



Adopt-A-Supermarket

A Campaign Guide for Advocates and Communities

Virtually all Americans shop at supermarkets for at least some portion of their food needs. Few independent grocers can compete against supermarket giants such as Wal-Mart – now the fastest growing supermarket in the country – Albertson’s, Safeway, and Kroger’s.

The brands that consumers see on these supermarket shelves are then the brands that they will choose to purchase, so what is being offered by supermarkets is important when it comes to shaping the future of the food market. Making Fair Trade products like coffee, tea, chocolate, rice, sugar, bananas and other fruits readily available on supermarket shelves will increase awareness of and demand for Fair Trade foods, while also helping to grow the market for more Fair Trade goods such as crafts and household items.

Thanks to consumer pressure, supermarkets are starting to make Fair Trade products available. In fact even Sam’s Club, a division of Wal-Mart, for all of its other problems, has starting offering its own private label Fair Trade Certified™ coffee.

The goal of **Co-op America’s Adopt-A-Supermarket** campaign is to ensure that more Fair Trade food products appear on supermarket shelves by building local community pressure to encourage supermarkets to carry and promote Fair Trade products.

By adopting a local supermarket, you can demonstrate your commitment to Fair Trade, engage people in your community on this issues, and deliver real benefits to Fair Trade farmers and artisans by working in solidarity with them to build markets for their produce

You may be thinking, “I’ve filled out customer comment cards and nothing ever happens. How can a small group of people in one town get big supermarkets to change?”

Supermarkets have a great deal to answer for in the communities where they do business. They must maintain a good public profile and answer to the needs of consumers, because supermarkets depend on the loyalty and trust of their customers to keep their business going. When your supermarket sees a strong group of committed community members demanding Fair Trade products, they have an interest in making sure that your requests are met.

Even if your supermarket tells you that they can’t find the products you are asking for, don’t give up. Major supermarket distributors offer Fair Trade products as part of the catalog of items supermarkets can choose to carry. Organizations such as TransFair USA can help retailers find manufacturers or distributors that can provide the products that will meet consumer demands.

Plus, with so many supermarkets having own-brand products or store labeled products, supermarkets can meet their obligation to customers and to farmers in their own supply chain by converting their own brands to Fair Trade.

I urge you to join our Adopt-A-Supermarket Campaign today!

1. It's easy. Start by **picking a supermarket** in your town to adopt.
2. Then, **form an adoption team** by getting together a group of friends, family members, or community members willing to join you in committing to regular visits to speak with your local supermarket manager about increasing the amount and diversity of Fair Trade products available in the store. Go every month or every other week. It's up to you.
3. Then, **spread the word in your community** about what your adoption team is up to. Tell your co-workers, neighbors, schoolmates, faith congregation members, and ask them to sign a petition supporting your request for more Fair Trade products.
4. **Tell us about your adoption team.** Go to www.fairtradeaction.org and let us know about your team and the store you adopted so we can add your name to the growing list of adoption teams around the country. Or email us at fairtrade@coopamerica.org
5. Co-op America is here to provide materials and support to help you in this process. This ADOPT-A-SUPERMARKET guide is intended to serve as a tool for you, providing information, suggestions, guidelines, and resources to help you adopt your own local supermarket.

Please let us know when you Adopt-A-Supermarket by registering yourself online at www.fairtradeaction.org. When you register, we will provide you with free "I Shop Fair Trade" shopping bag (while supplies last, of course).

Good luck and thank you for your strong commitment to Fair Trade!

In cooperation,



Erin Gorman
Fair Trade Director
Co-op America

About the Adopt-A-Supermarket Campaign

I. Who can Adopt-A-Supermarket?

- Community organizations
- Faith groups or entire congregations
- Businesses or co-workers
- Classrooms, school groups, or student organizations
- Any group of committed individuals



II. How do I Adopt-A-Supermarket?

1. Call a meeting to form a team.

Invite friends, coworkers, and members of your community to drink Fair Trade coffee or tea or eat Fair Trade chocolate, learn about the issue, and talk about work you can do together.

When you Adopt-A-Supermarket you pledge to:

- Adopt-A-Supermarket in your community for at least one year. It often takes time to get the attention and commitment of decision makers for your cause, so be patient and persistent.
- Visit on a regular basis to speak to the store manager and ask for an increase in Fair Trade product availability. Plus, each and every time you shop, you can fill out customer comment cards and ask for more Fair Trade products so that your message also gets those that deal with customer requests.
- Involve community voices in your efforts by sponsoring petition drives or hosting letter-writing sessions.

As time goes by, your team may want to do more—such as hosting a Fair Trade Festival or Fair Trade Bake Sale in your community where the educational focus of the events is encouraging people to ask for more Fair Trade products where they shop. Make a timeline and list your short-term and long-term goals, and brainstorm creative ways that you can achieve them.

2. Educate Your Team.

Co-op America offers free copies of our *Guide to Fair Trade* to Fair Trade advocates. They provide a good introduction to what Fair Trade is and how to individuals can use their consumer power to make a difference. Email us at fairtrade@coopamerica.org to request copies or call 1-800-58-GREEN.

You can also use Co-op America's Responsible Shopper web site, www.responsibleshopper.org, to help educate others about the larger set of social and

environmental issues surrounding supermarkets such as Safeway, Kroger's, Wal-Mart, Costco, Albertson's and their subsidiaries.

Be sure to use the FAQ and other resources in this guide as a way of preparing your group to talk to store managers.

3. Do your research and choose a supermarket.

Begin by making a list of local supermarkets or grocers in your area. You need to do some research; send your team members to the locations on your list to see if the stores are already offering Fair Trade products. Based on your research you will need to determine which supermarket to adopt. You may choose to start with a store that is already offering Fair Trade coffee and encourage them to expand to offer tea, chocolate or fruits. Or you may start with a store that has no Fair Trade products. Either strategy is worthwhile pursuing.

4. Pick a *clear* goal.

Maybe you are starting with a store that has no Fair Trade products at all. Your goal can be to *get at least one Fair Trade coffee line into that store in nine months*. Or perhaps your store has Fair Trade coffee but nothing else. Your goal could be that you want to *get Fair Trade Rice into your store within one year*. If you choose a goal it will make your discussions with store management easier and it will also give your team a focus.

You might also want to set up a timeline and map out steps towards reaching your goal. This outline could include days you will be passing out pamphlets, getting signatures on your petition, or days you visit the supermarket management, making your ultimate goal feel less daunting and more attainable.



5. Adopt your supermarket!

After this preliminary work, it's time to adopt your supermarket. Register your adopted supermarket with Co-op America online at www.fairtradeaction.org.

Remember, to keep the momentum going for your team you'll need to try to make this fun! Give your adoption team a name, a slogan, or get some matching t-shirts or pins. Hold contests in your groups to award the person that gets the most petition signatures Fair Trade chocolate. Do whatever you think will help build team spirit.

By now you are organized, educated, and ready to go!

6. Set up a meeting with management.

Store managers may be busy, so it is best to plan ahead for a meeting with your group and make sure they will have time to talk. If you cannot get a meeting, plan a time to go as a group and ask to speak with the manager at a time when you know he or she will be in the store.

See the “Resources” section of this guide for tips on how to talk to a store manager and answers to frequently asked questions. Be prepared to address your main concerns and, if possible, go with a letter or petition stating your request, as well as informational materials about Fair Trade to present to the store manager. Also, make sure that you leave the meeting with a follow-up item such as a time and date for a future meeting, a contact higher up the decision making chain, or a date for introduction of Fair Trade products.

7. Follow up.

Send a thank you note to your store manager after your meeting that restates your request and reminds your manager about specific follow-up items. Ask that your store manager contact you about the progress being made. If you don’t hear from the manager within a reasonable timeframe, call them to follow up. Keeping track with written documents helps to keep business owners accountable and can help build support for your efforts.

III. How do I generate support for my Adopt-A-Supermarket Campaign?

Your team will be successful if you:



1. Involve your immediate contacts to grow your team.

Ask friends and family to join your team. Involve your coworkers, classmates, faith congregation members, and members of your community group. Explain why you believe this is important and help people to understand that there is a specific goal, a timeline, and a larger social purpose.

2. Reach out to your community for support

Not everyone is going to be able to join your adoption team. But chances are there are steps that people in your community will take to help make your Adopt-A-Supermarket effort a success. Here are some ideas about getting people involved to support your campaign:

- Set up tables or booths at the next community festival, with information about the supermarket you’ve chosen and the opportunity to sign your petition
- Attend a seminar at the food co-op, natural foods store or farmer’s market and ask people there to sign your petition

Faith groups or entire congregations

- Post flyers on bulletin boards, pass around a petition with worship materials, or announce your campaign at the beginning or end of services
- Host a booth at the holiday bazaar, offer copies of Co-op America’s *Guide to Fair Trade* and free samples of Fair Trade products—and ask people to sign your petition

Businesses or co-workers

- Pass around your petition before staff meetings
- Post information on the office refrigerator or in the kitchen/break room about Fair Trade or set up a brown bag lunch to discuss Adopting a Supermarket and your team

Classrooms, school groups or student organizations

- Set up a table in the cafeteria or student union to educate students about Fair Trade and encourage them to support your supermarket campaign
- Post information about your campaign on student list serves, bulletin boards, and other online and print vehicles available on your campus

IV. Keep the ‘Mo’ Going

It’s not likely that you’ll see change at your adopted supermarket after one or two meetings with your store manager. To keep the pressure on you’re the momentum for your effort going, here are some ideas to help your team form a long-term action plan:

- A. Frequent actions.** Between meetings with management, you’ll need to keep encouraging your store to take action. Here’s how:
- **Do regular comment card drops.** Even a small group of people going regularly to a store or café and asking for Fair Trade products can make a difference. **Don’t underestimate the power of consumer voices—and repetition.** So gather up some friends, coworkers, or members of your church, find some pencils, and get going!
 - **Get petition signatures.** Petitions help you document the number of people in a community interested in Fair Trade, and they make a powerful statement about consumer demand. Pass your petition around your office, neighborhood, place of worship, and community meetings. Make sure you take the petition with you when you go to meet with management.
 - **Tell the media.** Write an article or editorial for your local paper about your Adopt-A-Supermarket campaign and how successful it has been. Include information about what Fair Trade is, how it helps farmers and the environment, and where people can purchase Fair Trade products locally.
- B. Make it Fun**
- **Hold a Competition for Your Team.** Challenge each team member to get as many petition signatures as possible. Reward the winner with Fair Trade chocolate or other Fair Trade gifts.
 - **Start a Photo Journal.** Web sites like **Flickr** make it easy to set up a free photo journal to help keep your community up to date about your team’s efforts. And basic membership is free. Check it out: <http://www.flickr.com/>
 - Host a Community Contest for a Logo or Slogan for your Adoption Team
 - **Sponsor a Fair Trade coffee tasting, chocolate tasting or musical event** to educate people in your community about your work.

V. Resources

1. Tips for How to Talk to a Store Manager:

- **Be informative.**
Many store managers may not know much about Fair Trade. Make sure you provide

them with information about what Fair Trade is and why it matters to you. Bring resources and materials for your store manager that they can read over. You can print out materials about Fair Trade from TransFair USA's Web site at www.transfairusa.org. If you would like to order copies of Co-op America's *Guide to Fair Trade*, you can email us at fairtrade@coopamerica.org.

- **Be clear.**

To make your meeting effective, you must be clear about what you are asking for. **Draft a letter or petition stating your request** before your meeting. State your goals and what you would like to see the store manager do to achieve these goals. Have the members of your group sign the letter, and if possible, circulate the petition for signatures from other interested community members. A sample petition can be found in this guide.

- **Be persistent.**

Don't give up your efforts after one meeting. The purpose of the Adopt-A-Supermarket campaign is to foster direct, long-term relationships with local supermarkets and retailers to grow the market for Fair Trade products.

At your first meeting, try to identify next steps. If the manager says that he or she has to consult with "the boss," ask who that person is and how you can speak with that person directly. Make sure you leave the meeting with a follow-up item, and send a thank you note with reminders about what they promised to do.

- **Be friendly!**

Adopting a supermarket is about making local connections between supermarkets and their clientele in order to get Fair Trade products carried locally. Antagonism or aggression is not our goal; you will have a much better chance of success if you are friendly and clear that you are committed to having your adoption team meet its goal.

2. Answers to Frequently Asked Questions/Objections from Retailers:

What is Fair Trade?

Fair Trade is trade based on direct relationships, mutual benefit, and justice for small scale farmers and artisans. Fair Trade is a win-win for producers and consumers. It ensures that producers are paid fairly for their products and that they have revenue to invest in their communities and in the preservation of the environment. For consumers, it's an opportunity to purchase with their values and get quality products. For coffee, chocolate, tea, bananas, and other fresh fruits, the Fair Trade Certified™ label guarantees that the product was traded on Fair Trade terms according to the international standards set by the Fair Trade Labeling Organization (FLO). Fair Trade food and craft items are also offered by members of the Fair Trade Federation. While the Fair Trade Federation is not a certifying agency, members of the Federation are businesses that have made a profound commitment to make Fair Trade principles part of their business model.



Does Fair Trade coffee, tea, chocolate, etc. cost more than conventional products?

This depends on the pricing policies of the companies that supply the products, but most Fair Trade coffee, chocolate and tea are priced within the range of other high-quality specialty foods items such as organics. There are more than 350 companies that supply Fair Trade coffee and a growing number of suppliers of other Fair Trade products. Chances are there is a supplier that will meet the needs of any business. You can get a list of suppliers from TransFair USA at 510-663-5260, or visit their Web site at www.fairtradecertified.org. You can also find a number of Fair Trade businesses or alternative trade organizations that supply everything from Fair Trade coffee to Fair Trade olive oil by checking out members of the Fair Trade Federation at www.fairtradefederation.org.

Well, if the products cost more, then my customers won't buy them.

Many stores are finding that Fair Trade products sell as well if not better than their conventional counterparts. And with some larger companies now selling Fair Trade products, customers are learning to look them when they shop. By stocking products that consumer want, you'll be meeting their demands and keeping customers happy.

I've heard that Fair Trade coffee is low quality. Is that true?

No. Fair Trade products are often higher quality because the Fair Trade system provides incentives for farmers to improve the quality of their products. Fair Trade coffees especially consistently win awards for taste and quality.

My customers are interested in environmental issues. Are Fair Trade products also organic?

While the two certifications are distinct, close to 85 percent of Fair Trade coffee is also organic and a growing majority of other Fair Trade food items are also certified organic. Fair Trade Certification requires that growers follow guidelines for environmentally sustainable pest management and integrated crop management. Plus, many Fair Trade cooperatives reinvest their Fair Trade revenues into expanding their environmental sustainability programs.

My distributor doesn't offer Fair Trade products

There are a number of distributors that do offer these products so you might consider switching or working with an additional distributor. UNFI (United Natural Foods) is the largest distributor of Fair Trade food products. In addition, many stores have policies that allow direct from manufacture purchasing. You should check with senior management about this possibility.

3. List of national supermarket chains and their contact information

Albertson's Inc.

Owns: Acme, Jewel-Osco, Max-Foods, Seesels Super Savers
250 Parkcenter Blvd.
Boise, ID 83706
www.albertsons.com

Costco

999 Lake Dr.

Issaquah, WA 98027

www.costco.com

Safeway Inc.

Owens: Carr's, Dominick's, Eagle, Genuardi's, Pak'N'Save, Pavilions, Randall's, Simon Davis, Tom Thumb, Vons

5918 Stonebridge Mall Road

Pleasanton, CA 94588-3299

www.safeway.com

Kroger Customer Relations

Owens: Ralph's, King Soopers, City Market, Dillons, Gerbes, Owen's, Smith's, QFC's, Fry's, Food 4 Less, Fred Meyer

1014 Vine St.

Cincinnati, OH 45202-1100

www.kroger.com

Food Lion, LLC

Attn: Consumer Relations

P.O. Box 1330

Salisbury, NC 28145-1330

www.foodlion.com

Target Corporation

1000 Nicollet Mall

Minneapolis, MN 55403

www.target.com

Wal-Mart Stores

702 SW Eighth St.

Bentonville, AR 72716

www.walmart.com

Whole Foods Market Inc.

601 N. Lamar Suite 300

Austin, TX 78703

www.wholefoods.com

Ahold USA

Owens: Giant, Tops, BI-LO, Bruno's, Peapod, Stop & Shop

1385 Hancock St., Quincy Center Plaza

Quincy, MA 02169

<http://www.aholdusa.com/>

Trader Joe's Company, Inc.

800 South Shamrock Avenue

Monrovia, CA 91016

<http://www.traderjoes.com/>

SUPERVALU Inc.

Owens: Bigg's, Cub Foods, Farm Fresh, Hornbacher's Deals, Save-a-lot, Scott's Foods, Shop 'n Save, Shoppers Food Warehouse

SUPERVALU rate Headquarters

11840 Valley View Road

Eden Prairie, Minnesota 55344

The Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company

Owens: A&P, Waldbaum's, A&P Super Foodmart, The Food Emporium, Super Fresh

Farmer Jack, Sav-A-Center and Food Basics

90 Delaware Ave

Paterson, NJ 07503
Email: apcustomerrel@aptea.com

4. Sample Petition

Petitions are a great way to show that members of your community care about Fair Trade and want to see Fair Trade products made available locally. There are many ways to circulate your petition. You can pass around your petition at local community meetings, set up a table at your house of worship for people to sign the petition after services, post your petition at your workplace and encourage your coworkers to sign it, or host a party and have people sign it to be admitted. You don't need thousands of signatures, but you should try to get a good showing to demonstrate that Fair Trade is an issue that community members care about and that consumers will vote with their dollars to support Fair Trade.

You are free to use this petition as your own, inserting the name of the supermarket and its manager and reprinting. We encourage you, however, to write your own petition and tailor it to your local community, inserting your own wording where you feel it is necessary.

We Want Fair Trade Products!

Dear [Name of supermarket manager],

We are community members and regular customers of [name of supermarket]. We are interested in seeing more Fair Trade products in your store, such as coffee, tea, chocolate, and fruit.

Fair Trade is a method of global exchange that ensures that farmers worldwide get a fair price for their products. Fair Trade offers higher wages for farmers and cuts out exploitative middlemen, and farmers around the world use their extra funds from Fair Trade to feed their families, educate their children, and invest in their communities.

A Fair Trade Certified™ label guarantees that food products were purchased according to Fair Trade standards. The certification is done by TransFair USA, the only third party Fair Trade Certification agency in the US. For information on how to purchase wholesale Fair Trade Certified™ products, visit www.transfairusa.org or www.fairtradefederation.org.

We ask that you help your customers support Fair Trade by providing Fair Trade items in your supermarket. Thank you in advance for acting on our request.

Sincerely,

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____
17. _____
18. _____
19. _____
20. _____

Tell us about your success!

We'd love to hear about your Adopt-a-Supermarket campaign. Please fill out this form and mail, fax, or e-mail it to:

Erin Gorman
1612 K Street, NW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20006
Fax: (202) 331-8816
fairtrade@coopamerica.org

Contact Name:

Contact Mailing Address:

Contact E-mail Address:

Contact Phone Number:

Who were your Adopt-A-Supermarket team members?

What is the name of your adopted supermarket?

Where is your adopted supermarket located?

When did you adopt your supermarket?

Before you adopted your supermarket, did it offer any Fair Trade products?

What Fair Trade products does your supermarket carry now?

Was your supermarket manager receptive to your efforts?

What were the biggest challenges to getting your adopted supermarket to offer more Fair Trade products?

Check the relevant boxes:

- We talked to our supermarket manager frequently/sometimes/never (circle one)
- We circulated a petition and generated _____ signatures (fill in the blank)
- We filled out comment cards in our supermarket
- We held a community Fair Trade awareness event

Other:

Thank you so much for your hard work in support of Fair Trade!