

VALENTINE DAY:

Fair Trade Chocolate for Your True Love



1. Fair Trade Chocolate ensures that farmers receive a fair price and strictly prohibits slave and child labor

An estimated 47 percent of U.S. consumers will exchange Valentine's Day candy, a billion dollars in sales. About 75 percent of that billion is from sales of chocolate. Much of the chocolate that we give away, however, was produced in part by young children and impoverished farmers. Fair Trade certification ensures that farmers receive a fair price and strictly prohibits slave and child labor; children can attend school instead.

If you give chocolate, please make sure it is Fair Trade Certified. Catholic Relief Services' Fair Trade preferred brands are Divine and Equal Exchange

2. Purchasing fair trade certified products – using your consumer power – is an easy and effective way to combat human trafficking

Human Trafficking is the exploitation of a person through the use of force, fraud or coercion for the purpose of forced labor or commercial sexual exploitation. The Catholic Church has repeatedly condemned human trafficking, stating that human trafficking “constitutes a shocking offense against human dignity and a grave violation of fundamental human rights.”

- 12.3 million people live in forced labor, bonded labor and sexual exploitation conditions worldwide (ILO, 2009)
- 100,000 US children are commercially sexually exploited every year in the United States (Shared Hope International, 2009)
- Profits from human trafficking are estimated at \$32 billion dollars (ILO, 2009)

3. False promises of good jobs and economic security result in the epidemic of human trafficking

Traffickers lure vulnerable men, women and children with false promises of good jobs, an education, economic security and even love. Once lured, the traffickers are able to keep their victims from seeking help by confiscating identification documents, using threats of violence against the victim or their family, as well as subjecting the victim to physical, psychological and/or sexual abuse.

4. Your consumer choices may feed the human trafficking industry

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops noted that “human trafficking will never be truly defeated without eliminating the consumerism that feeds it and prosecuting those actors in receiving countries, including our own, that benefit because of the exploitation of vulnerable human beings.”

5. The Kuapa Kokoo Cooperative, based on fair trade principles, formed Divine Chocolate

Ghana is the world's second-largest cocoa producer, yet 30% of the population lives on less than \$1.25 a day. In 1993, a group of farmers pooled their resources and formed the Kuapa Kokoo Cooperative. These farmers based their Kuapa Kokoo Cooperative on fair trade principles, transparency, democracy, efficiency, and equality for women.

In 1998, the farmers formed Divine Chocolate and today own 45% of the company, hold seats on the board, and host yearly board meetings in Ghana. Kuapa Kokoo sells cocoa beans to Divine Chocolate at a guaranteed minimum Fair-Trade price and also receives an additional premium, which the cooperative invests in various projects to improve the farmers' living standard, health status and education levels, and farming productivity.

This Valentine's Day, give the gift of Fair Trade Chocolate, a gift to all our brothers and sisters.



**ARCHDIOCESE OF PORTLAND
OFFICE OF LIFE, JUSTICE, & PEACE**