

Sustainability Report 2025

Re- think

BUSINESS AS A
FORCE FOR GOOD

Celebrating 20 Years
of Regeneration &
Empowerment

 fairtrasa®

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LETTER FROM OUR FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN

As Fairtrasa celebrates its twentieth anniversary, I am honored to present this Sustainability Report — a reflection of the work, the learnings, and the deep relationships that have shaped our journey since 2005.

When I founded Fairtrasa, the vision was to create a new way of doing business in agriculture: one that empowers smallholder farmers, restores ecological health, and brings dignity, fairness, and transparency into global supply chains.

For two decades, this vision has guided us through changing markets, changing climates, and a changing world.

A CATALYST FOR TRANSFORMATION

From our earliest days, Fairtrasa sought not only to participate in the food system, but to help reshape it. In 2005, we introduced the first Fairtrade-certified avocados to the global market — at a time when such a product did not exist. Soon after, we created and launched Argentina's first Fairtrade wine. Both initiatives sparked ripple effects far beyond our original operations.

What began as pioneering projects quietly influenced broader shifts. Today, entire categories that once had no ethical or sustainable options have grown into vibrant sectors supporting thousands of farming families. These changes were never ours alone, but they demonstrate how purposeful innovation can open doors and inspire new possibilities across an entire industry.

A WORLD TRANSFORMED – AND A MISSION MORE RELEVANT THAN EVER

The last several years have reshaped global agriculture. Climate volatility, inflation, and supply chain disruptions have made livelihoods more precarious, particularly for smallholder farmers. Yet at the same time, the world has awakened to the urgency of regeneration, fairness, and resilience.

What once were considered alternative practices — organic farming, agroforestry, transparent sourcing, equitable value distribution — are now widely recognized as essential for the future of food.

Fairtrasa's approach, developed long before these global shifts, has become increasingly aligned with what the world needs today.

RESILIENCE IN A DECADE OF UNCERTAINTY

The past years have challenged mission-driven companies everywhere. Despite financial constraints and global disruptions, we remained committed to our foundations:

- building long-term, trust-based relationships with smallholder farmers,
- maintaining organic and regenerative organic growing practices,
- ensuring fair and dignified working conditions,
- investing in soil health, water stewardship, and biodiversity,
- optimizing food supply chains and making them more direct,
- and strengthening local leadership across all regions.

These efforts are the reason Fairtrasa today is one of the longest-standing, locally anchored social enterprises in the global fresh fruit sector.



IMPACT POWERED BY OUR OWN OPERATIONS

One element of our journey stands out:

Fairtrasa has created all of its social and environmental impact without relying on donor funding.

Every program, every investment in farmers, every training, every regenerative initiative, every community project has been financed through the strength of our own business model.

This has shaped who we are. It has demanded discipline, creativity, and perseverance. But most importantly, it has demonstrated that: This is the spirit of business as a force for

a business, when grounded in purpose, can generate profound and lasting impact through its own operations.

good — not as a slogan, but as lived reality.

TWENTY YEARS OF IMPACT BEYOND OUR OWN BOUNDARIES

While our direct work touches thousands of farmers across Latin America, our influence extends further. Over the years, Fairtrasa has contributed to:

- new regenerative farming networks,
- the emergence of cooperatives and community enterprises,
- sector-wide innovations in transparency and sourcing,
- and a broader shift in how companies, consumers, and institutions think about smallholders and sustainability.

These are the subtle but powerful forms of impact — the ones that shape mindsets, inspire new actors, and help transform entire segments of the industry.

LOOKING AHEAD: DEEPENING AND SCALING OUR CONTRIBUTION

As we begin our next twenty years, our commitment is to deepen the work that has defined us:

- regenerating soils and restoring ecological balance,
- strengthening climate resilience for farmers and communities,
- expanding transparent, responsible supply chains,
- creating dignified rural livelihoods,
- and empowering smallholders to become agents of prosperity in their own communities.

Our role is clear:

to help build the food systems that the future demands — fairer, healthier, and more regenerative for all.

A WORD OF GRATITUDE

To our teams, growers, partners, and friends: thank you.

Fairtrasa's journey has been shaped by your dedication, your trust, and your belief in a shared mission.

As we reflect on twenty years of transformation, we step into the future with humility, clarity, and determination — ready to continue contributing to a more just and regenerative world.



With gratitude,
Patrick Struebi
Founder & Executive Chairman
Fairtrasa Group

A WORLD TRANSFORMED

Why Fairtrasa's mission is more relevant than ever in 2025

Over the past several years, the world has undergone profound change. Climate extremes, inflation, geopolitical instability, Covid, and supply chain fragility have reshaped the global food system. Farming has become more unpredictable, rural livelihoods more vulnerable, and the ecological foundation of agriculture more fragile.

Yet within this turbulence, a new global consensus has emerged:

The future of food must be regenerative, fair, and resilient — or there will be no sustainable future at all.

The world is not simply facing a crisis. It is undergoing a transformation in how people think about food, land, and the systems that sustain us.



1

Climate impacts are rewriting the rules of agriculture

Droughts, floods, heatwaves, and soil degradation have intensified across continents. For smallholder farmers, these changes are not abstract forecasts — they shape daily life.

Healthy soils and diverse agroecosystems are now recognized as essential climate solutions. Regenerative agriculture, once seen as niche, has become a global priority.

Regeneration is no longer an alternative. It is a necessity.

2

The economics of farming have shifted dramatically

Rising input costs, inflation, and logistical disruptions have changed the financial reality of agriculture. The last few years revealed how fragile long-distance, industrialized food systems have become.

Today, resilience depends on:

- fair partnerships
- local capacity
- diversified sourcing
- and stronger, more transparent supply chains

These principles have defined Fairtrasa's model since 2005 — long before they became global imperatives.



3 Consumers are demanding transparency and responsibility

Around the world, people increasingly want to know:

- where their food comes from,
- who grew it,
- how it was produced,
- and what impact it had on people and ecosystems.

Ethical and organic products are expanding rapidly. Traceability is becoming the new standard. Consumers are transforming markets — not the other way around.

Transparency has become one of the defining values of the modern food system.

4 Smallholder livelihoods are under pressure — and more essential than ever

Smallholder farmers still feed a large share of the world's population. Yet they face unprecedented challenges: volatile markets, aging rural communities, climate risk, and limited access to finance and technology.

Supporting smallholders is no longer a social mission — it is a global necessity for food security.



5 A 20-year head start in the food system the world now needs

The world's new priorities — regeneration, fairness, transparency — are the principles Fairtrasa has built upon for two decades.

Fairtrasa's pioneering contributions helped pave the way for broader change:

- Introducing the world's first Fairtrade avocados
- Creating the first Fairtrade wine in Argentina
- Demonstrating that smallholders can reach global markets with competitive quality
- Setting up farmer development systems years before "regeneration" became a mainstream concept
- Establishing locally led, self-sustaining business models in regions where donor dependence was the norm
- Showing that social impact can be generated through a business model — not grants

These innovations have influenced markets, cooperatives, and entire product categories, contributing to the rise of more ethical, transparent, and sustainable supply chains across Latin America and beyond.



6 Looking ahead: a world ready for regeneration

As global awareness shifts, Fairtrasa finds itself aligned with the direction the world is moving:

- restoring ecosystems
- strengthening smallholder resilience
- ensuring fair value distribution
- providing healthy, organic food
- and building transparent supply chains

Our work over the last 20 years has not only prepared us for this moment — it has helped **shape it**.

The path ahead is challenging, but the opportunity is historic. A world transformed needs food systems that honor both people and the planet. Fairtrasa's next 20 years will be devoted to helping build them.





WHO WE ARE



Twenty years of pioneering regenerative, fair, and inclusive food systems

Fairtrasa is a global social enterprise with regeneration, dignity, and shared prosperity at the core of everything we do. Founded in 2005 with a bold vision — that smallholder farmers can thrive as agro-entrepreneurs while restoring the land — Fairtrasa has spent two decades proving that business can be a force for good in some of the world's most vulnerable rural regions.

From the beginning, our model has been rooted in **three convictions**:

- 1 Healthy soils and ecosystems are the foundation of lasting prosperity.
- 2 Empowered smallholders create resilient communities and stronger food systems.
- 3 Long-term, transparent partnerships can transform entire sectors.



Yale



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A LOCALLY ROOTED, GLOBALLY CONNECTED MODEL

We operate through local teams in Peru, Mexico, and the Dominican Republic, led by local experts deeply connected to their communities. This “locals for locals” model ensures cultural understanding, continuity, and long-term relationships built on trust. Our partner growers — from small cooperatives to pioneering regenerative farms — benefit from agronomic support, certification guidance, transparent pricing, and access to international markets.

Across all regions, we work only with growers who share a commitment to soil health, biodiversity, and responsible agricultural practices. With them, we co-create impact through technical assistance, infrastructure investments, and support for local social projects.

IMPACT EARNED – NOT SUBSIDIZED

Unlike many organizations working in rural development, Fairtrasa has never relied on donor funding.

Every aspect of our impact — thousands of farmers trained, regenerative practices adopted, communities strengthened — has been financed through our own operations.

This independence has shaped our identity. It has required discipline, resilience, and creativity, but it has also allowed us to build a model that is self-sustaining, scalable, and grounded in real market value.

A REGENERATIVE, TRANSPARENT VALUE CHAIN

From our field operations in Latin America to our import and sales hub in Rotterdam, we offer a year-round supply of organic and Fairtrade fruit to some 300 retailers, wholesalers, and conscious markets across Europe. We prioritize transparency and quality at every step—combining smallholder empowerment, ecological regeneration, and rigorous standards from GlobalG.A.P. to organic and Fairtrade certifications.



A LEGACY OF INFLUENCE, AND A PLATFORM FOR THE FUTURE

Fairtrasa's work has reached well beyond our own supply chains. Farmers we trained have become leaders in their regions. Cooperatives we partnered with have inspired neighboring communities. Innovations we introduced have contributed to new standards and models across the sector. Over time, this quiet influence has helped shift mindsets, policies, and practices in ways that support more equitable and regenerative food systems.

Today, as we enter our twentieth year, our mission is both the same and more urgent than ever:

to empower smallholder farmers, regenerate the land, and help transform the global food system into one that nourishes people and the planet.

Fairtrasa was built for this moment — and the future we are working toward is already taking root.



AT A GLANCE

Two decades of proving that business can be a force for good.



Over
\$6.3 Million

Fairtrade Premiums
distributed to date



20 to 50%

Increases in the income of
small-scale family farmers



**Farmer
Development**

training, pre-financing, and
support for 20 years



Over 60,000

Lives impacted in marginalized
rural communities

EMPOWERING SMALLHOLDER FARMERS



EMPOWERING SMALLHOLDER FARMERS



Living wage

Or more in every country
for every position



100% local

Workforce and
leadership



Community

Building resilient, thriving
rural communities



41% female

Workforce across the group



EMPOWERING OUR WORKFORCE

Fairtrasa's model is simple,
scalable, and proven:
empower farmers,
regenerate land, and
create value for all.



REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE & CLIMATE IMPACT

20 years of regenerative impact and farmer empowerment.



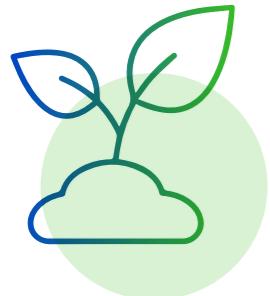
Regenerate forests

Help replant forests with indigenous varieties in vulnerable ecologies



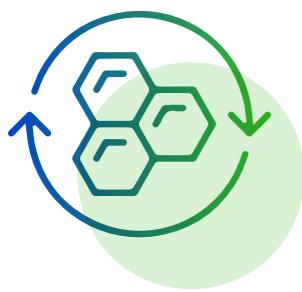
Water Stewardship

Strengthen water-risk assessments and promote water retention through regenerative practices.



Keep organic as the baseline

Continue our historic grower support program for organic management



Regenerate farmlands

Support our growers to implement regenerative agriculture



Zero donor funding

All impact generated through operations

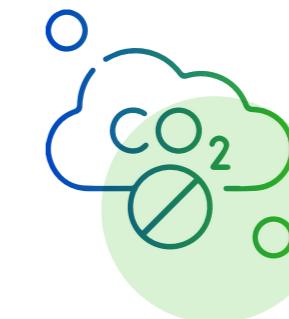


Regeneration sits at the core of Fairtrasa's identity.



Circularity in Packaging and Waste

Transition toward circular packaging systems using biodegradable or compostable materials.



Combat Climate Change

Net Zero emissions with our regenerative growers by 2030



Re- Generate

Restoring ecosystems, strengthening resilience, and building the foundation of regenerative food systems



Regeneration is at the heart of Fairtrasa's identity. Long before "regenerative agriculture" became a global priority, Fairtrasa was supporting smallholder farmers to improve soil health, enhance biodiversity, and work in harmony with their land. For us, regeneration is not a trend — it is the foundation of lasting prosperity for farmers, communities, and ecosystems.

Across our sourcing regions, we work with growers to strengthen soils, increase climate resilience, restore forests, reduce waste, and build circular systems that give back more than they take. Our approach is rooted in deep local knowledge, scientific agronomy, and hands-on innovation developed over two decades.

OUR PRINCIPLES



Protect and restore soil health



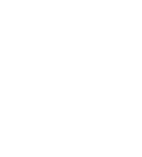
Improve the climate resilience of our growers



Increase sequestration, decrease emissions



Protect and regenerate ecosystems



Work toward a circular economy in the supply chain



3

GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



7

AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



12

RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



13

CLIMATE ACTION



15

LIFE ON LAND



17

PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

REGENERATE FARMLANDS

Healthy soils. Thriving ecosystems. Stronger communities.

We draw on both ancestral agricultural wisdom and modern agroecological science, recognizing that each farm and ecosystem requires tailored approaches.

To learn more about how regenerative organic agriculture goes beyond standard organic methods and benefits our climate, scan the QR codes.

Regenerative farming transforms agriculture from a system that depletes land to one that restores it. For our growers, the benefits go far beyond improved yields. Healthier soils mean stronger plants, greater biodiversity, improved water retention, and greater resilience to droughts and pests.

Fairtrasa has spent two decades supporting farmers to transition from conventional or low-input agriculture to organic, and increasingly to regenerative practices. These transitions require time, knowledge, and support—and our local teams walk this journey with farmers step by step.



STRENGTHENED FOUNDATIONS (2021-2025)

- Regenerative pilot plots established in multiple regions
- Successful transitions in soil cover, mulching, integrated pest management
- Increased adoption of mixed-species agroforestry where suitable
- Trained and guided several farms and smallholder cooperatives to achieve **Regenerative Organic Certified®** status—the food industry's most demanding top-level certification
- Local agronomists trained in regenerative monitoring
- Farmer field schools expanded to new communities

LONG-TERM DIRECTION (2025-2030)

- Scale regenerative practices across smallholder networks
- Support certifying for ROC™ (Regenerative Organic Certificatiated®) where realistic
- Expand agroforestry models for climate resilience
- Support farmer-led regenerative innovation
- Build regional centers of regenerative excellence

COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE

Carbon in the soil, not in the atmosphere.



Regenerative perennial crops — such as avocados, bananas, ginger, and citrus — have significant potential to remove carbon from the atmosphere and increase soil organic matter. Our studies with universities in Mexico have shown that properly managed orchards can become net carbon sinks.

Fairtrasa is uniquely positioned to contribute to global climate solutions: our products come from tropical and sub-tropical perennials with some of the highest sequestration potential in agriculture.

STRENGTHENED FOUNDATIONS (2021–2025)

- Initial carbon assessments completed with university partners
- Increased shade cover, biomass, and organic carbon in key farm regions
- Regenerative trials incorporated into climate impact modeling
- Low-impact logistics improvements via partner facilities

LONG-TERM DIRECTION (2025–2030)

- Develop a comprehensive climate strategy, combining sequestration + emissions reduction
- Expand carbon footprint assessments to all partner regions
- Support farmers to generate carbon benefits through regenerative transitions
- Continue shifting logistics partners toward renewable energy and use ocean vessels and containers with a significantly lower impact on the climate (low-GWP refrigerants)

REFORESTATION IN PERUVIAN AMAZONIA

There is only one thing on land that can sequester more carbon than a regenerative perennial farm: a forest.

We work with ginger farmers deep in Peru's Central Jungle, where deforestation remains a serious challenge. To offer support that is both practical and lasting, we designed a five-step plan together with our growers that helps the community restore the forest—and gives them strong reasons to protect it for generations to come.



**24,000
trees
planted**

over the last year



1



We established a nursery for indigenous tree species and raised tens of thousands of saplings.

2



We developed a locally adapted agroforestry system in which native trees grow alongside coffee, cocoa, and fruit trees. This mix improves growth conditions and provides farmers with additional income, giving them a strong incentive to safeguard the trees.

3



Because most farmers begin their day with the radio, we launched an early-morning program on the local station and organized regular training sessions. We discuss how local ecosystems function and show why healthy forests are essential for the long-term well-being of both farmland and communities.

4



Once a batch of saplings is mature enough, we hold community planting events where we distribute the young trees to local families and reforest the most vulnerable areas of the surrounding jungle together.

5



Finally, we use satellite imagery to monitor the growth of the new forests and to ensure that no deforestation occurs.

STRENGTHEN WATER RESILIENCE

Water is life. Protecting it is non-negotiable.

Water conservation is fundamental to sustainable agriculture, especially in the semi-arid regions where many of our growers farm. To protect this vital resource, we assess water use and availability from multiple perspectives. Using tools such as the WWF Water Risk Filter, we evaluate geographic and climate-related risks, while also gathering insights directly from farmers about changing patterns of drought, flooding, and water scarcity. In high-risk areas, we conduct field analyses with local experts to understand vulnerabilities more deeply. These assessments guide practical strategies to reduce water risk and strengthen long-term resilience for growers and their communities.



STRENGTHENED FOUNDATIONS (2021–2025)

- Completed water risk assessments in key regions
- Piloted on-farm water-use evaluations with university researchers
- Strengthened soil moisture retention through regenerative methods
- Educated growers about long-term water risks and management

LONG-TERM DIRECTION (2025–2030)

- Expand risk assessments to additional growers
- Strengthen water stewardship guidelines
- Promote regenerative practices that enhance water retention
- Collaborate on watershed-level initiatives

REDUCE PLASTIC FOOTPRINT

Reducing waste, increasing circularity.



Plastic touches nearly every part of the global food system — from farms and packhouses to retail shelves and home kitchens. Reducing this impact is essential to protecting ecosystems and communities.

Over the past years, we have begun testing alternatives to plastic-intensive materials in banana production — traditionally the most plastic-heavy crop. We have also organized community plastic collection initiatives around our farms and packhouses, and continue evaluating biodegradable and compostable options for consumer packaging. Our goal is to steadily transition toward materials that are safer for the planet and future generations.

STRENGTHENED FOUNDATIONS (2021-2025)

- Trials with biodegradable banana bags
- Reduction of non-degradable materials
- Community plastic collection and recycling events
- Evaluation of biodegradable packaging suppliers

LONG-TERM DIRECTION (2025-2030)

- Transition all consumer packaging to biodegradable alternatives
- Reduce on-farm plastic reliance
- Support communities in waste management initiatives

REDUCE LOGISTICS FOOTPRINT

Cleaner, smarter movement of food.

Our environmental impact extends beyond the farms we work with. Each year, we evaluate the sustainability performance of our logistics partners and assess the most responsible options available to us. When meaningful improvements are possible, we first explore them collaboratively with our existing partners. If change is not feasible, we transition to alternatives that better align with our values.

We are encouraged by the progress our current partners have made, with measurable reductions in energy use, refrigerants, and waste across their operations.



STRENGTHENED FOUNDATIONS (2021-2025)

- Logistics partners upgraded to LED lighting, solar, and low-GWP refrigerants
- Increased energy efficiency across ripening rooms
- Reduced GHG footprint in transport and warehousing

LONG-TERM DIRECTION (2025-2030)

- Collaborate only with partners committed to continuous sustainability improvement
- Integrate renewable energy logistics wherever feasible
- Map full transport footprint for continuous improvement

Re- Build

Thriving farming communities,
empowered growers and human dignity
at the core of every value chain



Fairtrasa was founded to address the systemic exclusion and marginalization of smallholder farmers — not through charity, but through economic opportunity, knowledge, and long-term partnership. Over the last 20 years, our work has strengthened rural livelihoods, empowered local leaders, and helped transform farming communities into foundations of resilience, prosperity, and dignity.

Our approach is grounded in the belief that **lasting social impact requires structural change** — fair wages, equal opportunities, safe working conditions, local leadership, and transparent value distribution.

Social impact is most powerful when it is built on dignity, opportunity, and partnership — not dependency.

OUR PRINCIPLES

- 1  Ensure an equitable workplace and good working conditions
- 2  Listen to and empower smallholder farmers
- 3  Build equal partnerships and co-create impact
- 4  Listen to and empower local communities.



ENSURE FAIR, SAFE, AND RESPECTFUL WORKPLACES

Protecting human rights, ensuring fair wages, and fostering a culture of dignity and opportunity

We guarantee that every position within our company meets or exceeds the local living wage, as defined by the internationally recognized Anker Methodology. This ensures that workers can support themselves and their families with adequate food, housing, education, healthcare, transportation, and a buffer for unexpected needs. Beyond fair wages, we invest continuously in the well-being of field workers by improving facilities, providing safe housing where needed, and ensuring access to essential services.

Being a social enterprise begins with ensuring the well-being, safety, and dignity of everyone who works with us. Across all regions, we uphold strong human rights and labor standards, supported by rigorous HR policies that protect employees from discrimination or abuse and promote fair, respectful workplaces.

STRENGTHENED FOUNDATIONS (2021-2025)

- Maintained 100% living-wage standards across all countries
- Strengthened HR systems, internal audits, and anti-discrimination safeguards
- Continued investments in worker housing, meals, and health access on our farms
- Supported growers in achieving Fairtrade, BSCI, GRASP, or equivalent social certifications
- Protected a culture of dignity, safety, and opportunity across all operations

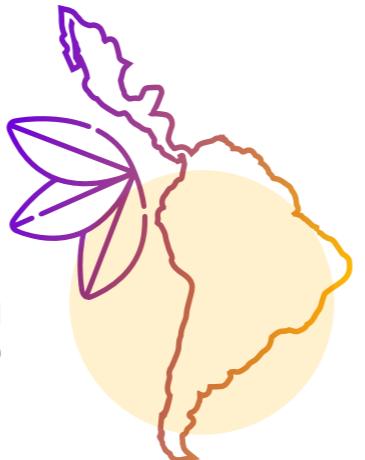
LONG-TERM DIRECTION (2025-2030)

- Ensure all partners meet or exceed social responsibility standards
- Strengthen worker well-being programs across regions
- Continue advancing living wage commitments as markets evolve
- Expand training programs focused on safety, rights, and inclusive leadership

EMPOWERING LOCAL LEADERS, GROWING STRONGER COMMUNITIES

Local leadership as the
engine of sustainable
impact

100% local
workforce and
leadership



STRENGTHENED FOUNDATIONS (2021–2025)

- 100% local staff and leadership in all sourcing countries
- Built long-term career paths for local managers and agronomists
- Embedded equal-opportunity hiring practices across the group



41%
female
group workforce

LONG-TERM DIRECTION (2025–2030)

- Continue building the next generation of local leaders
- Increase opportunities for women in agronomy and leadership
- Expand local professional development programs
- Strengthen community-based hiring to deepen regional roots

Fairtrasa was built on a “locals for locals” model, and this principle has guided our work from the beginning. We have always believed that meaningful, long-term change must be led by people who understand their communities — their challenges, their culture, and their aspirations. Local leaders are best positioned to shift mindsets, build trust, organize farmers, and create pathways out of systemic marginalization.

From the very start, our field offices have been fully staffed and led by people from the regions in which we operate, ensuring continuity, cultural understanding, and authentic relationships. Across the organization, women represent 41% of our workforce, contributing essential expertise and leadership throughout the company.

SUPPORTING WOMEN WORKERS

Violence against women affects poorer areas more severely—and the jungle where we work is among the poorest in Peru.

This is why in our ginger processing plant in Satipo we employ women in two thirds of the positions.

Many of our employees generate the only income in their homes.

In addition to building a female-majority workplace, we started an evening school where women can learn additional skills that are in-demand in the area. This year we expect 20 people to graduate.



EMPOWER SMALLHOLDER FARMERS

**The heart of our mission —
enabling farmers to become
independent
agro-entrepreneurs**

We have started Fairtrassa to empower small-scale growers and improve their livelihoods. This is still at the core of our mission — therefore we are going to discuss this area of impact at greater length.

WHY SMALLHOLDERS?

The importance of smallholder farming cannot be overstated. It is the foundation of the livelihoods of over 2 billion people, and it provides around a third of the world's food supply.

Small-scale agriculture on average is vastly better positioned to be sustainable and regenerative than large-scale, industrialized farming. Since more people cultivate smaller plots of land, they can devote more attention to details such as differences in soil quality, water retention or the availability of sunlight in different areas of their farms.

They are also able to create more complex polycultures, ensuring that the various crops reinforce each other and take into account the characteristics of the local ecosystem. As most smallholders live on or close to their land, they also have a deep interest in a healthy environment and multi-generational productivity.





**Contrary to popular belief,
smallholders are our best
hope to feed the world's
growing population**

A large-scale overview of existing research conducted by the United Nations has found that when we compare smallholders with industrialized agriculture, they tend to use fewer natural resources, maintain better soil health, grow healthier produce, and nurture more diverse ecosystems, therefore their farms are more resilient to weather events and pests. Contrary to popular belief, this comes hand in hand with yields that are often on par with industrialized agriculture — and with a vastly greater potential to increase yields in the future.



It is our common interest to ensure that smallholder farmers can succeed — because meta studies on the global food system over and over again find that they are our best hope to ensure food security for the world's growing population. To see more research data and references, please go to our website:

**Why smallholder
farming is not the past:
It's the future**



SCAN TO READ



How to go beyond fair trade - The Three Tier Model



SCAN TO READ

- training in organic best practices, yield optimization and export standards
- pre-financing as well as support in accessing affordable financing to buy organic seeds and fertilizers, equipment, and additional land
- help with obtaining and managing certifications
- support with warehousing and transportation
- investment in infrastructure projects, such as packhouses, banana transport cables, storage facilities or irrigation wells
- training in logistics and in setting up and operating infrastructure
- support with setting up grower co-operatives for increased efficiency and bargaining power
- access to global markets

WHAT WE DO FOR FARMERS

Smallholder farmers feed much of the world, yet many remain excluded from global markets and lack the knowledge, resources, and support needed to build stable livelihoods. While Fairtrade certification has helped more advanced growers, countless smaller and less-resourced farmers have been left out. We realized that we have to reach these growers — the ones facing the steepest climb toward economic independence.

Through years of close collaboration, we developed the **Fairtrasa Three-Tier Farmer Development Model**, which recognizes that farmers at different stages require different support. When we begin working with a new grower, our field teams assess their current situation and place them into one of three tiers.

Each tier receives a tailored combination of technical training, organic transition support, certification guidance, pre-financing, infrastructure improvements, and access to fair markets — helping farmers progress step by step toward greater independence and long-term success.

This structured, personalized model has become one of Fairtrasa's most effective tools for enabling farmers to strengthen their farms, increase resilience, and build more prosperous futures. It includes the following:



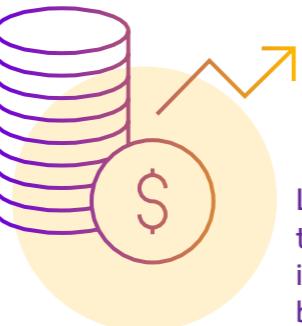


STRENGTHENED FOUNDATIONS (2021-2025)

- Continuous implementation of the Three-Tier Development Model
- Thousands of farmers trained in organic, regenerative, and export standards
- Long-term partnerships with farmer cooperatives and associations
- Improved access to certifications and global markets

LONG-TERM DIRECTION (2025-2030)

- Scale the Three-Tier Model to new regions and communities
- Expand regenerative training to enhance climate resilience
- Strengthen farmer access to finance and infrastructure
- Build stronger cooperative and community-based structures



Level 1 farmers typically report income increases between **20-50%** in some cases up to 300%



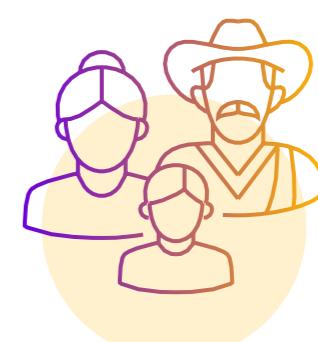
over **1,300** farmers engaged in current programs



over **\$6.3 million** million distributed in Fairtrade premiums



over **13,000** farmers and workers impacted



over **60,000** lives impacted





Re-Vitalize

Healthy growers. Healthy consumers. Healthy ecosystems.

Fairtrasa believes that food should nourish everyone it touches—the farmers who grow it, the communities who depend on it, the consumers who eat it, and the ecosystems that sustain it. Good food cannot come from degraded soils, exploited workers, or extractive practices. True vitality requires a holistic approach that restores health at every step in the chain.

This is why, from the very beginning, Fairtrasa chose organic agriculture as a minimum standard and has been advancing regenerative practices long before they became a global movement. Our commitment is grounded in the conviction that

human health and environmental health are inseparable.



OUR PRINCIPLE



Ensure that our products are healthy for all the stakeholders involved — farmers, workers, consumers and the environment



GROWER HEALTH

Protecting the people who nourish the world

Fresh fruit nourishes consumers, but for decades the people who grow it have faced serious health risks from chemical-intensive agriculture. The impacts are often invisible at first, yet long-term exposure to pesticides has harmed countless farmers, workers, and rural families. When we began Fairtrasa twenty years ago, growers shared stories that made these dangers unmistakably clear — and it became evident that helping farmers improve their lives meant helping them leave conventional practices behind.

Organic farming became our baseline because it protects the health of growers, their families, and their communities. Over the years, we have learned that natural ecosystems often require even more — which is why we continue to strengthen regenerative practices wherever possible. But organic remains the first, necessary step that each of our farmers need to take, and we support them through the transition with training, guidance, and long-term partnership.

**Healthy growers are the
foundation of healthy food
systems.**

A recent survey among our growers confirmed just how meaningful this transition has been. Many described the relief of no longer handling toxic substances, and when asked what they appreciate most about organic farming, the overwhelming response was simple: **safety**. Across all regions, farmers reported improvements in their own health, their workers' well-being, and the overall health of their communities since shifting away from chemicals. These voices affirm what has guided Fairtrasa for two decades: farming should nourish the people who grow our food—not harm them.

STRENGTHENED FOUNDATIONS (2021-2025)

- Maintained organic certification compliance for all grower partners
- Supported new partners through safe, stepwise organic transition
- Expanded farmer education on health risks of agrochemicals
- Documented growers' testimonies on improved well-being after transitioning to organic

LONG-TERM DIRECTION (2025-2030)

- Deepen grower health programs linked to regenerative transitions
- Introduce more farmer-to-farmer health knowledge exchanges
- Strengthen local awareness on pesticide dangers and safe alternatives
- Expand organic transition pathways to more farming communities

WHAT'S WRONG WITH PESTICIDES?



The UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food has reported that "pesticides are responsible for an estimated 200,000 acute poisoning deaths each year." In some countries, they exceed the number of deaths from infectious diseases. (1) Occupational and residential exposure to hazardous pesticides is associated with multiple types of "cancer, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases, hormone disruption, developmental disorders and sterility."(2) When pregnant women are exposed, there is a "higher risk of childhood leukaemia and other cancers, autism and respiratory illnesses."(3) Exposure for children through residues alone may be "very damaging for their health, disrupting their mental and physiological growth

and possibly leading to a lifetime of diseases and disorders." (4) (5) The list of confirmed harms in the UN report goes on for five full, frightening pages. And those are only pesticides' effects on human health.

The environmental devastation they cause affect everyone, not just those who live close to fields. Pesticides are poisons designed to kill. And they not only kill pests, but many other small animals and micro-organisms on and around farm fields. This erodes soil health and long term productivity, jeopardizing the very reason for these chemicals' existence: food security for a growing population. Pesticides have helped the world ramp up food production in the short run, which has saved hundreds of millions from starvation. But it has done so for a frightening price that, for a long while, was largely invisible. Today, we are aware of it. This is why there is no place for the status quo. Many studies have confirmed that smallholders using only sustainable practices could feed the world's increasing population (see pages [XX] for details). That is the future that we at Fairtrasa believe in and work for.

References

(1) Human Rights Council of the United Nations, 34th Session: *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food,* 1-4. **UN General Assembly (2017). / (2) Ibid., **5. / (3) Ibid., 6-7. / (4) Human Rights Council, 7. / (5) Mie, et al., 1.

CONSUMER HEALTH

Healthy soils create healthier food — and healthier lives

Scientific studies show that organically grown fruits and vegetables tend to contain higher levels of antioxidant and phenolic compounds — nutrients linked to reduced inflammation, improved cognitive function, and lower risk of chronic disease. While research continues to evolve, one fact is clear: choosing organic significantly reduces exposure to pesticide residues, a difference that is especially important for children.

This understanding has shaped our mission for two decades. Fairtrasa has always worked to make high-quality, organic produce accessible to a broad consumer base — not just those who can afford premium prices. Despite our deep local engagement and smallholder focus, our products remain competitively priced with fruit from large, conventional plantations, allowing more households to choose healthier, safer options.

As we continue expanding regenerative practices across our grower network, we believe that healthier soils will produce even more nutritious, resilient crops. Our strategy remains unchanged: to offer consumers responsibly grown, organic food with an ever-improving environmental footprint — ensuring that healthier choices become the standard, not the exception.

STRENGTHENED FOUNDATIONS (2021-2025)

- Maintained 100% organic baseline across all Fairtrasa fruit categories
- Ensured GlobalG.A.P compliance across all farms
- Expanded consumer transparency through traceability platforms
- Strengthened residue risk management in supply chains

LONG-TERM DIRECTION (2025-2030)

- Increase access to healthy and organic produce in key markets
- Research the links between regenerative soil health and consumer health
- Strengthen traceability to allow consumers to see how their food contributes to ecosystem and community health
- Promote awareness: “healthy soils = healthy food = healthy people”



References

(1) Mie, A., Andersen, H.R., Gunnarsson, S. et al. Human health implications of organic food and organic agriculture: a comprehensive review. *Environ Health* 16, 111 (2017).

CONNECTING HUMAN HEALTH, COMMUNITY WELL-BEING, AND ECOSYSTEM VITALITY

Our **Re-Vitalize** pillar bridges the human and ecological dimensions of Fairtrasa's mission. It reflects a simple truth:

**Food can only truly
be healthy if the land
and people behind it
are healthy too.**

By supporting farmers to transition away from harmful agrochemicals, improving soil health, and expanding access to organic and regenerative products, Fairtrasa helps create value that flows through the entire food system. Healthier farms sustain healthier growers and produce healthier food, which in turn nurture healthier consumers.

This holistic perspective has shaped Fairtrasa's work for two decades. It is a **human-centered and planet-centered approach**, which aligns with the values of sustainability leaders, responsible retailers, and mission-driven partners across the world.

Re-Vitalize reinforces Fairtrasa's role as a pioneer of food systems that nourish—from soil to grower to consumer—demonstrating that the path to a regenerative future begins with protecting the well-being of those closest to the land.





Re- Connect

**Bridging farmers, consumers,
communities, and global systems**

Fairtrasa has always understood that transforming agriculture requires more than supporting farmers and improving practices. It requires changing mindsets, building scalable models, and strengthening the relationships that connect growers, buyers, consumers, and institutions.

Re-Connect is the pillar where Fairtrasa's influence extends beyond our own supply chains — into the broader systems that shape global food production, trade, and sustainability.

OUR PRINCIPLES



1 Building replicable models of impact



2 Connecting growers with consumers through transparency



3 Contributing to a global movement for systemic change



16 PEACE, JUSTICE
AND STRONG
INSTITUTIONS



17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS

FROM LOCAL INNOVATION TO GLOBAL INSPIRATION

Scaling impact through innovation, example, and shared learning

Fairtrasa began as a pioneer — launching the world's first Fairtrade avocados and Peru's first Fairtrade limes, followed by Argentina's first Fairtrade winery. These early breakthroughs sparked ripple effects that reshaped entire product categories, inspiring hundreds of organizations to follow and opening global markets for smallholder farmers who had long been excluded.

While these achievements are easy to quantify, the deeper influence of our work is reflected in the people and organizations we have inspired over the years. Several individuals who worked closely with Fairtrasa have gone on to build their own farmer-focused enterprises, extending impact far beyond our direct reach. At industry fairs and events, we are continually approached by new agro-entrepreneurs who tell us how our model encouraged them to rethink their own approach to sourcing, farmer empowerment, and regeneration.

This wider influence has been reinforced by recognition from leading social-impact institutions—including Ashoka, the Schwab Foundation, the World Economic Forum, Yale University, and others — which has helped bring our model to a global audience. Yet the indicators that matter most to us are closer to home: the trust of growers who recommend us to friends and neighbors, and the talented, mission-driven individuals who seek to join Fairtrasa because they want their work to contribute to meaningful change.

Today, we are focused on developing scalable regenerative models that can once again inspire others and help transform agriculture into a solution for some of the world's most pressing challenges — from rural livelihoods to soil health to climate resilience. Our impact has never been about size alone, but about the consistency, authenticity, and local presence that have guided us from the beginning.

STRENGTHENED FOUNDATIONS (2021–2025)

- Shared insights with universities, partners, and peer organizations
- Strengthened regenerative methodologies for broader adoption
- Contributed to thought leadership in social entrepreneurship and ethical sourcing
- Encouraged the next generation of Latin American agro-entrepreneurs

LONG-TERM DIRECTION (2025–2030)

- Develop scalable regenerative models for smallholder contexts
- Support more cooperatives in adopting Fairtrade, organic, or regenerative standards
- Expand our educational footprint through academic and ecosystem partnerships
- Strengthen open-source knowledge sharing to accelerate systemic change

Our aim is not to own impact — but to enable it.

STRENGTHENING TRUST ACROSS THE VALUE CHAIN

Traceability, transparency, and trust from farm to fork

In an era where consumers demand to know where their food comes from, Fairtrasa has been at the forefront of transparent, responsible supply chains.

Our partnership with the Storybird platform allows customers to:

- trace fruit back to its origin
- learn about the farmer behind the product
- understand the stages from harvest to arrival
- see certifications, impact data, and photos
- engage directly with the stories of regeneration and transformation

This level of transparency builds trust, strengthens farmer pride, and demonstrates what ethical sourcing looks like in practice.



Scan the code to see the journeys



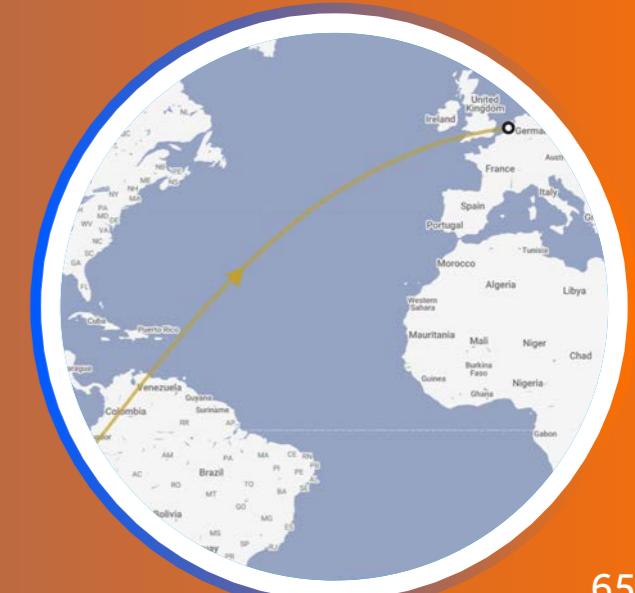
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Transparency builds trust — trust builds transformation.



CATALYZING GLOBAL CHANGE

Driving systemic change through partnerships, knowledge, and global networks

We have always believed that meaningful models spread through openness — by learning from others and sharing what we have learned along the way. This is why Fairtrasa actively engages in global networks such as Ashoka and Catalyst 2030, and why we participate in international forums that bring together leaders from business, policy, academia, and civil society. Beyond the agricultural sector, our insights are shared at global events where systemic change, social entrepreneurship, and regenerative models are shaping the future.

Our Founder and Executive Chairman, Patrick Struebi, plays a central role in this knowledge exchange. As an adjunct professor of social innovation and systemic change at Fordham University, he bridges practice and research, preparing the next generation of changemakers while drawing on the latest academic insights. Patrick is also a frequent keynote speaker at international conferences, offering perspectives on purpose-driven leadership, ethical business, and regenerative food systems.

His thought leadership extends into advisory roles with the International Humanistic Management Association and the United Nations' Principles for Responsible Management Education, both of which aim to redefine business education around human dignity and planetary stewardship. With his forthcoming book about his learnings and insights from the past 20 years, Patrick continues to amplify Fairtrasa's voice globally — helping inspire leaders, entrepreneurs, and institutions to rethink how business can drive meaningful, systemic impact.

STRENGTHENED FOUNDATIONS (2021–2025)

- Active participation in sustainability and social impact forums
- Contributions to research and case studies on farmer empowerment
- Academic collaborations with universities and thought leaders
- Publications and talks on regenerative agriculture and social entrepreneurship
- Engagement with global networks shaping the future of business and food

LONG-TERM DIRECTION (2025–2030)

- Expand participation in global sustainability platforms
- Strengthen alliances with universities and research institutions
- Contribute more systematically to public knowledge on regenerative systems
- Help shape global narratives about smallholders, regeneration, and ethical supply chains

We don't just grow food — we help shape the systems that will feed the future.

TWENTY YEARS BEHIND US. A REGENERATIVE FUTURE AHEAD.

Closing reflection

As Fairtrasa marks its twentieth anniversary, we reflect on two decades of partnership, learning, and impact across Latin America. What began as a small social enterprise with a bold vision has grown into a resilient ecosystem of empowered farmers, regenerative landscapes, and transparent supply chains that connect communities across the world.

This report captures just a fraction of the transformation that has taken place. The true measure of our work lies in the farmers who have become confident agro-entrepreneurs; the once-degraded soils that now sustain life again; the families whose livelihoods have grown more secure; the communities strengthened through collaboration; and the new models of impact that have inspired others in the industry.

Our journey has always been rooted in humility and in the belief that transformation begins close to the ground — in the soil, in the community, in the hands of farmers and local leaders.

Reporting notes

This report reflects Fairtrasa's sustainability actions, impact, and direction between 2005 and 2025, with particular emphasis on developments from 2021 to 2025.

For questions regarding methodology or specific data points, please contact:

impact@fairtrasa.com

All data and case studies were compiled by Fairtrasa's field teams in the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Peru, and our headquarters in Switzerland and the Netherlands.

- Metrics are based on cumulative internal records, Fairtrade data, and partner certifications.
- Some names, locations, or images may have been altered to protect privacy.
- All forward-looking statements reflect Fairtrasa's intentions and direction as of 2025 and are subject to change as local conditions evolve.

As we look ahead, we carry forward the same purpose that inspired Fairtrasa's founding:

- **To grow food in a way that regenerates the planet.**
- **To empower farmers in a way that restores dignity.**
- **To build value chains in a way that strengthens everyone involved.**

Fairtrasa was built to demonstrate what seemed possible.

Our next twenty years will be devoted to scaling what works and to contributing to the food systems the world now urgently needs.





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