Fair Trade USA Explores Application of Agricultural Production Standard in Dairy Sector

Fair Trade USA

May 8, 2019

Fair Trade USA has long been a driver of sustainable livelihoods, social responsibility, and community development, through the application of robust and credible social and economic standards that support farms, fisheries, and factories in a transition towards improved social welfare and environmental sustainability. Since 1998, producers in more than 45 countries have earned over $400 million in Community Development Funds through sales of Fair Trade Certified™ products, which they have used to address their communities' greatest needs: these include clean water, education, healthcare, and environmental protection. A cornerstone to this success has been Fair Trade USA's Agricultural Production Standard (APS) for crop production, which was designed to be applied to a variety of crops and farm settings.

Building upon the strong foundation of the APS, Fair Trade USA has begun an exploration of the US dairy sector with the goal of determining how a fair trade certification program could be most relevant, impactful, and valuable. The producer context for dairying is similar to that of agriculture in terms of the challenges faced by small-scale producers and by workers on larger farms, making the Fair Trade USA model a potential fit for this industry. The goal of the exploration is to determine whether and how the systems, operations, implementation, and auditing of the APS could be applicable in a dairy setting. This includes understanding current initiatives and determining whether fair trade certification would be additive to those efforts. Over the coming months, we will be consulting with stakeholders within the industry to ensure key issues are addressed in the potential development of a Fair Trade Certified dairy program.

As the project progresses, Fair Trade USA will create opportunities for comment and feedback on the draft expansion of scope of the standard, including at least one public comment period. Interested stakeholders are welcome to email us at standards@fairtradeusa.org with questions, comments, or to be contacted at the start of the public comment period.