



Fair Trade Fruit Week

THE ORGANIC BOX NEWS

Issue #80: January 10th, 2012

Even though it feels like springtime in Edmonton this week, it is actually the middle of winter and that means you'll find lots of good local storage root crops and winter greens in your box, plus some stored apples and pears from our BC farms. However, it is peak growing season in central America and we are excited to offer you an excellent selection of fair trade certified organic fruits in your box. We have a fresh shipment of our very special bananas, plus blueberries, avocados, grapefruit and mango. As the season progresses you'll see fair trade pineapples too!

Here are some profiles of our favourite Fair Trade collectives that supply winter fruits for your box.

BOS Solidares – Peru (Bananas)

Founded in 2003, with the goal of promoting the development of small scale organic banana farmers, BOS has grown to 619 growers, over 521 hectares of land (which is equivalent to one city block each). They are committed to Fair Trade and achieving economic, environmental, and social sustainability for their members and employees. Being Fair Trade certified, not only means that the growers get a fair price, but more importantly that they aren't at the whim of the fluctuating commodity markets and they have financial security that has allowed them to prosper. Additionally, a Fair Trade social premium of 5.5 cents per bunch (hand), and sales of over 336,000 hands of Fair Trade Bananas a week means BOS is receiving \$7,000 dollars per week for community projects. For BOS these include: medical insurance, scholarships, technical training, adult literacy programs, English lessons, women empowerment initiatives, and sponsorship for local sport and youth programs.

Planeta Verde – Mexico (Citrus, Avocado, Mango)

Planeta Verde is a cooperative of 40 small-scale Fair Trade and organic avocado, mango and grapefruit farmers in the state of Michoacán, Mexico. Half of Planeta Verde members inherited their orchards from their families and 95% of producers are planning on passing on their orchards to future generations. The Fair Trade social premium rallies the producers around solving issues facing their association and overall community. In the past social premiums paid to these growers were invested in building a school for handicapped children, fixing impassable roads, outfitting public clinics with medicine and supplies and solving community water problems.

Green Tribe – Chile (blueberries)



Chile is the third largest blueberry grower in the world, with a growing season from November to March. Green Tribe grows five types of organic blueberries, including high bush and rabbit eye varieties. Chilean blues are sweet, a welcome antioxidant blast in the winter. Green Tribe is a cooperative composed of seven Chilean blueberry producers; all certified organic and certified Fair Trade. The farmers came together in order to share resources including packing and export capacity. Green Tribe is built on a foundation of trust, quality and a profound respect for the environment. They are committed to organic agricultural practices and manage their soil and water resources with great care. After the February 2010 earthquake that ravaged Chile, Canadian sales of the blueberries raised an additional \$13,000 in social premiums. These funds were used by Green Tribe to create mediaguas, temporary housing for workers whose homes were destroyed by the earthquake.

About the Edward Honey Blush Mango and APROMALPI

Super soft and buttery, the texture of these mangos are to die for! Known to be one of the most delicious mango varieties, the Edward Mango, or the Honey Blush, was created in Florida in the 1930's and is believed to be a hybrid cross between the Haden and the Carabao mango. The flesh is fibreless and has a rich, sweet, and spicy flavor. This rare and special variety goes yellow with a reddish blush when fully ripened.

Not only are these incredibly tasty, but they are good for you too! Each mango is packed with more than 20 different vitamins and minerals. The mango is an excellent source of Vitamins A and C, as well as dietary fibre.

Although these organic mangos are typically grown in Florida, our Edward Mangos are Fair Trade from Apromalpi in Peru. Asociación de Productores de Mangos del Alto Piura, (APROMALPI) cooperative is a Peruvian association of 170 members founded in 1996 by a group of 40 mango producers to increase the family income and escape prices imposed by middlemen and brokers.

Apromalpi uses their Fair Trade social premiums to fund a microcredit lending program for members, the development of textile workshops providing employment for local women, and provision of an onsite medical clinic. Their five year plan is to focus on providing educational scholarships for the students in the community.