



**FAIRTRADE**  
INTERNATIONAL

# **Fairtrade Standard for Coffee for Small Producer Organizations**

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**For further information and standards downloads:  
[www.fairtrade.net/standards.html](http://www.fairtrade.net/standards.html)**

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## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
<b>How to use this Standard</b> .....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
<b>Monitoring of Amendments</b> .....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
<b>1. General Requirements</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>1.1 Certification</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>1.2 Labelling and Packaging</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>1.3 Product Description</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>1.4 Other product requirements</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>2. Trade</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>2.1 Traceability</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>2.2 Product Composition</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>2.3 Contracts</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>3. Production</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>4. Business and Development</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>4.1 Sustaining Trade</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>4.2 Pre-finance</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>4.3 Pricing</b> .....	<b>6</b>

# Introduction

## How to use this Standard

Refer to the generic standard for Small Producers' Organizations as a separate document as updated by Fairtrade International (FLO) on its website.

Please note that the Generic Fairtrade Trade Standards also apply. In cases where the product specific standard below differs from the Generic Fairtrade Trade Standard, the requirements presented in this Standard apply.

## Application

The Product Specific Fairtrade Standards for Small Producer Organizations have been revised according to the New Product Classification (based on the Central Product Classification). The new standards apply from 1 July 2011.

## Monitoring of Amendments

Fairtrade International reserves the right to amend Fairtrade Standards in accordance with Fairtrade International's Standard Operating Procedures ([http://www.fairtrade.net/setting\\_the\\_standards.html](http://www.fairtrade.net/setting_the_standards.html)). Requirements of Fairtrade Standards may be added, deleted, or otherwise modified. Those who have to meet Fairtrade Standards are required to monitor pending and finalized revisions on Fairtrade International's website.

Fairtrade Certification ensures the compliance with Fairtrade Standards. Revision of Fairtrade Standards may lead to a change in the requirements of Fairtrade Certification. Those who wish to be certified or have already undergone certification are required to monitor pending and finalized certification policies and compliance criteria on the certification body's website <http://www.flo-cert.net>.

# 1. General Requirements

## Intent and scope

All operators taking ownership of Fairtrade certified products and/or handling the Fairtrade price and premium are audited and certified.

### This chapter applies to the certificate holder.

This standard covers the purchase and sale of both Arabica and Robusta coffee in their primary form (green beans). For the sections under certification and traceability (only), the standard also covers any processed products and derivatives.

The standard also covers its secondary products and their derivatives. The definition of secondary products is included in Annex 1 of the Generic Trade Standards.

A non-exhaustive list of products fitting the secondary products definition is published on the Fairtrade International website.

## 1.1 Certification

**1.1.1** Where a producer requires the assistance of an exporter in order to undertake Fairtrade exports, the producer must apply to the certification body confirming that the exporter is needed to export Fairtrade products on their behalf.

## 1.2 Labelling and Packaging

There are no additional requirements.

## 1.3 Product Description

**1.3.1** The Fairtrade standard covers two species of green coffee:

***Coffea arabica*** - Arabica coffee

***Coffea canephora*** - Robusta coffee

Fairtrade Minimum Prices have been set for washed coffee and natural coffee. Pulped natural coffee is considered as washed coffee. The different types of processing systems are defined as follows:

**Washed System** – Coffee parchment is dried without pulp and without mucilage. The pulp is removed by machines called pulpers and the mucilage is removed by fermentation with or without water or by mechanical friction. These coffees are also known as mild.

**Natural System** – Coffee cherries are dried with pulp and with mucilage. Normally, drying of the whole cherries takes place in the form in which cherries are harvested. This coffee is sometimes called sun-dried or unwashed coffee.

**Pulped Natural System** – Coffee parchment is dried without pulp and with some or all mucilage adhering. This is an intermediate system, also known as semi-washed, semi-dried or cereja descascada (CD).

## 1.4 Other product requirements

There are no additional requirements.

## 2. Trade

### Intent and scope

This chapter outlines the requirements that you need to comply with when you sell Fairtrade products.

**This chapter applies to the Fairtrade product.**

### 2.1 Traceability

There are no additional requirements.

### 2.2 Product Composition

There are no additional requirements.

### 2.3 Contracts

**2.3.1** A “price to be fixed” contract should be used between the seller<sup>1</sup> and the buyer. The price fixation must be made at the seller’s call.

An outright priced contract may be used only in the following cases:

- a) auction systems where it would invalidate a price to be fixed contract, or
- b) the seller has the coffee in stock at the time of making the contract, or
- c) the seller and the buyer agree that it is mutually beneficial to have an outright price contract and jointly agree upon a risk management strategy. The mutual agreement and the details of the risk management strategy must be confirmed in writing.

**Guidance:** In case (c), there should be a clear rationale as to why both parties decide to have such a contract, a clear description of the risk management measures, including clarity on who bears the costs and agreements in case those fail.

**2.3.2** Use of a broker<sup>2</sup> (if needed), needs to be made explicit in the contract between the seller and the buyer.

Brokers can only act on behalf of one specified party. The party who wants to bring in a broker for a specified use and purpose needs written agreement of the other party and needs to pay for the broker’s service. In case of the buyer bringing in the broker, the commission cannot be deducted from the FOB price.

**2.3.3** If a Fairtrade payer requires the extension of the shipment schedule beyond the limits of sound commercial practice of the producer (three months after the harvest), the real costs of storage, interest and insurance must be covered by the Fairtrade payer in the terms of the contract. This rule is not applicable for those producers in whose respective countries specific export regulations exist which make the above unworkable.

<sup>1</sup> The seller is the producer organization (if the producer organization exports) or the exporter (if the producer organization sells through an exporter) in which case the producer organization gives fixing instructions to the exporter.

<sup>2</sup> A broker is defined as a non-certified operator, who does not gain ownership of the coffee at any point in time. A broker is someone who facilitates the contact and the trade between the seller and the buyer.

**2.3.4** In case of a potential default against a contract, the seller is required to promptly notify the buyer, at a minimum 2 months before the shipment date<sup>3</sup>.

## 3. Production

### Intent and scope

This chapter outlines the ethical and sustainable production practices that are behind every Fairtrade product.

**This chapter applies to the Fairtrade product.**

There are no additional requirements.

## 4. Business and Development

### Intent and scope

This chapter outlines the requirements that are unique to Fairtrade and intends to lay the foundations for producer empowerment and development to take place.

**This chapter applies to the certificate holder.**

## 4.1 Sustaining Trade

**4.1.1** Sourcing plans must cover each harvest. Sourcing plans must be renewed a minimum of three months before they expire.

## 4.2 Pre-finance

**4.2.1** On request from the producer, the Fairtrade payer must make up to 60% of the value of the contract available as pre-finance to the producer at any time after signing the contract. The pre-finance must be made available at least eight weeks prior to shipment.

**Guidance:** Where a producer organization is not exporting the coffee themselves, the producer and exporter must agree upon the handling of the pre-financing money and the fulfilment of the contract.

Where several shipments are planned, the spread of the pre-finance must be fixed in the contracts. It is not always necessary to pre-finance the whole amount before the first shipment. Pre-finance must be adapted to the real needs of the producer.

## 4.3 Pricing

Fairtrade Minimum Prices and Fairtrade Premium levels for Fairtrade products are published separately to the product standards.

**4.3.1 Price reference:** For Arabica coffees the reference market price shall be based on the New York Board of Trade "C" contract (NYBOT/ICE). The reference market price shall be established in US\$-cents per pound, plus or minus the prevailing differential for the relevant quality, basis F.O.B. origin, net shipped weight.

**4.3.2 Price reference:** For Robusta coffees the reference market price shall be based on the

<sup>3</sup> Please note that contracts need to be honoured. This clause applies to cases when the seller is not able to honour the contract, due to exceptional unforeseen circumstances.

London "EURONEXT LIFFE" contract. The reference market price shall be established in US-dollars per metric ton, plus or minus the prevailing differential for the relevant quality, basis F.O.B. origin, net shipped weight.

**Guidance:** For both Arabica and Robusta, no matter what is negotiated between the producer and the Fairtrade payer, the price paid to the producer (excluding the Fairtrade Premium) cannot be below the FTMP. A negative differential cannot be applied to the Fairtrade Minimum Price.

**4.3.3 Price fixation:** In the case of price-to-be-fixed contracts, if the seller wishes to fix the price before the harvest starts, the fixation requires the agreement of the buyer.

Both the seller and the buyer need to jointly agree upon a risk management strategy. The mutual agreement and the details of the risk management strategy must be confirmed in writing.

**4.3.4 Price fixation:** In the case of outright priced contracts, prices must not be fixed for a period longer than one crop period.

**4.3.5** When, by legislation, coffee has to be passed through the auction, importer and exporter will agree upon a reasonable margin for the exporter to cover their costs. Producers selling via an exporter should agree upon a reasonable margin for the exporter to cover his costs.

**4.3.6 Payments:** Payment shall be net cash against a full set of documents on first presentation. The documents to be presented will be those stipulated in the contract and will be in line with what is customary in the coffee trade.

**4.3.7 Payments:** For contracts involving Fairtrade payers and producers, payment must be made according to the international customary conditions, and no later than 15 days after the receipt of the documents transferring ownership.

For contracts involving Fairtrade payers, producers and conveyors, conveyors must pay producers no later than 15 days after receipt of the payment from the Fairtrade payer.

**4.3.8 Payments:** In case of potential late payment of a contract<sup>4</sup>, the buyer is required to promptly notify the seller as soon as possible but at the latest one week before the payment date.

**4.3.9 Fairtrade Premium:** The Fairtrade Premium needs to be paid in addition to the price of the product ("C" Price plus or minus the prevailing differential, or the Fairtrade Minimum Price, whichever is higher). The Fairtrade Premium amount cannot be incorporated into the agreed upon differential.

**4.3.10 Fairtrade Premium:** At least 5cts of the FT premium must be invested in the improvement of productivity and/or quality of Fairtrade coffee. Investment can be made at the level of individual members and/or the producer organization. The General Assembly decides on the activities to be carried out. The producer organization needs to keep records on the use of the monies and to explain in which way it contributes to the improvement of productivity and/or quality.

**Guidance:** Productivity and/or quality investment refer to any measures that will increase the quantity and quality of coffee produced. It can include measures to improve yields such as, for example, training on agricultural practices, farm-level replanting and renewal projects, purchase of equipment or infrastructure investments. It can include measures for quality such as hiring cuppers, investing in cupping labs, trainings and similar activities.

**4.3.11 For secondary products:** There are no Fairtrade Minimum Prices defined for secondary products and their derivatives. Sellers of the product and its next buyers must negotiate prices for secondary products and their derivatives. A default Fairtrade premium of 15% of the negotiated price

<sup>4</sup> Please note that contracts need to be honoured. This clause applies to cases when the buyer is not able to fulfil clause 8.7, due to exceptional unforeseen circumstances.

must be paid to in addition.

Fairtrade International reserves the right to set a Fairtrade Minimum Prices for secondary products and its derivatives in the future.