



Press release

A €1 million partnership supporting small organic fairtrade banana producers

Nanterre/Les Ulis – 19 May 2021 –

The Fairtrade / Max Havelaar movement has launched a €1 million project funded by the French Development Agency (with a €300,000 contribution from Carrefour) to support environmentally friendly practices and promote gender equality across the organic fairtrade banana supply line. To do this, it is supporting 11 cooperatives in Peru and in the Dominican Republic.

Organic fairtrade bananas: 12% of the French market

With a 9% increase in global sales in 2019 and a 4% increase in France in 2020, the organic fairtrade banana is being seen as an increasingly essential product. The goal of Fairtrade/Max Havelaar is to guarantee the best possible working conditions. It does this by providing producers with a guaranteed minimum price, giving them a development premium and establishing strict terms of reference governing sustainable agricultural practices. Bananas have won more market share than any other fairtrade product in France: they represent 12% of the market (84,000 tonnes sold in 2020), as opposed to 4% for coffee, for example.

A high-risk supply line: climate uncertainty, soil depletion and chemical products

The main issues affecting banana production in Latin America are pest control, water availability, fertilisation and protection against extreme weather. Monoculture and historical intensive use of fertilisers and chemical pesticides have resulted in a loss of soil fertility and lower levels of biodiversity, as well as increasing the vulnerability of crops to certain pests. This means that banana supply lines need to be **adapted so they are able to withstand climate change, the way in which natural resources are managed needs to be improved and agricultural practices need to be diversified**. These initiatives can involve systems for improving soil fertility, using organic inputs or diversifying crop-growing practices so as to ultimately bring about sustainable increases in productivity, as well as creating new sources of revenue or developing food-production agriculture.

The banana is also a loss leader – a product that attracts people to the fruit and vegetable section, and its low price in traditional supply lines does not always guarantee producers a secure position or enable them to improve their income. So a key challenge involves training and supporting cooperative managers so they can more effectively showcase what they produce on the market.

“Although producers of organic fairtrade bananas in Latin America are enjoying significant success in the eyes of consumers, they still need to be supported so they can increase their resilience in the face of climate change, improve their agroecological productivity and thus secure their income”. - **Blaise Desbordes, Managing Director of Max Havelaar France**

A €1 million project to increase the resilience of small producers to climate change, promote female empowerment and help the younger generation take over from the older generation

This original project funded by the French Development Agency with a €300,000 contribution from Carrefour will be rolled out by the Fairtrade / Max Havelaar movement and its regional network of fairtrade producers in Latin America. Over three years, it will provide 11 fairtrade banana producer

cooperatives in the Dominican Republic and Peru with support (10,000 beneficiaries). Its priorities will be to sustainably improve their revenue, empower women and young people and improve resilience to climate change. The actionable initiatives being planned include building **micro-factories to produce organic inputs** and setting up **diversification field schools**. At the same time, women and young people will be trained, via innovative teaching modules derived from the Fairtrade movement's *School of Leadership for Women*, the aim being to give them more autonomy and empower them in the cooperatives and communities (knowledge of human rights, gender and masculinity, self-esteem, leadership, negotiation and political participation, etc.). Finally, opportunities for producers and cooperatives in both countries to discuss their experiences will be created so as to disseminate best practice and share the expertise acquired.

"The French Development Agency directly supports projects which incorporate the three requisites of sustainable development. It does this by developing viable economic supply lines, promoting gender equality and adapting to the effects of climate change. To maximise their impact, getting French economic stakeholders to commit to sustainably developing their supply lines is of fundamental importance". **Remy Rioux, Managing Director of the French Development Agency**

"Committed to providing organic and fairtrade bananas via the Fairtrade/Max Havelaar label, Carrefour is also keen to support producers out in the field. We are proud of this product offering which has helped a banana supply line to develop. Today, one out of every three bananas purchased at our stores is fairtrade. We would like to reach a new milestone by supporting a project which takes action further upstream of production so as to ensure a sustainable future for producers who are having to embrace major challenges, such as the effects of climate change in particular". **François Vincent, Director of Food Products for Carrefour France.**

The Fairtrade/Max Havelaar banana market enjoying rapid growth in France

In France (2020):

- 84,000 tonnes of Fairtrade/Max Havelaar bananas sold, a 12% market share of the overall banana market in France.
- 4% increase sales in 2020
- 94% of Fairtrade/Max Havelaar bananas are also organic

Worldwide (2019):

- 747,425 tonnes sold in 2019 around the world
- 9% increase sales in 2019
- 34,973 producers and workers are beneficiaries of Fairtrade/Max Havelaar

About Max Havelaar France

The Max Havelaar France NGO is a founder member of the international Fairtrade/Max Havelaar movement and strives to bring about fairtrade that does not damage the environment or violate human rights. Through the Fairtrade/Max Havelaar label, it gets companies, consumers and public authorities involved in transforming practices and supporting producers and disadvantaged workers. It raises awareness among the general public and militates in favour of an ethical and responsible global economy. For more information, visit www.maxhavelaarfrance.org/actualites/presse

About the French Development Agency Group

The French Development Agency Group is a public body tasked with implementing France's policy on development and international aid. Its teams are involved in more than 4000 projects with a high social and environmental impact in France's overseas territories and in 115 other countries. These projects involve climate, biodiversity, peace, education, urban development, healthcare and governance. Through these projects, we bolster the commitment of both France and its people to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For the benefit of the world we share.

About Carrefour France

Carrefour has over 5200 stores in France operating in four formats (hypermarket, supermarket, convenience and cash & carry). For sixty years, Carrefour has been a partner in the daily lives of millions of customers, offering them a wide range of products and services at the lowest prices. To keep pace with new consumer modes and make shopping easier for its customers, Carrefour has developed a number of omni-channel solutions (e-commerce, Drive, Click and Collect, express delivery and mobile applications). Carrefour employs 105,000 people and welcomes more than 3 million customers every day throughout the country. For more information, visit: www.carrefour.com (press page), www.carrefour.fr or follow us on Twitter at: @CarrefourFrance, @GroupeCarrefour