

Ethical Purchasing Policy

Category: Finance and Administration

Number:

Responsibility: Vice President, Finance and Administration

Approval: Senior Administrators' Committee

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INTRODUCTION

Over the last two decades, concerned global citizens and organizations have turned their attention to the issue of sweatshop and unfair labour and trade practices in a number of industries. Organizations such as the International Labour Organization, Worker Rights Consortium, Fair Labor Association, Maquila Solidarity Network, Ethical Action Trading Group, and Transfair Canada have taken a leadership role in the development and enforcement of international fair labour practice standards.

In the late 1990s the fair trade, anti-sweatshop movement gained considerable momentum on college campuses across the US and Canada. The focus of the movement involves resistance to the deplorable and unsafe working conditions, poverty wages, abuse of women and children, and lack of union rights suffered by workers who make clothing, toys, and other labour-intensive products in developing countries.

While achieving a change to fair labour practices across the globe may seem a daunting task, concerned citizens and organizations can take action to become part of the solution. Consumers can demand provision of fair trade products and services from suppliers. Larger consumers, such as Brock University and other institutions, can utilize their considerable buying power to influence suppliers to adopt fair labour practices or lose business.

Brock University is committed to conducting its business affairs in a socially responsible and ethical manner that is consistent with its own educational, research, and community goals.

Acknowledgements: Brock University and the Ethical Purchasing Policy Committee, wish to acknowledge the following institutions, whose related policies and procedures provided important assistance, ideas and background in the development of this policy: McMaster University, University of Toronto, and Simon Fraser University.

PURPOSE

This policy serves the following purposes:

- Communicates the University's commitment to social responsibility in its business interactions,
- Setting guidelines for ethical purchasing of products and services by the University, beginning with coffee and apparel, and
- Building awareness in the Brock community of the fair trade and ethical purchasing issues.

SCOPE

The initial scope of Brock University's Ethical Purchasing Policy includes:

- A Fair Trade Certified Coffee and Tea option, and
- Apparel bearing the University name and/or logo, purchased for sale or use by the University.

Ethical Purchasing Policy

These two industries have been chosen to start because they have been well investigated by organizations such as Transfair Canada, Worker Rights Consortium and Fair Labor Association, making it possible to Brock University to rely on their expertise in monitoring and enforcement of fair labour practices.

POLICY

1. Definitions:

"Fair Trade" means that farmers, workers, and artisans:

- · receive a sufficient price under direct long-term contracts,
- are small-scale producers in democratic co-ops (coffee, cocoa, bananas, fruits, crafts) or workers on larger farms who receive a living wage and can bargain collectively (tea, bananas, fruits),
- don't use abusive child labour or forced labour, and
- · use ecologically sustainable methods.

Fair Trade products bear the "Fair Trade Certified" label and the "Fair Trade Federation" logo.

"Fair Trade Ceritified" means that TransFair Canada, a third-party certification agency, has placed the "Fair Trade Certified" label on the product (coffee, tea), guaranteeing that every step from the producer to the consumer has followed international fair trade criteria. Appendix A includes a more detailed explanation of Fair Trade Certified Coffee.

"No Sweat" means products that are produced in a manner where there are:

- no forced labour or child labour;
- no harassment, abuse or discrimination of workers;
- maximum hours of work;
- the right to organize and bargain collectively;
- payment of a living wage;
- health and safety protections;
- public disclosure of factory locations;
- a written commitment by companies to work with suppliers to achieve compliance;
- public annual reporting by suppliers on progress; and
- third-party investigations of complaints and a corrective action plan if violations occur.

Appendix B includes the Code of Conduct of the Fair Labor Association, to further illustrate the elements of a No Sweat environment.

2. Fair Trade Coffee and Tea

A Fair Trade Certified coffee option shall be provided in all Brock University building complexes and student residence that contain food outlets, whether by the Department of Food Services or the Brock University Students' Union. The Department of Food Services, and its subcontractors, are encouraged to coordinate provision of this service with the Brock University Students' Union, to avoid unnecessary competition between outlets.

A Fair Trade Certified coffee option will be available for events (e.g. meetings, conferences) catered by the Department of Food Services or the Brock University Students' Union.

Ethical Purchasing Policy 2

The Department of Food Services and the Brock University Students' Union are also strongly encouraged to provide a Fair Trade Certified Tea option in all Brock University building complexes and student residence that contain food outlets.

3. University Apparel

Any apparel bearing the name "Brock" or "Brock University" and/or the Brock University logo that is used in association with university matters and activities shall be "No Sweat", supplied through factories, which meet or exceed minimum international labour and environmental standards. This includes apparel purchased for sale at the Brock University Bookstore, uniforms purchased by the Department of Athletics, and uniforms purchased by Brock University for its employees.

Anyone purchasing apparel for other purposes at the University, such as student groups and events, residence life groups and events, faculty or department groups and events, and conference groups and events, is strongly encouraged to ensure the supplier of such apparel meets or exceeds minimum international labour and environmental standards. The Director, Bookstore Operations and the Manager of Purchasing are available to provide such groups with information and assistance in making ethical purchasing decisions.

PROCEDURES

4. The Director of Community and Ancillary Services and the Retail Operations Manager for the Brock University Students' Union shall be responsible to ensure that a Fair Trade Certified Coffee (and Tea where possible) options are available within all Brock University building complexes and student residence that contain food outlets.

Fair Trade Certified Coffee and Tea shall be clearly marked with the TransFair Canada logo so that consumers are aware that the coffee and tea meet the Fair Trade certification standards. Fair Trade Certified Coffee and Tea should be priced so that cost alone will not be an overriding factor in consumer selection.

5. The Director, Bookstore Operations, the Director of Athletics, and the Manager of Purchasing Services will be responsible to ensure that apparel falling under this policy is "No Sweat", purchased from suppliers that meet or exceed minimum international labour and environmental standards. Such suppliers shall normally be from supplier lists approved by the Worker Rights Consortium and/or Fair Labour Association, who will be considered to be "No Sweat". Brock University is encouraged to join these two organizations in order to obtain access to the approved supplier lists and will make such lists available to other groups purchasing apparel not currently covered by this policy, with the goal of encouraging those groups to also consider ethical purchasing of apparel.

Exceptions to the policy and procedures for apparel may be made for specialty sports uniforms and fashion items that are not available through approved suppliers.

6. The Director of Community and Ancillary Services, the Director, Bookstore Operations, the Director of Athletics, the Manager of Purchasing Services, and a representative of the Brock University Students' Union shall report annually to the Vice-President, Finance and Administration on their compliance with this policy.

RELATED POLICIES

- Purchasing Policy
- Quotation, Tender and Award Policy
- Graphic Standards Policy and Manual
- Guidelines for Campus Sales

3

APPENDIX A

Fair Trade Coffee

"Fair Trade Certified Coffee", certified by TransFair Canada, meets the following standards:

- 1. Coffee importers agree to purchase from the small farmers included in the Fair Trade Labelling Organization Fair Trade Coffee Register. The farmers listed in the register meet various criteria related to democratic organization, transparent administration, non-discrimination, export capability, and environmental protection.
- 2. Farmers are guaranteed a "fair trade minimum price" per pound for their coffee. As of June 2004, this price was US \$1.21/pound for Arabica coffee from Central America, Mexico, and Africa. For Arabica coffee from South American and the Caribbean the price was US \$1.19/pound. If the market price rises above the fair trade minimum price, the market price shall apply.
- 3. In addition to the minimum price, farmers are also guaranteed a Fair Trade Premium of US \$0.05/pound which producers can use to invest in local community development.
- 4. Producers may request up to 60% of their payment in advance if necessary which helps farmers to stay out of debt to local coffee intermediaries who often charge extremely high interest rates.
- 5. Importers and roasters agree to develop direct, long-term trade relationships with producer groups, which brings greater commercial stability to an extremely unstable market.

TransFair Canada provides contact information for wholesalers and retailers who offer Fair Trade Certified Coffee in Canada.

TransFair Canada 302-251 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K2P 1X3

Website: www.transfair.ca/

Phone: 613-563-3351, Fax: 613-563-1462, Toll-Free: 1-888-663-FAIR.

Fair Trade coffee certified by TransFair Canada contains the following logo:



APPENDIX B

FAIR LABOR ASSOCIATION CODE OF CONDUCT

Forced Labor

There shall not be any use of forced labor, whether in the form of prison labor, indentured labor, bonded labor or otherwise.

Child Labor

No person shall be employed at an age younger than 15 (or 14 where the law of the country of manufacture allows) or younger than the age for completing compulsory education in the country of manufacture where such age is higher than 15.

Harassment or Abuse

Every employee shall be treated with respect and dignity. No employee shall be subject to any physical, sexual, psychological or verbal harassment or abuse.

Nondiscrimination

No person shall be subject to any discrimination in employment, including hiring, salary, benefits, advancement, discipline, termination or retirement, on the basis of gender, race, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, nationality, political opinion, or social or ethnic origin.

Health and Safety

Employers shall provide a safe and healthy working environment to prevent accidents and injury to health arising out of, linked with, or occurring in the course of work or as a result of the operation of employer facilities.

Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining

Employers shall recognize and respect the right of employees to freedom of association and collective bargaining.

Wages and Benefits

Employers recognize that wages are essential to meeting employees' basic needs. Employers shall pay employees, as a floor, at least the minimum wage required by local law or the prevailing industry wage, whichever is higher, and shall provide legally mandated benefits.

Hours of Work

Except in extraordinary business circumstances, employees shall (i) not be required to work more than the lesser of (a) 48 hours per week and 12 hours overtime or (b) the limits on regular and overtime hours allowed by the law of the country of manufacture or, where the laws of such country do not limit the hours of work, the regular work week in such country plus 12 hours overtime and (ii) be entitled to at least one day off in every seven day period.

Overtime Compensation

In addition to their compensation for regular hours of work, employees shall be compensated for overtime hours at such premium rate as is legally required in the country of manufacture or, in those countries where such laws do not exist, at a rate at least equal to their regular hourly compensation rate.

Ethical Purchasing Policy