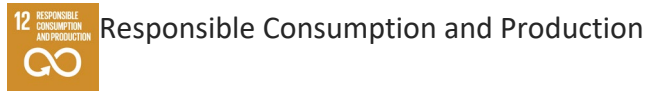


# Banana Webs



Manitoba Council for International Cooperation

## INTRODUCTION

This is an introductory activity to fair trade, organic and conventional products. Students create two webs tracing the path of two bananas from field to consumption, and compare the differences of each journey. Students will learn where food comes from and the path it takes from field to consumption, explore purchasing choices, learn the difference between fair trade, organic and local and identify and understand the various fair trade symbols.

## AUDIENCE

- Grades 1+
- 8 or more participants

## LENGTH

- 25+ minutes

## MATERIALS

- 2 large balls of yarn, preferably different colours
- Actor cards cut out
- Scissors

## SET-UP

- o Print out the activity and cut out the actor/location cards
- o Gather the group into a circle and randomly distribute the cut out actor cards. Students must remember which cards they are assigned.

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Ask students what they know about the term "fair trade"
  - What does it mean?
  - Who does it benefit?
  - How can you tell if a product is fair trade?



# Banana Webs



Responsible Consumption and Production



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Explanation:

Fair trade is an arrangement made by companies and producers of goods. The partnership protects worker's rights, ensures producers are paid fair wages and informs and empowers buyers to make sustainable and ethical purchases.

**Ask students what they think is the difference between fair trade, organic, and local?**

**Fair trade:** Fair Trade is a partnership between companies and producers to ensure fair wages and safe working environments. A product can be fair trade but does not need to be organic or local.

**Organic:** An organic product is produced without the use of chemicals, pesticides, and fertilizers. There are some products that are organic and fair trade, or organic and local, but not all products are.

**Local:** A local product is exclusively from a particular area or neighbourhood, usually within a few hours driving distance of the consumer's location. A local product may be fair trade and organic, but not always.

2. Start reading the Conventional Banana script, emphasizing words that are bolded (actors). Every time a word is emphasized, the person holding the yarn must toss it to someone else while holding onto their part of the yarn. This will create the web. The yarn can be tossed to someone more than once. Continue to read the story until the web is complete.

3. Read Conventional Banana debrief:

- Look at the entangled web of yarn. What does this say about our food system? Is it sustainable?
- Think back to the banana's journey. How many times was the ball of yarn dropped (spoiled banana)? How many steps were there (16)? Did some steps repeat (transportation)? How long was the banana's journey (a few weeks)?
- Who do you think makes the most money from this system? Was anyone pulling on the web more than others?

4. Repeat the process by using a new ball of yarn, and read the Fair Trade Organic Web.



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## 5. Read Fair Trade Banana debrief:

- Look at this new web. How is it different from the first one? Which web looks more sustainable and why?
- Compare what happened with the last web. How many times was this ball of yarn dropped? How many steps were there (8)? Did some steps repeat from the first web? How long was the banana journey (a few days)?
- Did the farmer make more money?

## 6. Discuss: What are the various fair trade symbols and what do they mean?



**Fair Trade International:** This international symbol signifies that a fair cost and premium has been paid to small farmers, supporting the social, economic, and environmental development of the local communities. Their standards prohibit forced labour and child labour, and will enact a child protection policy if detected. The companies selling products with this symbol are regularly audited by the inspector and certifier FLOCERT. To sell a product with this label, all ingredients that can be certified must come from fair trade sources.



**Fair Trade USA:** Fair Trade USA developed their own set of extensive credentials and criteria that is separated into categories like Independent Shareholders, Farmworkers, Trade, Apparel and Home Goods, and Capture Fisheries. Fair Trade USA also prohibits forced labour, child labour, discrimination and protects collective bargaining rights. The compliance criteria can be accessed through their Standards Download Center. The certifier, SCS Global Services (SCS), issues a license to a company wishing to use the Fair Trade USA symbol



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**Fair For Life:** Fair for Life's certification is based on a non product specific standard. This means that the steps between, like the raw materials, producers, traders or manufacturers to the finished product can be certified, rather than just the finished product. This certification also ensures farmers receive fair pay and exhibit safe and fair working conditions. Fair for Life also certifies entire companies, a rarity in the fair trade certification process. The certifier is Institute for Marketecology (IMO), which specializes in international inspection for organic, ecological, and social standards. 50% of all ingredients must be fair trade to receive this label.

## Take Action

Buy fair trade items! There are many options when buying fair trade, especially when splurging on luxury items. Items like chocolate, sugar, spices, drinks, grains, coffee, tea and even ice cream are commonly fair trade certified. Encourage yourself and others to buy fair trade during gift giving events. Curate your personal fair trade gifting wish list today! Consider buying directly from farmers at local markets when possible.

Talk to your favourite local vendors about supplying fair trade items. Grocery stores, coffee shops and restaurants care about what the consumer wants! Become an ethical consumer and have some say in the market by sending a letter, email or chatting face to face with your local favourite vendor. Brainstorm a list of places who would be eager to hear from you!

Fair trade bananas may not be as easily accessible in Manitoba compared to other products but there is room for growth and change. Check out <https://equifruit.com/en/> to learn more about fair trade bananas, and use their template to send to your local grocer to request fair trade bananas.

Workshop inspired by and resources from [www.usc.canada.org](http://www.usc.canada.org)



# Banana Webs: Instructions

- Start by reading the Conventional Banana Web.
- Once the Conventional Banana Web is done, read the Fair Trade Organic Web.

## 1. Conventional Banana Web

1. A **small producer in Honduras** grows bananas on a plantation.
2. When they are still green, before they are ripe, the small producer picks his bananas and sells them to the **plantation** owner at the price of *1 cent* per banana.
3. The owner of the plantation has the bananas packed and transported, and the shipment is taken onto an **airplane** at the local airport.
4. The merchandise arrives at an **airport** in North America.
5. The goods are delivered by truck to a **warehouse** where bananas are inspected and then chilled.
6. When the price of bananas is low on the market, a **negotiator** buys bananas, and the goods are shipped to him.
7. The negotiator sells his bananas to an **importer**.
8. The bananas are sent to the importer through a **delivery company**.
9. The importer sells the bananas to a **large distribution centre**.
10. A **transport company** delivers the bananas to the distribution centre.
11. At the distribution centre, **packers** pack and unpack the bananas a few times as they prepare orders and move them from one fridge to the next.
12. A **supermarket company** buys the bananas from the large distribution centre for a few of its stores.
13. The **large distribution centre** ships the bananas to another different distribution centre, closer to the supermarket stores that ordered them.
14. Once they arrive at the new location, the **distribution centre employees** store them in rooms where they are gassed to artificially ripen the bananas.
15. *A few weeks after they've been picked, a truck finally delivers the bananas to your supermarket in \_\_\_\_\_ (name of your city).*
16. You, the **consumer**, are hungry. Your parents drive you to the **supermarket**, you see a banana and you buy it for *50 cents*.

### Conventional Banana: 16 steps\*

*\* Keep in mind that this story was highly simplified. The actual path of a conventional banana is much more complex.*

## Fair Trade Organic Web

1. A **small producer in Honduras** grows bananas on his farm.
2. When the bananas are almost ripe, he picks them and sells them to his **cooperative** at the price of *25 cents* per banana.
3. The cooperative sells the bananas to an **importer**.
4. The importer sells his bananas to a **small grocery store distributor** in North America.
5. The importer has the bananas packed and transported, and the shipment is taken onto an **airplane\*** at the local airport. *\*Note: Sometimes, bananas are also shipped by boat which, on average, uses 1 000 times less energy than when they are transported by plane.*
6. A transport company delivers the goods to a **small distribution centre** where the bananas are inspected and then chilled.
7. *A few days after they've been picked, a truck finally delivers the bananas to your local grocery store in \_\_\_\_\_ (name of your city).*
8. You, the **consumer**, are hungry. You bike to your local grocery store, you see a banana and you buy it for *1 dollar*.

### Fair Trade/Organic Banana: 8 steps\*

*\* This story was only slightly simplified.*

## Fair Trade in a Nutshell

Fair trade seeks to ensure that the farmers get a better wage for their products by reducing the amounts of middlemen. Fair trade also promotes fair and safe labour, more environmentally-sound practices, access to credit and long-term contracts for producers.

**Fair trade products you can find:** Chocolate, bananas, coffee, cocoa, sugar, tea, honey, cotton, flowers, soccer balls and handicrafts.

**How to tell if a product is Fair Trade Certified:** Look for the logos below on products wherever you shop.



# BANANA WEB STORIES: Instructions

- Cut along the dotted lines of each actor card and see page 1 for how to run the game.

ACTORS (Conventional banana)	✂	ACTORS (Fair trade organic banana)
<u>Small producer in Honduras</u>		<u>Small producer in Honduras</u>
<u>Plantation Owner</u>		<u>Cooperative</u>
<u>Airplane</u>		<u>Importer</u>
<u>Airport</u>		<u>Small Grocery Store Distributor</u>
<u>Warehouse</u>		<u>Airplane</u>
<u>Negotiator</u>		<u>Small Distribution Centre</u>
<u>Importer</u>		<u>Truck</u>
<u>Delivery Company</u>		<u>Local Grocery Store</u>
<u>Large Distribution Centre</u>		<u>Consumer</u>
<u>Packers</u>		
<u>Supermarket Company</u>		
<u>Distribution Center Employees</u>		
<u>Truck</u>		
<u>Supermarket</u>		
<u>Consumer</u>		

