



BTC TRADE FOR DEVELOPMENT



***BELGIANS ABOUT
FAIR TRADE***

RESULTS OF THE 2011 OPINION POLL

Most Belgians...

- **Know fair trade;**
- **Would like the principle to be applied to the advantage of Belgian farmers too;**
- **Want to be reassured about the impact of fair trade on producers.**

These are a few of the results from the opinion poll that Dedicated Research conducted for the Trade for Development Centre, a programme of the Belgian development agency BTC. One thousand and twenty Belgians, a representative sample of the population, were polled about their behaviour, attitude and opinions concerning fair trade.¹

THE MAIN FINDINGS

1. Well known: Oxfam and Max Havelaar are still the reference.

- **79% of Belgian consumers have already heard about fair trade.**
Fair trade is known equally by language, age or gender group.
- **Oxfam and Max Havelaar are clearly fair trade references.**
More than half of Belgians (56%) spontaneously mentions either of both when fair trade is discussed. Other labels or brands are hardly mentioned.
- **Moreover, Max Havelaar and/or Oxfam are graded an 8/10 level of trust or higher by two out of three respondents** who are familiar with them. It shows that Oxfam and Max Havelaar contribute positively to the general image of fair trade.

2. The milk crisis has highlighted problems which part of our own agriculture is facing.

The question is: "Do you think fair trade should be used to the advantage of Belgian or European farmers?"

- **69% of respondents said: "Yes, it is logical that our producers, our farmers get a fair price too."**
- **10% says: "No, this should only apply to poor farmers from countries in the South."**
- **3%: "Yes, but only for products that have at least one ingredient from a country in the South (for instance, pineapple jam)."**
- **17% has no opinion.**

3. Familiarity with fair trade brands and labels.

Fair trade is recognized best thanks to a fair trade label or one of the main fair trade brands. Organic products are recognized best thanks to the legal "organic" label on packaging.

- The main labels and brands of fair trade are well known: Oxfam-Wereldwinkels is known by 93%, Oxfam Fairtrade by 85%, Max Havelaar by 62% and Fair Trade Original by 48 %.
- In comparison, The organic labels of AB, Biogarantie and the European union are known respectively by 44, 36 and 18%.
- Sustainable trade labels are becoming familiar. The fame of FSC, PEFC (sustainable forest management), Rainforest Alliance (sustainable farming and tourism) and MSC (sustainable management of fisheries) respectively reaches 34% (25% in 2010), 28%, 15% and 13%.

¹ The opinion poll was conducted via the internet from 18 to 24 August 2011. Maximal margin of error (frequencies close to 50%) is 3.1%.

- Consumers do not know well what the Rainforest Alliance and MSC labels stand for. About 1 out of 3 who know these labels thinks that they are fair trade labels.

People shop especially at Oxfam-Wereldwinkels, Oxfam-Magasins du monde but also in the supermarket:

- **57% of Belgians** says **having bought fair trade products** over the last 12 months (against 40% in 2009).
- **The most popular fair trade products** are (in order of importance): **coffee** (66%), **fruit** (50%) and **chocolate** (43%). Jam and spread are bought less (12%) than in 2010 (23%).
- **43% of fair trade buyers** (46% of Dutch speakers and 40% of French speakers) say they bought fair trade in **Oxfam-Wereldwinkels and Oxfam-Magasins du monde**. **39%** buys fair trade in **Delhaize group shops**; **33%** in **Carrefour group shops**, and **29%** at **Colruyt**. Respondents are very positive about the fact that fair trade products can be bought in supermarkets.
- **Satisfaction** with fair trade products is **very high**. Almost all Belgians (96%) who buy fair trade are satisfied (53%) or very satisfied (43%) about fair trade products.

4. Awareness-raising efforts to show which role the consumer plays and which impact fair trade has for countries in the South must be continued.

- **74% of respondents** says “fair trade is important for developing countries.”
- **Yet, Belgians want to be reassured and demand for guarantees** about the real effectiveness of fair trade and about the impact of their individual actions. **69%** (74% in 2010) **of buyers hopes, yet is not sure whether their fair trade purchases really provide for more respect of the rights of producers and workers**. Only 24% of buyers is really convinced of this. For 84% of respondents a guarantee that fair trade really contributes to development of small producers would make them buy more products.

5. The government also has a duty to inform and raise awareness.

- 64% (72% in 2010) of people polled still finds that they are not informed sufficiently about fair trade.
- **According to 54% of Belgians it is the task of the government to raise awareness** and to advertise for fair trade products (and fair trade organisations: 56%).

More than half of Belgians (57%) has already heard about the Fair Trade Week.

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