

HORSHAM FAIRTRADE STEERING GROUP

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MAKE IT HAPPEN. CHOOSE FAIRTRADE.

FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT (23 February – 8 March 2009)

The Horsham Fairtrade Group will join in the national Fairtrade Fortnight campaign **Make it Happen. Choose Fairtrade** (23 February – 8 March 2008) with local events.

Make it Happen. Choose Fairtrade is a nationwide campaign to encourage people to make small changes in their everyday lives by choosing Fairtrade products when they shop, triggering positive change for small producers in developing countries. This action will directly benefit farmers and workers, empowering them to make changes in their lives and environment.

Fairtrade Producer Visits Horsham March 4. Centre piece of the Horsham Fairtrade Group's Fairtrade Fortnight campaign 2009 will be the visit of Oumarou Gadjere , a Fairtrade cotton producer from Cameroon who will tour schools in Horsham talking to audiences of pupils about his direct experience as a Fairtrade producer, and answering their questions. He is a member of the Heri Fairtrade Cooperative and is their elected representative on the Executive Board of the Cameroon Cotton Producers Organisation (OPCC). OPCC is a national organisation of 1,800 cotton cooperatives and represents 360,000 cotton farmers, having grown rapidly from the start in 2004 when just three coops received Fairtrade certification. In 2007 OPCC sold 40% of its cotton, some 2,850 tonnes, to Fairtrade buyers, and clothing and goods made from their produce are now on sale in stores such as M&S and Next among others. Oumarou is a guest of the Fairtrade Foundation, one of several touring Britain in Fairtrade Fortnight. He is due to speak at Millais school at 1.15 pm on March 4 to 200 to 300 pupils of the school. After 40 minutes of talk and answering questions he will move on, and arrangements are currently being made for him to follow with a visit to another school. This visit is a rare opportunity and an important one given the keen interest in Fairtrade being shown by young people and schools. Clearly Oumara has a very tight schedule to maintain but access is available for press photography which would be a very valuable boost to the **Make it Happen. Choose Fairtrade** campaign in Horsham. All press enquiries to Geoff Lunn (see below) please.

Swan Walk Information Stand. On February 28 volunteers from the Horsham Fairtrade Group will run a stall in Swan Walk throughout the day. It will provide information and

samples for tasting (including chocolate , wine and fruit juice) together with a directory of Fairtrade retailers in Horsham showing details of which Fairtrade produce they stock – a Fairtrade “shoppers’ guide”.

Gaynor Cooper, Chair of the Horsham Fairtrade Steering Group said: “We are calling on everybody to do their bit. Join this powerful global movement for change by taking part in Fairtrade activity in Horsham during Fairtrade Fortnight”. Gaynor continued : “Fairtrade is a people’s movement that aims to tip the balance of trade in favour of poor producers. Fairtrade is needed now more than ever and we all have the power to create positive change. We hope that over the next five years together we can scale up Fairtrade to benefit more disadvantaged producers. **Make it Happen. Choose Fairtrade** is telling people that when they buy a Fairtrade product, they can make a positive difference to people and the planet. Two billion people – a third of humanity – still survive on less than \$2 a day. Unfair trade rules keep them in poverty, but they face the global challenges of food shortages and climate change too.”

Church Action. Over twenty churches in Horsham have now successfully applied for Fairtrade Church status and are being encouraged to mark Fairtrade Fortnight with events and services. We understand Roffey St Andrews will take part in a Fairtrade Organisation UK attempt to set a new banana eating world record. The churches join employers, businesses and retailers in maintaining Fairtrade Town status for Horsham.

The annual Fairtrade Fortnight campaign is promoted by networks around the country including development and campaigning agencies CAFOD, Christian Aid, Oxfam, SCIAF, Tearfund, Tradecraft Exchange, People and Planet, Banana Link, Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign, Action Aid, Shared Interest, and the World Development Movement; The Mothers Union; the National Federation of Women’s Institutes; Soroptimist GBI; the Public and Commercial Services Union; and churches and faith-based organisations. Major pushes are expected in the 400 Fairtrade Towns where committees have pledged to an ongoing programme to raise awareness about Fairtrade.

In 2008 an estimated 12,000 events took place around the country during Fairtrade Fortnight – everything from parades, concerts and debates to family fun days and a Fairtrade bus tour.