PRESS RELEASE

**2 February**

**Fairtrade Yorkshire working with Fairtrade Devon and other regions and nations organise *Fairtrade Connections* online community arts festival**

**As part of Fairtrade’s *Choose the World You Want* online festival to highlight the harmful effects of climate crisis on farmers and food supplies, Fairtrade community groups – spearheaded by Fairtrade Yorkshire and Fairtrade Devon in a unique collaboration - will run a community arts festival.**

**Taking place during Fairtrade Fortnight 2021, from 22 February – 7 March, the *Fairtrade Connections* Festival features a dozen events designed to entertain, inspire and educate people around the urgent message of Fairtrade and climate change. All the events are free to attend over Zoom and everyone is welcome.The festival is funded through donations from Fairtrade groups and individual supporters.**

**Visitors can hear from acclaimed poets and photographers, cook along with a Bake Off contestant, learn how to make Fairtrade chocolate ruffles or join in with a bhangra dance workshop. Ghanaian musician Richard Wiafe has written three songs exclusively for the festival and will talk about his journey from farm hand on a Fairtrade banana farm to studying International Development at university – funded by the Fairtrade premium.**

**The Fairtrade Connections festival is booking now:**

**http://www.fairtradeyorkshire.org.uk/news/fairtrade-connections-community-arts-festival-for-fairtrade-fortnight-2021**

Fairtrade Fortnight 2021 marks the start of a new climate campaign asking the British public toget behind Fairtrade so that farmers overseas can benefit from fairer prices, fairer trading practices and the resources needed for tackling the climate emergency in climate vulnerable countries such as Kenya and Honduras.

As global trade changes in ways we could not have imagined a year ago, poverty will continue to be a key contributor to further environmental degradation and the inability for farmers to adapt to environmental shocks. The farmers behind some of our favourite foods need empowerment, fair value, fair prices, and fairer trading practices to resource the investment needed for mitigation, adaptation, diversification and resilience in the face of the climate crisis.

**Co-ordinator of Fairtrade Yorkshire, Joanna Pollard says:**

‘Farmers and workers in agricultural communities in countries such as Ghana and the Dominican Republic have contributed the least to climate crisis – yet they are among the world’s most vulnerable and are already feeling the worst effects from unpredictable weather to natural disasters and disease. But without stable incomes, these farmers lack the ability to fight climate change impacts and continue to struggle to meet their immediate needs.

‘Poverty and environmental damage in our food supply chains will not end until exploited farmers are paid fairly and given the power to make their own choices. Only then will they have the power to effectively fight the impacts of the climate crisis.’

**Fairtrade coffee farmer Bayardo Betanco, of the Prodecoop co-operative in Nicaragua, said:** ‘There is a chain on earth that starts where the producers are. They are the ones who suffer the consequences of climate change, the ones who get the least help, and carry all of the burden. It’s not fair.’

Each year, communities around the UK play a key role in promoting Fairtrade Fortnight through their own campaigns, events and materials, in order to help raise awareness of the link between trade and poverty. We hope people will engage with Fairtrade Fortnight once again this year, as part of their ongoing efforts to protect people and planet.

As valued members of the Fairtrade movement, thousands of Fairtrade towns, villages, schools and churches have already committed to using Fairtrade products, including tea, coffee, sugar and biscuits, and to supporting Fairtrade as a key solution for making trade fairer for those in lower-income countries.

Fairtrade is committed to fighting the climate crisis. Fairtrade Standards encourage producers to protect the environment by improving soil, planting trees, conserving water and avoiding pesticides, while Fairtrade’s programmes include climate academies for farmers to share best practice. At the same time, Fairtrade makes training available to producers so that they can use the latest agricultural methods, such as intercropping and shade-grown coffee to adapt to conditions.

Fairtrade continues to raise the voices of producers and prioritise what they need to respond to the environmental crises unfolding in already vulnerable communities

To find out more about how to take part in Fairtrade Fortnight 2021, visit [www.fairtrade.org.uk/fortnight](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/fortnight).

#ChooseFairtrade
#FairtradeFortnight

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

Case studies, local community members and Fairtrade spokespeople are available as interviewees, photography of farmers and local community events and film footage of climate change is available.

For more information, interviews and images, contact media@fairtrade.org.uk

**NOT FOR PUBLICATION**

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