of production.

Fortunately, Francisco, José and William all belong to a local Farmer’s Cooperative (Co-op Monte de Oro), which sells 35-40 per cent of their crop to the Fairtrade market. ‘It’s our organisation. They’re not exploiting us,’ says Francisco. ‘When we supplied to a middleman, he paid us when he wanted and we never knew if the payment reflected the market price.’ The Co-op’s sales to the Fairtrade market fetch a price guaranteed to cover the cost of production.

‘If it wasn’t for Fairtrade, it would be impossible to continue,’ says José. ‘A lot of people abandon their land and go to the city, which isn’t what they’re used to. Some only find casual work. Here we have subsistence crops, so we’ve got something to eat, even if times are hard.’

Scenario

You are on the committee running a community group. Someone has suggested the group starts buying Fairtrade tea and coffee instead of the usual brands.

- Why might this be a good idea?
- What objections might there be?
- What would you decide to do?

Handout 5

Other courses in this programme

Taster Title	Content
Care For Your Area	Uncared for areas and impacts on communities, Government's interest in environmental issues, Every Action Counts, Communities taking action and the resources needed and available
Community Buildings and Environmental Action	The bigger picture relating to the environment The Government's response and Every Action Counts The role of community buildings in improving the environment The building itself The projects running through the building Action planning
Climate Change Communications	Understanding climate change and how it affects people and communities Exploring actions that can be taken Understanding peoples motivational for change Communication methods and targeting your message
Food and Communities	Exploring the relevance of food to communities The importance of quality food The barriers to getting good food Actions communities can take Local food initiatives Food and the environment Community food growing projects Food and social justice
Community Development and Environmental Action	Understanding the background and concept of Sustainable Development and environmental action Why environmental actions are relevant to communities Work already being undertaken to protect the environment Other actions that could be taken Learning needs of community workers and communities
Strategies and Policies to Support Environmental Action	Key Government policies Regional bodies and their role Local policies and strategies Opportunities created for communities to influence policies and strategies Opportunities created for improving resources to support community actions on environmental improvements
Unit	
NOCN Unit	Community Development and Environmental Action level 2/3
HE Unit	Sustainable Communities: Integrating Sustainable Development and Community Development
Informal Learning	We have also produced material to support the day-to-day work of community development workers - there is an informal learning pack and a new Community Work Skills Manual will be coming out in 2007