

# Fair Trade, “the Local Trap”, Organic conversion in Sweden

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# Fair Trade and the Global South

- Better prices, working conditions for farmers and workers
- Mainly tea, coffee, chocolate
- 2012 European ruling – legally permissible for a tender to specify that products must be Fair Trade
- New Public Procurement Directive – easier to specify/offer additional points for Fair Trade
- UK schools – bananas, orange juice

# USA and Canada - Domestic Fair Trade

- Academic studies in USA and Europe show some consumers are willing to pay extra for food grown under fair labour conditions
- Labour disputes involving farm workers
- USA Domestic Fair Trade campaign thedfta **twitter** 143 followers - shows this is a very small campaign
- Website [www.dfta.org](http://www.dfta.org) not functioning

# 24 April 2015: Mexican farm workers protest

- Thousands of farm workers protested again in northwestern Mexico on Friday to demand better pay for backbreaking labor picking fruits and vegetables that are exported to the United States.



# USA – trade union publicises fairly traded products



**United Farm Workers Products**

**Wine**

- Chateau Saint Michell
- Columbia Crest
- Saddle Mountain
- Farron Ridge
- North Star
- Snoquaimie
- St. Supery
- Dollarhide Ranch
- Scheid Vineyards Inc.
- Balletto
- Charles Krug
- C.K. Krug
- C.K. Mondavi
- Gallo Sonoma
- Gallo Estate
- Rancho Zabaco
- Anapamu
- Marcelina

**Almonds**

- Montpelier

**Roses**

- Armstrong
- Jackson and Perkins (J&)

**Mushrooms**

- Monterey Mushrooms (CA only)
- Family Farms Mushrooms
- Del Fresh
- California Mushroom Farms Inc.

**Dates**

- Patos Dream Date Garden

**Strawberries**

- Dole Berry \*
- Swanton Berry

\* Only with UFW Black Eagle

**Vegetables**

- Andy Boy
- Muranaka\*

\* Only with UFW Black Eagle

**Citrus**

- Sunkist\*
- Sunworld\*
- Airdrome\*
- Big Jim\*

\*Only with UFW Black Eagle

FAIR TRADE FOR A BETTER WORLD

# What about the UK?

- No widely accepted domestic fair trade label anywhere in Europe
- Social Value Act- Jan 2013
- Legal advice – may be permissible to require contractors to pay the living wage to staff directly employed on the contract but not to extend this to contractor's food suppliers

# Manchester Veg People?

- Co-operative of growers & buyers [restaurants & caterers]
- It aims to increase access to organic food in Manchester and create a more stable market for small organic growers
- Model based on fairness with prices based on cost of production and risks shared
- Linked initiatives are Farmstart which develops new organic growers and Land Army which brings volunteers to work on organic farms

# Greater Manchester

- City region 2.5 m people
- Minimal food growing
- 0.4 per cent of surface area is cultivated
- Much less than 50 years ago
- NWDA study - potential for increase in peri-urban horticulture
- Climate change – warmer & wetter





# Kindling Trust

- Established 2007
- Website [www.feedingmanchester.org.uk](http://www.feedingmanchester.org.uk)
- Aim to promote increased production and consumption of organic food in Greater Manchester
- Feeding Manchester – regular gatherings of small organic growers, organic retailers, cafes, NGOs, Manchester Council

## Initial research - 2009

- Research – how to increase organic food growing
- Buyers – unable to source local organic produce
- Small organic growers struggling to survive/expand
  - ❑ low product prices – dominance of supermarkets
  - ❑ logistical challenge of serving customers scattered round a large conurbation

# A social enterprise: buyers + growers

- Research showed that previous growers co-ops had failed because customers did not commit to providing growers with a fair return
- Proposal for MVP – involve both buyers and growers
- Transparency of pricing based on paying fair wages
- Large-scale public caterers eg university & small restaurants
- External grants and crowdfunding

# Distinctive characteristics of MVP

- Buyers estimate quantities of crops they will want to buy throughout the new season & communicate this to growers
- Growers agree amongst themselves what each grower will produce based on who can grow what crop most efficiently
- Price list is based on growers actual production costs – including seasonal variations – plus 35% mark-up to cover co-op running costs

## MVP benefits to growers

- Guaranteed minimum produce price,
- Provide a better produce offer to customers as a group
- Collective marketing & promotion - MVP brand
- Efficiency – co-ordinator takes orders, does marketing & delivers produce to buyers
- Share equipment & delivery crates
- Easier to dispose of surplus produce – more potential customers

# MVP Benefits to Buyers

- Access to local organic fruit & veg in season
- Freshest produce in city – delivered day after harvest
- MVP logo – shows customers this is local, organic produce
- MVP produce is truly fair trade -growers receive fair pay
- One point of sale – for placing orders & receiving deliveries
- Growers are working as group to provide greater variety

# Structure & decision-making process

- Multi-stakeholder cooperative – monthly meeting
- Different member categories: growers, buyers, worker [s]
- Growers may meet separately to discuss practical production-related issues
- Voting weighted: 45% growers, 30% buyers, 25% workers
- Growers are taking more risk - buyers not obliged to buy any specified amount

# Mix of buyers

- Summer 2011 MVP started off with 4 buyers – now 24
- 19 independent restaurants, cafes or pubs in Manchester
- Important role of Manchester University- canteens, conferences, halls
- Veg box scheme for university staff  
<http://vegboxpeople.org.uk/>
- Turnover reaching £140,000 in 2014
- Build up slowly –find new growers



# Farmstart Manchester [i]

- The UK's first farm business incubator
- Inspired by Farmstart project in Canada
- “Near urban start up farms” as a stepping stone to larger farm businesses or a viable business model in themselves
- Manchester launch March 2013 on flat, fertile 2 acre site rented from established organic farm 15 miles from Manchester

## Farmstart Manchester[ii]

- New growers join as Test Croppers
- They pay £500 for 1/8 acre lot – ploughed & prepared
- Get certified organic land, equipment, training & mentoring
- If they show commitment to growing food for sale they will be given a larger plot
- Sell produce via MVP, farm shop or farmers markets
- Can be a part time job – up to maybe two days a week

# Manchester Land Army

- Recruiting volunteers to help local growers - weeding, harvesting
- £5,000 grant from lottery funded part time worker plus insurance, refreshments, transport
- First step to encourage people to think about becoming a food grower...Short training courses eg fruit tree grafting
- Strict selection process for five day commercial horticulture course

# Second FarmStart Site in Stockport – land & polytunnels left by Parks Dept



## “the Local Trap”

- **“the local is assumed to be desirable”**
- **“reducing food miles”**
- It must not be assumed that localisation of food procurement equates to environmental sustainability or social justice
- Local farming may have poor labour practices and higher environmental impacts eg local beef with a high carbon footprint, pesticide and fertiliser usage.

# Organic Conversion in Swedish public catering- City of Sodertalje

- Introducing organic food without increasing budget
- Cooking from raw ingredients
- Decentralise kitchens
- Retrain staff
- Plan cooking to reuse left overs
- Make pupils aware of waste
- Reduce meat

# Swedish organic association KRAV

- *When school kitchen after school kitchen was able to purchase organic food within their normal budget, the debate on expensive organic food disappeared”*
- Twenty two municipalities buy over 30 % organic. Three buy over 40%
- Similar achievements in Denmark eg Copenhagen House of Food – retraining staff.



# Any Questions?

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