

Four downward-pointing triangles are arranged vertically on the right side of the red banner. The top three are red, and the bottom one is white.

# FAIRTRADE BANANAS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

# BANANA NETWORK



The Banana Network is one of the Product Networks that form part of CLAC. Currently, it represents 83 Fairtrade certified banana organizations in seven countries throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

The Banana Network is organized as a consultation body and is made up of representatives from Fairtrade certified small-scale producer organizations in each banana-producing country on the continent. These include Dominican Republic, Windward Islands, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru.

In line with CLAC's strategic plan, the Banana Network is focused on the following areas of work:

- Organizational development and living income for producers
- Rights and living conditions of workers
- Cross-Cutting Themes: Climate change mitigation and adaptation, empowerment of women and youth
- Communication: Impact and market development
- Strengthening the Banana Network as well as the Workers Network

# SERVICES AND SUPPORT

Besides the ongoing support in areas such as organizational strengthening, standard compliance and Fairtrade Development Plans, CLAC has placed an extra focus on soil health by providing support to banana organizations via the Program for Increased Productivity (PIP) and the campaign against Tropical Fusarium Race 4 (TR4).



# PROGRAM FOR INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY

The Program for Increased Productivity (PIP), developed and implemented by CLAC, is a training program that incorporates the transfer of technology as a basic element of sustainable development for Fairtrade banana producers in the region. The main objectives of the project are: (1) to improve fertility and soil health, and (2) train technical staff and producers in the production and preservation of beneficial microorganisms for the soil.

Two years after the project's implementation, the organizations have seen a wide variety of results. Overall, there was an average increase in production by 29% on participating farmers' plots, with a direct and indirect impact on their income. This increase in productivity has also improved economic, social and environmental aspects of the organizations.

One of the most important results includes an average increase of 522 boxes per hectare per year. Taking into account that each box has a price of \$6.20 (USD), producers managed an additional income of \$3,238.00 per hectare. With a cost reduction of \$0.66 per box, they generated a secondary savings of \$1,529.00 per hectare. Considering the price per box and cost reduction, the total added income for the producer is estimated at \$4,767.00 per hectare for 2017.

Finally, in addition to the economic and social impact demonstrated by the project, PIP has also had positive effects on the environment, by reducing the use of agrochemicals and managing production resources, amongst other results.



# FAIRTRADE PREMIUM USE

**ORGANIZATION:**  
**BANANOS ECOLÓGICOS DE LA LÍNEA  
NOROESTE (BANELINO)**  
**COUNTRY:** DOMINICAN REPUBLIC  
**PROJECT:** EDUCATION



Education is very important at BANELINO. With funds from the Fairtrade Premium, the organization has invested in the construction, repair and sponsorship of nine schools, two of which are for special needs children. This directly benefits the 1,000 families that send their children to these schools, which are fully equipped with the necessary tools for teaching and learning. The organization also facilitates university scholarships for members' children; more than 100 scholarships are awarded annually.



In addition, BANELINO provides uniforms and school supplies. Nearly 2,000 students, children of producers (33%) and workers (67%), receive uniforms and school supplies each year to participate in primary and secondary education. The organization has also developed a Banana School, in which about 100 young people participate; learning about banana production, to later join the organization and follow in the footsteps of their parents.

# CAMPAIGN AGAINST FUSARIUM TROPICAL RACE 4 (TR4)

*Fusarium Tropical Race 4 (TR4) is an evolving fungus that directly affects banana plants, including the Cavendish variety, among many others. The disease spreads through the soil and can remain active for decades.*



Through its regional campaign, CLAC is taking the necessary measures to prevent the threat of TR4, supporting producer organizations at various levels:

- Training of technical personnel and producers in the region, through workshops, webinars and informative material.
- Technical support, so that organizations consider the necessary prevention methods and implement them on their farms or plots.
- Advocate at institutional level in producer countries, to work together to develop an effective containment plan.
- Raise awareness among producers about the importance of implementing the biosafety protocol of the Global Gap Add-On.
- Transfer technology and provide training on soil health management (PIP Project), which involves the reproduction and inoculation of beneficial (mountain) microorganisms on banana farms, as well as the incorporation of organic matter, to promote resistance mechanisms and increase the potential of phytopathogenic suppressing soils.

# FAIRTRADE PREMIUM USE

**ORGANIZATION:**  
**COOPERATIVA AGRARIA AGROEXPORTADORA  
DEL NORTE (AGRONORTE)**  
**COUNTRY:** PERU  
**PROJECT:** PRODUCTIVITY

Due to the need to improve banana production, AGRONORTE has invested funds from the Fairtrade Premium in fieldwork. The organization now provides technical assistance to its members, facilitating trainings in pest and disease control, and quality and productivity.

In addition, they have equipped the processing and packing plants, providing additional training to crew workers and organization members; as well as completing structural improvements to the warehouse and storage facility. Finally, AGRONORTE used funds to purchase fertilizers for members, so that they can better care for their farms and prevent diseases. Overall, these activities and projects have contributed to the overall efficiency and productivity of the organization.



*"Fairtrade has allowed the organization to focus on its social approach; and in addition, thanks to the Fairtrade Premium, farming families have a better income. Currently, our members (and directors) are more committed to the development of the cooperative. They identify with [the work], assuming additional responsibilities without pay, and thus demonstrating their commitment."*

Alex David  
Raymundo Arevalo  
AGRONORTE, Peru



# CAPACITY BUILDING IN LABOR STANDARD COMPLIANCE

In the Dominican Republic, bananas are the greatest agricultural export product, generating around 27,000 jobs. In addition, more than 300,000 families depend on its production, making the country a leader in both the production and export of Fairtrade organic bananas.

The banana sector in Dominican Republic greatly depends on migrant labor from Haiti, proving labor standard compliance to be a challenge for banana plantations. To combat this issue, CLAC, with the support of Fairtrade Finland and the Finnish government, developed and implemented the following project: Training to Improve Labor Standard Compliance and Social Conformity. The project focused on banana-producing regions, including the provinces of Valverde, Montecristi and Azua.

The main objective of the project was to contribute to the development of a dignified work environment that respects the rights of banana workers, through skills development at both employee and worker level. The project also focused on other topics such as worker vulnerability, social equity and gender.

The project covered 20 Fairtrade certified plantations in the Dominican Republic. In order to achieve this, adult participants were highly trained so that they can facilitate replicate workshops and trainings within their organizations. These included trainings on labor rights and migration guidelines, establishing mechanisms for complaint management and effective suggestions, as well as teaching plantation workers about labor standards and the fundamentals of decent work,

## RESULTS

In total, nearly 1,300 workers benefited from the project, the majority being Haitian migrant workers from banana plantations. Of these, 81 directly benefited from the “trainers training,” which included 54 plantation workers and 27 managers. Between 65% and 70% of the beneficiaries were migrant workers and 30% were women.







FAIRTRADE

Latin American and Caribbean Network of Fair Trade Small Producers and Workers  
<http://clac-comerciojusto.org>