



TransFair USA

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Coffee Giveaway Event Planning Guide

Thank you for taking part in our first nationwide, Fair Trade Month kick-off event! All around the country, Fair Trade supporters like you will be taking to the streets to share their commitment to Fair Trade and a good cup of coffee, with commuters in their city.

We hope this checklist will help your group make the most of the occasion and kick-off your community's efforts to connect with Fair Trade this October.

Getting Started - 5 weeks before the event

1. **Review all the materials in your "Coffee Giveaway Event Kit."** This is your guide to organizing your event. Fun ideas, sample timelines, fact sheets are all here.
2. **Get some help!** There are many roles to play and you'll need some help. Get a committee together and talk about where and when you can have a coffee giveaway in your community. Decide who will do what and how you can get other community groups involved.
3. **Determine a time, date and location for your event.** Pick a date that's strategic for your work or join us October 1st for our national community kick-off. Pick a busy street corner, commuter traffic hub or downtown train station for your event. If you are on a college campus, determine the busiest route for students attending their morning classes. The busier the better.
4. **Research the proposed event site.** How many people pass by during the commute? How many cups of coffee do you think you might go through during the event? Determine the busiest time of day for your proposed site and plan your event for then.
5. **Get permission.** Consult with your city hall about whether or not you will need a permit to hand out literature and food and beverage samples at your desired location. If you are not selling anything you may not need one but be sure you have your bases covered well in advance. If you are going to use amplified sound

make sure you have the right permits. Also, event permits and food and beverage permits tend to be administered by different agencies. Be sure you consult both.

Figure out the details – 4 weeks before the event

1. **Find a roaster or café that you can partner with.** This step is critical. How will you get brewed coffee to the site? Frequently a café that offers Fair Trade Certified coffee can help brew coffee in exchange for exposure at the event. Identify a couple cafes or local roasters and ask if they want to partner with you. Go over the materials checklist with them to see what they can help with.
2. **Register with us to host an event in your city.** This allows us to better support your event and ensure that you receive the materials you need. If you can't find a local roaster or coffee house we may be able to help pair you up with one of our national cosponsors. When you register we will also send you a big box Fair Trade Month themed materials, background information, sign up sheets, buttons, iron-ons and all sorts of fun stuff to make your event a success. To register, email jguzzi@transfairusa.org with some preliminary details of your event.
3. **Apply for a Fair Trade Month mini-grant!** TransFair USA may be able to help with the cost of permits and supplies. You can find an application form in your event planning kit or online at our website.

Prepare Your Materials – 3 weeks before the event

Our “Coffee Giveaway Event Kit” will have everything you need to explain the basics of how Fair Trade is helping farmers around the world. But to make the most of your event, you are going to need to get out there and do a bit of foot work on your own.

1. **Create a “Where to Buy Guide”.** Figure out where in your city Fair Trade products are offered, particularly locations convenient to where your event will be taking place. Make a short flyer with a list of locations where folks can find Fair Trade in your city or go all out and create a comprehensive “Where to Buy Guide” for your city. Our national “Where to Buy Guide” can help you get started: <http://www.transfairusa.org/content/WhereToBuy/>
2. **Prepare your visuals.** Draw attention to your group with colorful outfits or visuals. Build a giant French press or Fair Trade label proclaiming October to be Fair Trade Month! Let people know why you are here, who to thank for their free cup of Fair Trade coffee and how they can get involved with a colorful banner for your group. Be creative, be strategic and have fun! Read about what other folks have done here: <http://www.transfairusa.org/content/support/campus.php>

3. **Think big.** How can this event help draw attention to your long term efforts or promote Fair Trade events later in the month? Work with your school's dining services to increase awareness of Fair Trade on your campus or set your sights city wide with a campaign for a Fair Trade Town. For more information visit: http://www.transfairusa.org/content/support/Fair_trade-resolutions.php
4. **Recruit volunteers!** The more warm bodies on hand, the more warm cups of justice you can hand out. Is your group just getting started? This is an ideal opportunity to recruit new supporters and reach out to other groups in your community that share your commitment to Fair Trade. Too many volunteers for one booth? Set up two booths! Still more volunteers? Start a new location! Go big!

Nailing Down the Details – 2 weeks before the event

1. **Meet with your café partner to finalize details.** Have you worked out all the logistics of the coffee giveaway? What will the café staff do and what will the volunteers do? How will you get the coffee from the café to the giveaway location? How will you store it? How will you get more coffee when you run out? Do you have each other's cell phone numbers?
2. **Assign roles.** Who will be brewing the coffee? Who will be handing it out? Who will be behind the table and who will mingle in the crowd? How many volunteers are available and where will they stand? Who will be preparing and serving additional food items? Who will staff the information table? Set all your roles ahead of time and make sure everyone knows where they need to be and when.
3. **Don't forget the sugar!** With all of this planning it's easy to forget the little things that will make this all work. Be sure you have enough cups, stirrers, trash bags, etc. to make this event a success. Don't forget cream or milk that's up to your group's high standards and of course, Fair Trade Certified sugar to sweeten the deal. See the materials checklist for things you may have forgotten..

Press and Promotion – 1 week before the event

1. **Assign a spokesperson.** With this event we hope to reach out to thousands of new supporters and introduce Fair Trade to many of neighbors and fellow commuters who have maybe never even heard of Fair Trade. We also hope to reach out to thousands more through the local and national press.
2. **Write a press release.** Draw up a press release with all the details of your event and the contact information for your lead spokespersons. Be sure to talk about your groups work throughout the year and how this action advances your goals

and don't forget to mention Fair Trade Month! Use our sample press release or write your own.

3. **Make a press list.** No publication is too big or too small. Some of your best chances are going to be with hometown papers, campus papers and smaller publications. Your big chance to shine however is with local TV. Start out by digging up all the email and phone contacts for your local and regional press. Let us know what you are up to and we will help out where we can.
4. **Invite reporters.** Since our event is on a Monday, you will need to send out your press release about a week in advance and then again on the Friday morning before the event and possibly even again on the morning before you start. Let us know what you've got planned and we will work together to make sure all the folks that need to know about your event are invited and invited again.
5. **Don't forget TV.** It's a bit of a long shot, but local TV offers one of your best chances of getting your event covered. Be sure to call the assignment desks for each of your local TV stations the morning of the event to follow up on the press release you sent them Friday afternoon and hear if they will have time to swing by with a camera crew and when. The later in the morning your event is, the more convenient it will be for TV crews to cover. If it's a slow news day you may be in luck!

Before the Event

1. **Review the materials list.** Do you have everything you need? Did you get your kit of promotional materials from TransFair USA? Do you have all your coffee and equipment ready to go? Are your shoes tied?
2. **Decide what you'll say.** Be prepared to share your feelings on Fair Trade with a simple sentence about what Fair Trade is and why you support it. Make sure everyone in your group is ready to get our message out to the hundreds of people you will be serving that morning.
3. **Take a deep breath.** This is going to be a lot of fun and you are going to make tons of new friends and allies. By the end of the morning you are going to know your Fair Trade speech forwards and backwards.

During the Event

1. **Make a splash!** Let folks know why you're here and what this is all about. This event is about increasing the visibility of Fair Trade in your community. Be sure folks can see you and your message is clear.

2. **Keep the crowd moving and the coffee flowing.** Reach as many people as possible. Don't be in the way. For folks that want to learn more have resources readily available at your table for them to take with them.
3. **Build your group!** Direct new supporters to your table for more information and have them sign up for more information and to get involved. Be sure they know where they can find you and a good cup of Fair Trade coffee, all year round. Be friendly, outgoing and accessible.
4. **Be on the look out for press!** You can reach hundreds of people on their morning commute and thousands of people on the evening news. Be ready with that killer sound bite about why you support Fair Trade and where folks can find out more about your campaign.

After the Event

1. **Let us know how it went!** Fill out an online evaluation form or complete and mail the form enclosed in your organizing kit.
2. **Did your group get any press?** Be sure to let us know so we can share your success with other supporters around the country.
3. **Mail us your sign in sheets.** We'll include these folks on the list for our newsletter, the Fair Trade Beat.
4. **Follow up with all your new supporters.** Send an email and let them know how they can get involved.
5. **Celebrate being a leader in the Fair Trade movement!** Your event just brought hundreds of commuters that much closer to Fair Trade farmers around the world and set the stage for future campaigns in your community! Well done! Throw a small party for all the volunteers that helped out.