

Faire Woche 2017 from 15th to 29th September

## Naturland farmers – ambassadors for fair trade

**Gräfelfing – This year's Faire Woche (15th – 29th September) is being launched this Friday under the banner "Fair Trade Creates Prospects". Throughout Germany over 2,000 events will be taking place to make fair trade a hands-on experience. A highlight of the Faire Woche is the visits to producers, many of whom are Naturland farmers who report on their work and their experiences with fair trade.**

For Naturland, organic agriculture and fair trade are inextricably linked. "Organic agriculture is both environmentally friendly and healthy, which makes it equally fair to human beings, animals and nature," says Hubert Heigl, the president of Naturland, a German organic association, with reference to the Faire Woche. Organic agriculture enables smallholders in the global south in particular to stay independent of expensive agricultural chemicals. Besides this, fair trade ensures that they can earn a living with their work. "This is important for organic farmers all over the world, including those in the global north," says the Naturland president. The association has therefore created its own "Naturland Fair" logo, combined certification awarded for compliance to both its organic and fair trade standards.

### Naturland farmers report on their experiences

In the course of the Faire Woche, several representatives of smallholders' co-operatives which are members of Naturland will report on how they work. One of them is Stanley Maniragaba, manager of Ankole Coffee Producers' Co-operative Union (ACPCU), the Naturland coffee co-operative in Uganda. "Our farmers can now pay for their children's school fees and avail themselves of medical services." ACPCU has established a large health centre, the construction of which was partly due to fair trade. The doctor working there holds regular surgeries for local farmers.

### Strengthening women creates new job prospects

Ibtissam Musa from Palestine reports on the successes, challenges and prospects for smallholders' families in Palestine. She is one of 2,500 farmers belonging to Canaan Fair Trade, a fair trade enterprise. Musa, a Naturland farmer, lives in the northern part of the West Bank and, together with 20 other women in a group which she initiated, produces about two tons of maftoul (Palestinian couscous) a year. "It is important for me to help Palestinian women to assert their position in society, as the strong, independent, creative and proud human beings that we are," says Ibtissam Musa.

### Co-operatives give their members the backing they need

In Ecuador some 120 families have joined together to form UROCAL, a co-operative federation. BanaFair, a partner of Naturland certified to its Naturland Fair standards, takes care of exports and pays the farmers a fair price plus a fair trade premium for their harvest. Yhony Yanzaguano, one of the farmers, cultivates a nine hectare farm according to the Naturland standards, together with his family. "Thanks to fair trade via UROCAL and BanaFair, we enjoy economic stability," says Yanzaguano. The co-operative is using the fair trade premium to provide new wash basins and sanitary facilities in its packing station, a bonus payment for the school children, and for health care.

## Faire Woche makes fair trade a hands-on experience

Faire Woche is a campaign which takes place every year in the second half of September. The campaign is organised by Forum Fairer Handel in co-operation with TransFair and the German National Association of Worldshops. Local groups and organisations arrange between 2,000 and 2,500 events a year to attract attention to fair trade, this year under the banner "Fair Trade creates prospects for producers in the global south". **Naturland is a member of Forum Fairer Handel**, which functions as the political voice of the fair trade movement in Germany.

## Note to editors: You can meet Naturland farmers on the following dates:

13th September: **How organic fair trade olives can create future prospects:** Nasser Abufarha, founder and directors of Canaan Fair Trade, presents this inspiring project in Palestine. (Seidlvilla - Nikolaiplatz 1B, Munich, 7:00 p.m.)

18th September: **Using organic and fair trade to preserve diversity:** Stanley Maniragaba, manager of ACPCU, the Naturland coffee co-operative in Uganda, meets Georg Schlickenrieder, the manager of ArcheHof Schlickenrieder, a member of Naturland. Following this, a talk in Weltladen Holzkirchen (Markweg 50, Otterfing, 10:00 a.m., and Münchner Strasse. 16, Holzkirchen, 12:00 a.m.)

18th September: **Palestinian women assert their position in society:** Fida Abdallah and Ibtissam Musa from Canaan Fair Trade in Palestine report on their experiences. Venue: Naturland Fair member and business partner Ölmühle Solling (Höxtersche Strasse 1, Boffzen, 10:00 a.m.).

27th September: **Organic and fair trade in the global north and south:** Marcelo Matute and Yhony Yanzaguano, banana farmers from Ecuador, meet the Sichler family, Naturland dairy farmers in Berchtesgadener Land. Following this, a tour of the Milchwerke Berchtesgadener Land dairy (Grossrachl 1, Grassau, 10:00 a.m., and Hockerfeld 5, Piding, 12:00 a.m.)

*In its 05/2016 magazine, Stiftung Warentest, a German consumer organisation, attested to a combination of organic and fair trade being the only really sustainable solution. The testers assessed six different sustainability labels and came to the clear conclusion that "the Naturland Fair seal sets the highest standard."*