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Community Engagement in Developing Prospects for a System of Domestic Fair Trade for Food Products

[A PEI PILOT]

Charlottetown, PEI

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Canada



About the Authors

Cooper Institute : Cooper Institute is an **education and community development centre** in the province of [Prince Edward Island](#), Canada. The main program areas of our organization are focussed on [livable income](#) for all, [food sovereignty](#) and [cultural diversity and inclusion](#).

About the Network

The Social Economy and Sustainability Research (SES/ESD) Network is the Atlantic Node of the Canadian Social Economy Research Partnerships (CSERP) – one of six regional research centres across Canada, funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), 2005-2010. The Network has a wide variety of academic, community and government partners representing Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland and Labrador. www.msvu.ca/socialeconomyatlantic/ For more information, contact us: Social Economy and Sustainability Research Network, c/o Research House, Mount Saint Vincent University, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3M 2J6

Tel: 902-457-6748

Fax: 902-457-5547

E-mail: seproject@msvu.ca

About the Working Paper Series

The SES/ESD Network will periodically publish research papers about our research in Atlantic Canada. The papers will be written by both academics and social economy practitioners. The SES/ESD Network hopes these papers will contribute to the theory and practice of social economy within the Atlantic Region. Noreen Millar is the Network Coordinator and Managing Editor of the Working Paper Series. Papers in this series are not formally peer reviewed, but are products of Network-approved and managed research projects.

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Introduction

Community Engagement in Developing Prospects for a System of Domestic Fair Trade for Food Products [A PEI PILOT] is designed as a two year project intended to examine new possibilities for a system of Domestic Fair Trade in food products in Canada. The project draws on the experience and wisdom of the various actors engaged in food security issues.

The main purpose of this project is to engage various food-interest sectors to establish collaborative processes to examine the capacity of a Domestic Fair Trade system to open new marketing opportunities for food products. This project will develop a model that can be replicated in other parts of Canada. The project aims to involve major players across Canada and anticipates that the content, processes, and actions of this project will have the capacity to move the sector forward on strategies for a Domestic Fair Trade system. It will enhance traditional marketing practices because it responds to growing consumer demands for forms of production and distribution that are consumer- and eco-friendly and respectful of farmers right to a livable income.

The first phase of this project is the research phase, in which various organizations working on Domestic Fair Trade initiatives, or related initiatives were interviewed. The interviews explore the experience and wisdom of people who have initiated Domestic Fair Trade programs or other initiatives related to Domestic Fair Trade. The research identifies the successes, obstacles, and strategies associated with establishing and maintaining Domestic Fair Trade as an ethic and practice. The research will also identify possible next steps for developing a Domestic Fair Trade system as an achievable goal.

This project has been made possible, in part, by the financial support of the Prince Edward Island ADAPT Council and the Social Economy & Sustainability Research Network. This is a project of the National Farmers Union in collaboration with Cooper Institute.

Research Methods

1.0 Methods

The research phase of this project began with the researchers identifying key organizations in North America with experience in Domestic Fair Trade initiatives. Upon identifying these organizations, key informants within these organizations participated in phone interviews of approximately one hour in length. The researcher used an interview guide, developed prior to the research phase, to direct the interview process. For the recruitment of participants, the researcher used a non-random, snowball methodology in which initial respondents gave suggestions for other organizations to interview. Prior to interviews, the researcher provided participants with an information letter (Appendix A), invitation letter (Appendix B), consent form (Appendix C), researcher agreement form (Appendix D), and a copy of the interview questions (Appendix E) via email or mail. The researcher audio-recorded the interviews and later used the recordings, and interviews notes, to develop transcripts, which the researcher sent to participants via email.

1.1 Participants

A total of 11 people were interviewed, by telephone, for this project. These participants represented 10 organizations working on Domestic Fair Trade and/or other initiatives related to Domestic Fair Trade in food products. The research has included perspectives from different sectors, such as farmers, program managers, community development workers and executive directors. These participants not only bring diverse perspectives but also bring varied experiences working on Domestic Fair Trade, which is reflected in the richness of the research.

Equal Exchange – West Bridgewater, MA

A worker owned co-op focused on developing partnerships that are economically just and environmentally sound using democratic principles. Equal Exchange has a Domestic Fair Trade initiative focused on forming partnerships with farming families, farm workers, and farmer co-operatives.

Equinomics – Ontario-wide

Equinomics is a student-labour coalition organizing in an anti-oppression framework. They advocate for solidarity-driven fair trade and are critical of market-driven fair trade initiatives.

Fair Farm Foods – Canning, NS

This initiative was developed by Lance Bishop, livestock producer, as a initiative focused on the production, distribution and marketing of food products. The business is based on Domestic Fair Trade principles.

Farmer Direct Co-operative Ltd. – Regina, SK

Farmer Direct is a producer-driven business focused on the production, marketing and distribution of ethically grown and fairly traded food products. Farmer Direct is a cooperative of 60 organic farmers that uses the principles of the fairDeal¹ program.

Food Secure Canada – Ottawa, ON

Food Secure Canada is a non-profit society with a broad membership that facilitates collaborative activities by members to address and advance food security. Food Secure Canada provides support to its members to increase members' capacity to work on food security.

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) – Milton, PEI

This CSA was initiated by a producer who was interested in using the model of Community Supported Agriculture to ensure a fair return to producers and to reconnect consumers to food production.

Local Fair Trade Network – Minneapolis, MN

A network of growers, sellers, and eaters of food who are working cooperatively to create a food system that is just and healthy. The work of the network is focused on farmers, farm workers, businesses and consumers.

Local Food Plus – Toronto, ON

Local Food Plus is a non-profit organization dedicated to building sustainable local food systems by certifying local farmers and processors and connecting them with purchasers, using Local Food Plus standards and certification process².

Red Tomato – Canton, MA

Red Tomato is a non-profit organization that helps connect farmers with markets and grocery stores, while also connecting consumers with fresh, local fruits and vegetables. The Red Tomato is involved in marketing, logistics, distribution and education.

SeaSpray Atlantic Organic Farmers Cooperative – Atlantic Canada

SeaSpray Atlantic is a maritime wide producer owned marketing co-operative that facilitates the sale and distribution of certified organic produce and products in the Maritimes.

West End Food Co-op – Toronto, ON

The West End Food Co-op is an aspiring multi-stakeholder co-operative, consisting of consumer, employee, and producer/supplier members. The co-op is working on local food security through the coordination of community initiatives and aims to provide livable wage employment.

¹ The fairDeal program was created by Farmer Direct Co-operative Ltd. to identify standards for fair trade with the farmer members of the co-operative. The fairDeal standards have many commonalities with the principles of Domestic Fair Trade.

² Local Food Plus created their own set of standards and certification process. The Local Food Plus standards have many commonalities with the principles of Domestic Fair Trade.

Interview Results

2.0 Domestic Fair Trade Activities & Outcomes

The organizations involved in this research perform a variety of activities related to Domestic Fair Trade. These activities range from public education and community engagement, to marketing and trade, to networking and organization, and finally to the encouragement of food production. These activities build upon each other to promote the practice of Domestic Fair Trade as a strategy for addressing issues of food security. This section will describe some of the activities that organizations do around Domestic Fair Trade as well as some of the outcomes from these activities.

Public Education & Community Engagement

Public education and community engagement are considered, by many organizations, to be a critical part of the work that they do. This type of activity provides people in the community with opportunities to learn about issues of food security and explore possible strategies for addressing food security. Organizations in this research have taken many approaches to public education and community engagement, such as community kitchens, community meetings to identify food security needs and develop community driven initiatives, farm stands and farmers markets, farm tours, advocacy, writing and disseminating publications, as well as conferences. One co-operative organization engaged the community by ensuring that there are “disempowered groups at the table to create a standard that would be empowering.” This approach to community engagement provides an opportunity for the community to have voice in the decisions that have an impact.

Another organization from Ontario noted that developing a farmers market, based on the values of Domestic Fair Trade, resulted in more engaged consumers and a greater connection between the consumer and the producer. This farmers market created opportunities for consumers and producer to negotiate costs and prices and for the development of a reciprocal relationship between consumer and producer. This organization also notes that consumers emerge more educated and more connected through the direct relationship with producers.

Public education is also a vital component to the work of several organizations within this research, particularly those organizations that act as networks and/or have a broad membership. An American Domestic Fair Trade network has been engaging in public education to promote a “local fair trade” label. This group uses a poster project, showcasing different farmers in the area that are producing using the label of “local fair trade.”

A Canadian network based organization that does a considerable amount of public education reflected on the role and impact of public education, stating

“We’ve been doing this promotion since 1977, with *The Land of Milk and Money* and now, all of the sudden, there is a great response. People are

saying ‘what?!’ We have to find a solution. It’s a bit like the dog that catches the car it’s been chasing. What do you do with it now that you’ve got it?”

Networking & Organization

As organizations work on educating the public and engaging the community around Domestic Fair Trade, opportunities to work collaboratively emerge. For many organizations, belonging to networks and working collaboratively has provided invaluable opportunities to bring people together to develop a standard for Domestic Fair Trade. One organization notes that their involvement in the Domestic Fair Trade Association³ has resulted in power-sharing for participating groups and participation along the entire food chain.

For another organization, networking is valued as “increasing the capacity of civil society to be an effective voice for food security.” One network supports its members by helping them carry out research, programming, and education. The network facilitates collaborative processes and knowledge sharing.

The types of activities that come from networking can also increase the organizational capacities of participating organizations. The role of organizing in developing Domestic Fair Trade initiatives is invaluable. Three different producers highlighted the organizational challenges associated with producing supply, certification, distribution, transportation, cost negotiation, and marketing. A cooperative organization approaches these challenges by committing to share the market, advocate for fair prices to all farmers in the cooperative, work cooperatively to meet supply demands, and meet as a cooperative in the off-season. They stress the need to have clear principles and clear monitoring systems in place.

For one organization located in North-Eastern, USA, the primary role of their organization is coordination and organizing, similar to “a broker who also does product development and brand building for the farmers.” The group aims to extend the practice of fair trade to local farmers. In order to achieve this goal, the group is involved in the marketing and trade of products and is involved in networks to help develop principles and evaluation tools for Domestic Fair Trade.

Marketing & Trade

Domestic Fair Trade is an ethic and a practice, based on a set of values and principles, with the intention of bringing food products from the farms to the people. For one cooperative organization, the importance of having a clear set of standards and certification system, developed with full stakeholder participation, is paramount. They stress the need for strong marketing, which includes having integrity in standards,

³ The Domestic Fair Trade Association is an organization that began as a working group. The Domestic Fair Trade Association is a member-based network.

differentiating the products, personalizing the farm, and educating consumers to make informed choices.

An Ontarian organization places marketing and supply chain development as one of the three main pillars for the organization. This organization stresses the need to redevelop the local supply chain by helping organizations source local sustainable food products. This group has opted to use their own certification mechanism to provide traceability in food production, processing systems and evaluative processes.

One farming organization from Atlantic Canada that advocates for fair prices for producers, notes that developing a system of Domestic Fair Trade could open up a niche in the market for producers. This organization also notes that having a Domestic Fair Trade system could help cooperatives and producers organize themselves and present a stronger marketing approach. Another organization notes that a standard and certification system could “add value to the products and provide integrity, and background to consumers about the food they are purchasing.” Many organizations felt that the current food climate in Canada, where food security is in question, may be an appropriate time to bring something new, such as Domestic Fair Trade, into the marketplace.

Encouragement of food production

In order to promote Domestic Fair Trade into the marketplace, there are several factors that must be addressed, such as a certification system and evaluative tool for systems, public education and community engagement in the development of Domestic Fair Trade standards. Another factor that must not be overlooked is the need for the encouragement of food production that is produced according to Domestic Fair Trade standards. This encouragement is reflected in standards that demand fair prices for producers, standards that are achievable for producers, support for farmers as they make a transition to meet those standards, and recruitment and support to new producers. An Atlantic Canadian farming organization notes that there is occasionally a gap that exists between “buying local” and supporting a food system that is economically sustainable. This organization addressed the need for an economically sustainable food system by making an agreement with a retailer that guaranteed fair returns to both the producer and the retailer. Unfortunately, over time, the retailer challenged the returns, demanding a greater margin. This particular organization decided that, without a fair return, their agreement was no longer fair trade. In this case, the retailer did not respect the principles of Domestic Fair Trade, resulting in the termination of the agreement. This experience was very discouraging for the organization involved.

For another organization, located in Toronto, ON, the encouragement of production is at the forefront of the work they are doing around Domestic Fair Trade. It is reflected in their development of a new farmers market, based on food security, as well as in their focus on recruiting new producers. This recruitment focus is influenced by “a huge thirst in the community for the consumer-producer relationship and a shortage of farmers to support that thirst” in this region. This organization chose to address this apparent shortage by creating a farmers market with a focus on providing opportunities for new

farmers, using another community organization to locate new producers with ecological and sustainable practices. In the first year of operation, one quarter of the farmers selling at the farmers market were new producers.

3.0 Organization's Obstacles & Strategies

The considerable activity happening in North America around Domestic Fair Trade has not come without challenges and obstacles. Each participating organization identified obstacles they faced within the organization and described strategies to address these challenges. Many of the obstacles, such as resources, marketing, evaluation, and balancing the needs of the producers with the standard requirements, were experienced by numerous organizations and each organization was able to propose strategies to deal with the obstacles.

Resources

The lack of resources for organizing and developing initiatives is an obstacle that was echoed by several organizations. The lack of financial resources made it challenging for organizations to hire full time staff people for the development of their initiatives. One organization in Ontario relied on people working other jobs while also dedicating considerable, unpaid, time to the initiative. This organization described relying on “social capital, volunteer capital – which can be quite difficult.” In the end, the result of this obstacle meant a later start-date for the organization's first project.

Another Ontarian organization approached the issue of resources by building collaborative programs with organizations whose skills and resources complimented theirs. An organization based in North-Eastern USA used a similar approach by partnering with another organization to do an evaluation of community needs. Unfortunately, the other organization was from outside the community and the community did not respond well to this outside evaluation. This strategy for dealing with a lack of resources cost the organization in terms of trust and transparency. In the end, the organization has been able to re-establish trust and transparency with the community.

This obstacle places many organizations in a challenging situation, however, it is possible to develop appropriate strategies. Many organizations stressed the need for a champion or “renaissance person” who can propel the organization or initiative forward in the early stages and, for many organizations, it is this champion who helps with overcoming obstacles.

Marketing

Another obstacle that was identified by several organizations was in relation to marketing. Many organizations felt that because “Domestic Fair Trade” is still a relatively new term in North America and they do not have a universal set of standards and principles, it is challenging to market for Domestic Fair Trade products. Some organizations have overcome this challenge by developing their own label and standards

for Domestic Fair Trade, under different names. Others have used a strategy of community engagement and public education to “create a buzz” around Domestic Fair Trade.

One organization in western Canada has approached the challenge of marketing by partnering with another organization that had a standard for local fair trade in place. The partnership involved combining their strengths in marketing with the strengths of the other organization’s standard. It became a “win-win” situation for both organizations and both were able to address their challenges and use their own strengths.

Although, the challenge of marketing Domestic Fair Trade remains for many organizations, there is considerable work being done to develop common principles and values to promote the Domestic Fair Trade movement in both the marketplace and the general public.

Evaluation

For those organizations that do have certification standards in place, there is often a lack of functioning evaluation tools in place. These organizations have identified that lack of evaluation as a challenge to the transparency and integrity of their products. Some organizations are hopeful that they will help develop an evaluative tool through their involvement in networks working to develop Domestic Fair Trade standards and principles and to address food security issues.

Label

Many organizations feel that there would be a benefit to creating one label for the various principles associated with Domestic Fair Trade. One organization suggests that, if there were a Domestic Fair Trade label, then “Transition foods, i.e. food transitioning into Domestic Fair Trade, could be counted as Fair Trade, whereas, with organics, you either are or you aren’t.” The common thread from the perspectives of several organizations is that a common seal would be beneficial for the development of the Domestic Fair Trade movement as well as for the improvement of the evaluation issues.

Labour Issues

Fair labour practices are one of the tenets to the ethic and practice of Domestic Fair Trade and yet it has been identified several times as an obstacle and challenge within the sector. One organization from Western Canada values fair labour standards as critical to their practice of fair trade, explaining that for them it includes “the right to collective bargaining, living wage, safe working conditions...” For this organization, meeting these fair labour objectives is related to the integrity of their standard.

Other organizations discuss the realities of the agricultural labour market in the USA, questioning how to establish transparency when labour is often illegal, whether because of illegal status, cash payment, working overtime without pay, and illegal/fake documentation. Another organization, echoing the same concerns, also states that they are

“really conscious that it’s a very difficult, challenging part of farming...to have seasonal labour and reliable, experienced labour. So we are in a principled, but cautious, position.” This particular organization, and others, are approaching the obstacle by intentional talk with farmers about their labour situations, trying to help reconcile relationships between farmers and farm workers.

This fair labour obstacle has also been identified as a potential opportunity, for progressive farmers who are already engaged in fair labour practices, to market that aspects of their farming practices.

4.0 External Challenges to Domestic Fair Trade in Food

Organizations working on Domestic Fair Trade initiatives, and other initiatives related to food security, face challenges within their organizations, however, some of the challenges associated with Domestic Fair Trade exist outside of the organization. These challenges are often related to ideology and an economy that makes it difficult to gain access to the marketplace. This section will highlight some of the external challenges to Domestic Fair Trade in food that were identified in the research.

Ideology

Several organizations have noted an important trend in ideology that have an impact on both the ability of producers to earn a livable income and the potential for a system of Domestic Fair Trade in food products. The trend is what one Atlantic Canadian organization calls a “cheap food mentality.” Cheap food mentality means that, in North America, we’ve all been taught that food should be cheap. We’ve been taught to see food as a given, not a luxury. And as one organization so accurately describes, the public’s perspective on food is that “we’ll always have it and, if we run out, we’ll get it from somewhere else.”

However, increased awareness of food safety issues, health concerns, the energy crisis and climate change has resulted in an increased awareness and interest in the food system. A Canadian organization from the West highlights that when consumers are supportive because it’s a philosophy of food they believe in, they are supporters for life. This increased awareness and potential ideological shift presents an opportunity to bring food and Domestic Fair Trade into the political realm.

Policy

Several Canadian and the United States policies create barriers for the effective marketing, distribution and promotion of a food system that is just and equitable for all. One organization uses the example of seed regulation in Canada, which has been “taken over.” This illustrates the ways in which regulations currently give more freedom to corporate interests and less to the interests of the local community. This organization also describes the necessity of policies that support fair trade in food,

“This is not a matter of good will. There’s a host of policies, many of them cloaked in the language of public health, that inhibit the potential of the local food supply and Domestic Fair Trade”

Moving food security issues and Domestic Fair Trade into the political realm will help to ensure that all people have access to quality food, food security, and respect that farming families also deserve to live with dignity. Many organizations stressed that we need policies that support and ensure that farmers receive income that allows them to live and produce with dignity. As one farming organization reflected, a Domestic Fair Trade movement should politicize people because “when we engage people, we influence their politics.”

Both the external challenges of ideology and policy also present opportunities for a system of Domestic Fair Trade to transform the current economic realities for food production, distribution and consumption in Canada. In order for a Domestic Fair Trade system to be sustainable, it must be based on sound principles and practice.

Conclusions

5.0 Principles & Practices

In 2005, the Domestic Fair Trade Association in the USA gathered together as a group of like-minded individuals to develop a set of principles for Domestic Fair Trade, the result of which is a thorough set of principles outlining the values associated with the practice of Domestic Fair Trade. Other organizations working on parallel initiatives to Domestic Fair Trade (using a different term than “Domestic Fair Trade”) have also defined a set of guiding principles for their work. Many of these principles overlap with the Domestic Fair Trade principles⁴, however, some of the principles do not. This provides an opportunity to evaluate the different sets of principles and create a comprehensive set of guiding principles for Domestic Fair Trade initiatives. The guiding principles for Domestic Fair Trade should act as a starting point for defining fair trade and continue to grow and change with the movement.

5.1 Principles

Several of the participating organizations used a set of principles for Domestic Fair Trade that had been developed by the Domestic Fair Trade Association in the US, formerly known as the Domestic Fair Trade Working Group. These principles act as a starting point for defining Domestic Fair Trade. The principles that were developed by this working group, and adopted by several organizations participating in this research, are:

- Sustainable Agriculture
- Family scale farming
- Capacity building for producers and workers
- Democratic, participatory ownership & control
- Rights of labour
- Equality & opportunity
- Direct trade
- Fair & stable pricing
- Shared risk & affordable credit
- Long-term trade relationships
- Appropriate Technology
- Indigenous Peoples’ Rights
- Transparency & Accountability
- Education & Advocacy

Some organizations use a different label than “Domestic Fair Trade” for work that shares many of the same principles and practices as Domestic Fair Trade. These organizations also use a different set of principles to guide their work and, while many of the principles overlap with the Domestic Fair Trade principles, some of these organizations include additional principles, such as:

⁴ As defined by the Domestic Fair Trade Association.

- Humane Animal Treatment
- Emission standard
- Sustainable packaging
- Conserve & enhance wildlife habitat & ecology diversity
- Bio-dynamic farming
- Connect consumers & producers
- Reduce the distance between producers & consumers
- Encourage closed-loop systems that conserve and recycle nutrients

Both sets of principles address a variety of issues associated with food production, food distribution, and food security which highlights the scope of impact for food, from fair pricing to sustainable agricultural practices to technology. These principles should remain open to change as the community and environment changes.

5.2 Practices

The practices that have been described in this research can be organized into three main areas: networking & influencing policy; community development & program management; and production & distribution. Exploring the different practices in these three main areas of work provides a snapshot of the practice norms for Domestic Fair Trade in North America.

In the area of networking and influencing policy, practice often involves organizing collaborative efforts to mobilize and analyze the role of policies in food. Most organizations in this research have engaged in consensus-based decision making. Organizations working in this area also tend to value research and provide support to research initiatives.

Organizations working in the area of community development and program management are also commonly part of networks. Practice in the area of community development and program management is also characterized by a public education and community engagement component. In this study, all organizations working in this area worked directly with farmers, most often, with farmers as organization members with a distinct role in decision-making and program development.

Production and distribution practice involves food production, product development, packaging, branding, labelling, marketing, distribution and other logistical activities. This area of work would be considered at “the front lines” of the food industry, although many organizations practicing in the area of production and distribution are also working in the areas of community and program management and networking and influencing policy.

There is a great deal of overlap between the three different practice areas and very few organizations work just in one area of practice. The overlap between practice areas is an essential aspect in the practice of Domestic Fair Trade as it promotes connection between different practice areas and provides networking opportunities to individuals and organizations involved.

5.3 Analysis & Recommendations for the Future

This research provides rich data highlighting the experiences, successes and challenges in Domestic Fair Trade. This creates an excellent starting point for a discussion about the possibilities for a new system of trade. The current global economic system is changing and new questions are emerging. The question that the researchers for this project are asking is, “within the global economic system, the market-driven economy, what are the possibilities for establishing a system of Domestic Fair Trade for food products?”

The unregulated marketplace, which favours corporate sector interests, leaves farmers at a disadvantage. Primary producers’ capacity to make a living is seriously compromised. Farmers have limited opportunities to engage in sustainable, agricultural practices. A direct consequence of the same economic structure is that a high percentage of people contribute to corporate profits by earning low incomes. They are thus denied the capacity to meet their food requirements.

What is needed is a new system which ensures farmers a dignified livelihood and which also provides the whole population with adequate income for their basic human needs. A system of trade for food, such as Domestic Fair Trade, which recognizes the rights of farmers to produce food in a sustainable way and which acknowledges and promotes changes to allow for citizens of the world to access healthy food.

All the independent Domestic Fair Trade initiatives and efforts can have an impact on developing alternative economic relationships which provide fair and just opportunities for farmers, consumers and retailers. A practice of Domestic Fair Trade in food products engages in alternative action from within the conventional economic system, to create just structures for the production, distribution and access to food. Domestic Fair Trade has the capacity to carve out a path by which the production of food and people’s full access to food may lead to the gradual removal of food from the unfettered free market. By proposing and adhering to principles that are sustainable and equitable, Domestic Fair Trade in food as a movement has the possibility of leading to fundamental change in the way we trade food products.

Appendices

APPENDIX A: INFORMATION LETTER

Dear Potential Participant,

You have been invited to participate in the research phase of the project, *Community Engagement in Developing Prospects for a System of Domestic Fair Trade for Food Products [A PEI PILOT]*, conducted by researchers, Marie Burge and Ann Wheatley.

This two-year project is designed to examine new possibilities for establishing a Domestic Fair Trade system for food in Canada. It will involve communities in processes of interactive learning about Fair Trade, in planning procedures, and in establishing a foundation for a Fair Trade system. The project begins with research drawing on the experience and wisdom of the people in other jurisdictions and/or sectors who have initiated Domestic Fair Trade programs. The research will examine the history of Fair Trade and identify the successes and challenges in establishing and maintaining Fair Trade as an ethic and practice. It will identify and explore appropriate approaches and solutions used in developing Fair Trade as an achievable goal.

The project will culminate in a final report that will be shared with the participants of the study, and as appropriate, with other organizations, with public policy makers and the public at large. In addition, a plain language document will be developed for use in the second phase of the project; workshops aimed at engaging farming and non-farming citizens in the discussion of the potential for a system of Domestic Fair Trade. That document will also be shared with participants in this study.

The study method will be a telephone interview with you or another interested member of your organization, conducted by one of the researchers. Interviews are tentatively scheduled for June and July 2008. The interview will last up to one hour and may be tape-recorded. The researcher will also take notes during the interview. An interview guide will be made available in advance. You may refuse to answer any questions and can discontinue the interview and/or recording at any time without reason. With your consent, the name of your organization will be cited in the final report. The researcher will keep all individual interview results. Interview tapes and documents will be stored in a locked filing cabinet and will be labelled with codes that can only be identified by the researcher and principal investigators.

Thank you for considering this request to participate in this research project. A copy of the research proposal is available at your request.

If you have any questions about how this study is being conducted, you may contact the Lynne MacPhee at the UPEI Research Ethics Board (902-566-0637 or lmacphee@upei.ca).

APPENDIX B: INVITATION LETTER

Name of potential participant

Address

Date

Dear _____,

We are writing to invite you, as a representative of <organization> to participate in a research study into the development of the Fair Trade movement as it applies to domestic trade in agricultural products. This research project is being conducted through the Institute of Island Studies at the University of Prince Edward Island, in partnership with the Atlantic Region Social Economy & Sustainability Research Network.

We are looking for volunteers who would be willing to participate in a one-hour telephone interview between June and August, 2008. The interview will be either individual, or involve a group from your organization, based on your preference. All efforts will be taken to ensure agreed-upon anonymity and confidentiality. We have attached an information sheet about the study for your reference. Interview questions will be distributed prior to the interview.

If you are willing to take part in this study, or if you need further information, please contact Marie Burge or Ann Wheatley by phone at (902) 894-4573 or by e-mail: cooper@isn.net. We will follow up with a telephone call in approximately one week to inquire whether you will be able to participate.

Thank you for your consideration. If you decide to participate, you will be contributing to a greater awareness of Fair Trade philosophies and practices which can influence the development in Prince Edward Island of a population engaged in eventually establishing national domestic Fair Trade in agricultural products.

Sincerely,

Ann Wheatley
Researcher

Marie Burge
Researcher

If you have any questions about how this study is being conducted, you may contact the Lynne MacPhee at the UPEI Research Ethics Board (902-566-0637 or lmacphee@upei.ca).

APPENDIX C: CONSENT FORM

You are invited to participate in a study entitled *Community Engagement in Developing Prospects for a System of Domestic Fair Trade for Food Products [A PEI PILOT]*, conducted by researchers, Marie Burge and Ann Wheatley, of Cooper Institute.

Your signature below indicates that you understand the following statements and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researchers.

- I have read and understand the material in the research project information letter.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary.
- I am aware that the interview is being recorded.
- I am aware that I may stop the interview and/or the recorder at any time and that no reason is required.
- I know that I can refuse to answer any question(s).
- I am aware that the information collected during individual interviews will remain anonymous and confidential if I deem it necessary.
- I know that I can contact the University of Prince Edward Island Research Ethics Board at (902) 566-0637, or by email at lmacphee@upei.ca if I have any questions or concerns about the ethical conduct of this study.
- I am entitled to a copy of this consent form.

Name of Participant

Signature

Date

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. Your input is valued and appreciated.

APPENDIX D: RESEARCHER AGREEMENT

Agreement of Researcher

As a researcher for this project I will be sensitive to any wishes or concerns that arise before, during or after the interviewing process. At no point in time will I take advantage of or misuse the information that is provided to me. I understand that participants shall be recognized and treated as equals in this research project.

I am also agreeing to ensure confidentiality and anonymity for the participants in this study unless this is explicitly waived (see below).

Signature

Date

RE: Any information to be held confidential (please check one option – Participant and Field researcher to initial the selected option):

1. I do not wish for any aspect of my participation to be held confidential.

Initials:_____

OR

2. I wish for the following information to be held confidential: Answer to question(s)# __

Initials:_____

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Questions

The following is the full list of interview questions.

Section A: Background

Name of Organization

Location

Name and Position of Interviewee

How long has the organization been involved in the issue of Fair Trade?

Is this organization exclusively dedicated to the practice or philosophy of Fair trade?

Does the organization have a member base? How is it constituted?

Is the organization part of a network or coalition? If so, what is the name of that network/coalition?

Section B: Organization's Development of Fair Trade Programs

How would you describe your Fair Trade activities/outcomes?

What would you describe as some of the accomplishments of your organization in the promotion and practice of Fair Trade?

On what principles or values is your Fair Trade work based?

Please describe the processes that you or your organization have used in the establishment of a Fair Trade program.

What kinds of obstacles have you faced?

What means have you used to overcome the obstacles?

Section C: Organization's Experience of Domestic Fair Trade in Food Products

Are you involved in actual domestic Fair Trade programs? If so, describe the involvement.

Are you involved in Fair Trade in food? International? Domestic? Please describe.

What are the particular challenges of Fair Trade for food?

What are the particular challenges of domestic Fair Trade for food products?

Section D: Suggestions for Organizations in the Process of Initiating Domestic Fair Trade in Food Products

From your organization's experience, what advice could you give communities and sectors that are proposing to initiate involvement in domestic Fair Trade in food products?

What information and other resources are available for initial stages of the development of principles, processes, population buy-in/engagement, and pilot programs?

Can you direct us to other key organizations with successful experiences with programs of domestic Fair Trade in food products?

Working Paper Feedback

A. Please let us know what you found helpful in this

Working Paper. Include Paper # ____

B. How could the Working Paper Series be improved?

C. Is there anything that needs to be changed in this Working Paper?

D. Your name and contact info (optional)

Send to:

Noreen Millar, Network Coordinator
c/o Research House, Mount Saint Vincent University
Halifax Nova Scotia B3M 2J6 Canada
Tel: 902-457-6748 Fax: 902-457-5547
E-mail: seproject@msvu.ca

SES/ESD Network Research Goals

- . Contributing to the theory and practice of social economy in the Atlantic region
- . Internal bridging, bonding, mentoring & capacity building
- . Encouraging use of the “social economy” as a framing concept in the region
- . Linking Atlantic partners with other parts of Canada and the world

SES/ESD Network Research Themes and Questions

Conceptualizing & describing the social economy in Atlantic Canada

- . What does the social economy look like? What needs does it address?
- . How can we best capture this sector conceptually?
- . What, if anything, makes it distinctive or innovative? How interconnected are its facets, & to what effect?
- . What are the characteristics of social economy organizations?
- . What are the implications for government policy?

Policy inventory and analysis

- . How are different understandings of “social economy” reflected in government policy?
- . What needs are not being met, & what changes are needed in regulatory environment?
- . What indicators can we develop to aid in policy development?

Community mobilization around issues of common concern (natural resources; food security;

inclusion and empowerment)

- . Do social economy organizations contribute to social inclusion, the democratization of the economy, & empowerment?
- . What inputs are needed to overcome obstacles & build capacity?
- . What can we learn from research on mobilization around food security, empowerment & inclusion, community management of natural resources & energy?

Measuring and Financing the Social Economy

- . What can social accounting, co-operative accounting, social auditing, & other techniques contribute towards a better understanding of the work and contributions of social economy organizations?
- . Where do social economy organizations obtain the financing that they need?
- . What do social economy organizations contribute toward financing the social economy?

Modeling & researching innovative, traditional, & IT-based communication and dissemination processes

- . How can social economy actors best communicate?
- . What can our Network team members contribute by developing & modeling processes and techniques?
- . What can be gained from exploring technology as an equalizer vs. technology as a barrier?



Social Economy and Sustainability Research Network
Partenariat sur l'économie sociale et la durabilité
Bridging, Bonding, and Building | Renforcement des liens et des capacités

Network Director:

Dr. Leslie Brown, Professor, Sociology/Anthropology, Mount Saint Vincent University

Network Co-Directors:

- . Mr. Seth Asimakos, Manager, Saint John Community Loan Fund
- . Ms. Penelope Rowe, Chief Executive Officer, Community Services Council Newfoundland and Labrador
- . Dr. Luc Thériault, Professor, Sociology, University of New Brunswick

Sub-node Coordinators:

- . SN1: Mapping and Policy Analysis
Dr. Luc Thériault, Professor, Sociology, University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, NB
- . SN2: Mobilization : Inclusion and Empowerment in the Social Economy
Dr. Irené Novaczek, Director, Institute of Island Studies, University of Prince Edward Island, Charlottetown, PEI
- . SN3: Mobilization : Food Security and Community Economic Development
Dr. Patricia Williams, Assistant Professor, Applied Human Nutrition, Mount Saint Vincent University, Halifax, NS
- . SN4: Mobilization : Natural Resources and Livelihood
Dr. Omer Chouinard, Professeur, Sociologie, Université de Moncton, Moncton, NB
- . SN5: Financing and Measuring the Social Economy
Dr. Sonja Novkovic, Associate Professor, Economics; and Dr. Judith Haiven, Associate Professor, Management, Saint Mary's University, Halifax, NS
- . SN6: Communication Practices and Tools
Ms. Penelope Rowe, Chief Executive Officer, Community Services Council Newfoundland and Labrador, St. John's, NL; and
Dr. Ivan Emke, Associate Professor, Social/Cultural Studies, Sir Wilfred Grenfell College, Memorial University of Newfoundland, Corner Brook, NL

Network Coordinator:

Noreen Millar, M.A.

<http://www.msvu.ca/socialconomyatlantic/>

A multiple partner, Atlantic-wide research project. Un partenariat de recherche au Canada atlantique