



PRESS RELEASE

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EUROPE-WIDE CAMPAIGN IS ASKING LIDL TO PLAY FAIR WITH TROPICAL FRUIT WORKERS

The Europe-wide Make Fruit Fair! campaign is asking the discount supermarket giant Lidl to Play Fair with the small-scale farmers and workers that plant, pick and pack it's bananas and pineapples.

The price Lidl and other supermarkets pay for tropical fruit does not cover the real costs of production. Paying such low prices, means that workers can be exploited through the payment of poverty wages, insecure employment, and the denial of their rights to collectively bargain for better wages and conditions.

Low prices can also discourage employers from hiring women, denying them equal access to jobs, training and promotion. And low prices can also discourage companies from investing in improved environmental practices, making fair prices an important factor in work towards environmental sustainability. The campaign is asking Lidl to use the Fairtrade minimum price as the minimum standard in their sourcing.

Earlier this year, Lidl announced it is taking steps to buy all its bananas from 100% sustainable sources this year. But the reality for farmers and workers looks very different. Plantation workers and their families are exposed to toxic pesticides, and suffer from respiratory symptoms, sickness and dizziness. The low income of small-scale farmers and low wages of plantation workers mean their families often can't cover basic household costs. Plantation workers are often discriminated against or even fired for joining a trade union. Soil and water quality are suffering due to the use of chemical substances. Monocultures and pesticides destroy biodiversity'.

The campaign is calling on Lidl to guarantee that small-scale farmers and plantation workers producing tropical fruit earn an income which enables them to provide for their families and themselves; that all workers are safe in the workplace, and protected from exposure to toxic pesticides; that the trade union rights of workers are respected; and that they pay a fair price for bananas and pineapples to all of their suppliers.

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NOTES

1. Banana Link is a not-for-profit co-operative based in Norwich, which works for fair and sustainable banana and pineapple trades. We raise awareness of the poor living and working conditions faced by plantation workers and small producers in Latin America, Africa and the Caribbean. <http://www.bananalink.org.uk/>
2. Make Fruit Fair! has brought together nineteen organisations from across the world to campaign for fair and sustainable banana and pineapple supply chains. NGOs from Europe are working in close partnership with small farmer organisations and plantation worker unions from Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean to improve living and working conditions for the hundreds of thousands of people who grow, pick and pack the tropical fruit that we buy in our shops every day. <http://makefruitfair.org/>
3. The Make Fruit Fair! campaign asking Lidl to Play Fair is asking consumer across Europe to sign postcards, to be delivered to Lidl, in support of the campaign demands. Alternatively, consumers can sign in support of the campaign online at <http://makefruitfair.org/>
4. A recent report by Make Fruit Fair! member Oxfam Germany – “Sweet Fruit, Bitter Truth” - alleges underpayment, dangerous pesticide exposure and inhumane living conditions across a range of pineapple plantations in Costa Rica and banana farms in Ecuador, that supply Lidl and other European supermarkets. <http://makefruitfair.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Sweet-fruit-bitter-truth.pdf>
5. Although many bananas and pineapples sold by Lidl are certified by the Rainforest Alliance, Make Fruit Fair does not believe that this voluntary certification scheme guarantees fair prices, living wages, safe workplaces or union rights. <http://makefruitfair.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Buy a Banana Get a Sustainable Future Free.pdf>
6. A report published last year for the Make Fruit Fair! campaign shows how increasing market power and Unfair Trading Practices of European supermarkets affect banana small farmers and plantation workers. http://www.makefruitfair.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/banana_value_chain_research_FINAL_WEB.pdf

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