



Mankato Area Fair Trade Town Initiative

Five years on –
 from the Fair Trade Town Declaration
 by the Mankato City Council, October 24, 2011
 City Council Meeting, October 24, 2016



1. INTRODUCTION
 - 1.1 Mankato, MN and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil may not often be mentioned in the same sentence. They can be now - Rio became a 'Fair Trade Town', the second in Brazil, during the recent Olympic Games. At the official ceremony on August 12, Fairtrade Brasil's president Naji Harb said, *"Now Rio de Janeiro is part of a network of more than 1800 Fair Trade Towns all over the world. These cities are educating consumers and raising awareness about Fairtrade benefits and its impact on changing the lives of the marginalized small farmers all over the world"*.
 - 1.2 This is the role that the Mankato Area Fair Trade Town Initiative (MAFTTI) has continued to play locally since the Mankato City Council, on October 24, 2011, unanimously passed a resolution recognizing that the Fair Trade Town criteria of the national Fair Trade Campaigns organization had been met by MAFTTI's work since its inception in mid-2009.
 - 1.3 The City Council's 'Fair Trade Town' resolution was the first in Minnesota and the 25th in the USA. Mankato is now part of an international network of Fair Trade Towns in 28 countries. In the USA there are 44, some very large, some small. (The first 'Fair Trade Town' declared itself in 2000, in Garstang, north-west England, a village half the size of St. Peter).

2. MANKATO AREA FAIR TRADE TOWN INITIATIVE

- 2.1 MAFTTI has been a 501(c)3 non-profit since 2014. It is a voluntary effort not in receipt of grant funding. Its officers are Paul Renshaw (Chair/Lead Organizer), Jane Dow (Vice-Chair) and Paul Prew (Treasurer). Other members of its Steering Committee are Paulette Bertrand, Margo Druschel, Arlene Renshaw and Bradley Wolfe.
- 2.2 MAFTTI's program squarely supports the Community Development vision of E2020, as seen in the wording of Goal 2 in the Education KPA mini-vision of 2014:
"Once far away parts of the world are now related to our own community in multiple ways. Accordingly, we now need to have an understanding of how we are interdependent with others in the world – culturally, economically and ecologically. By being able to understand and communicate with others, we will be better able to respect other people around the world and in our own community to cope with increasingly global problems."
- 2.3 This vision, and MAFTTI's future contribution towards sustaining it, is even more important in a period of rising populist sentiment. MAFTTI and the wider Fair Trade movement are not enthusiasts for unfettered globalization. Equally, however, an internationalist outlook is crucial for understanding the value of Fair Trade relationships between the Global North and South.
- 2.4 This table summarizes Fair Trade Campaigns Goals and Criteria and MAFTTI's basic record:

National Goals	National Criteria	Record
Build a Team - Steering Committee	Minimum of five drawn from various sections of community	6-8 meetings per year to organize the MAFTTI program in the community.
Reach Out to Retailers-pro rata on population basis	Eight retailers carry at least two products certified as 'Fair Trade'.	16 retail outlets, large and small, carry Fair Trade certified products. (MAFTTI's Fair Trade Shopping Guide is normally produced three times per year.)
Engage Community Organizations-pro rata as above	Eight organizations commit to using Fair Trade products	Nine religious congregations, plus the SSND community, are the core, committed constituency.
Get Some Love from Media	Undefined	Occasional Free Press letters and articles and interviews on KTOE/KMSU
Engage Local Government	Seek City Council support by Fair Trade Town Resolution.	Proclamation of support, May 10, 2010 Council Resolution, October 24, 2011

3. MAFTTI PROGRAM

3.1 In the last five years, some elements of MAFTTI's program have been constant, e.g.

Mankato Area International Festival (MSU)	One Sunday in mid-April.
World Fair Trade Day (second Saturday in May)	Fair Trade coffee sampling (two food stores); book display at Barnes & Noble; information at coffee shops.
Mankato Farmers' Market	Periodic (3-6 times per season) tabling of Fair Trade educational materials.
North Mankato Fun Days Parade, July	'Carmen Miranda' float and escorts promoting ethical purchasing.
Campus & Community Fair, MSU	MAFTTI literature table, early in first semester.
Blue Earth County Library	Display boxes used for thematic exhibitions during October, Fair Trade Month.
Reverse Trick or Treat	Halloween distribution of Fair Trade chocolate minis with cards commending Fair Trade.
Ten Thousand Villages kiosk, River Hills Mall	Volunteers for kiosk organized by Ten Thousand Villages, Mountain Lake, from Thanksgiving to Christmas.

3.2 A program of events open to the public has been maintained

Red Sky Lounge	Oct. 17, 2011	Music and Fair Trade education	105
Bananamania	Oct. 18, 2012	Jorge Restrepo and Felipe Zapata (Colombia)	80
Fair Trade Tea	April 28, 2013	Four kinds of Fair Trade tea, with edibles	85
Mexico Night	Oct. 22, 2013	Jane Dow (on Oaxaca and Chiapas)	60
5 th Anniv.- Peru	June 10, 2014	Joyce Bucklin (10K Villages, Mountain Lake)	85
Fashion Show	Sept. 11, 2014	Kelsey Timmerman & Mata Traders clothes	145
Soc. Justice Lecture	Mar. 17, 2015	Canadian academics speak on Fair Trade at MSU	65
Focus - Chiapas	June 4, 2015	Tamika Bertram, River Rock Coffee, St. Peter	75
Focus - Guatemala	Oct. 8, 2015	Catholic & Congregational church links	90
Fair Trade Tea	Apr. 24, 2016	Special exhibit on Fair Trade fashion	90
Immediately ahead			
5 th Anniversary, Mankato-Fair Trade Town	Oct. 27, 2016	One-day conference, MSU (Keynote speaker- Mark Ritchie) Evening celebration, Christ the King Lutheran Ch.	

3.3 Other activities

- Visits to Fair Trade producers: Margo Druschel, Dominican Republic, April 2012; Jane Dow, Oaxaca and Chiapas, July 2013.
- Visits from Fair Trade producers: Jorge Restrepo & Felipe Zapata (Colombian banana farmers), October 2012. Anticipated – Mariana Cobos, Ecuadorean banana farmer, October 27, 2016
- Newsletter: Monthly since January 2015, Mailing list nearly 350. See www.maftti.org
- Sustainability Expo, MSU: MAFTTI literature table for one-day event, April 2014 and 2016.
- International Fair Trade Towns Conferences: MAFTTI represented in November 2011 (Malmo, Sweden by Paul & Arlene Renshaw) and in July 2015 (Bristol, England by Paul Renshaw).
- National Fair Trade Campaigns Steering Committee – Margo Druschel is a member.
- Speaking on Fair Trade with local groups, secular and religious.
- Looking for opportunities to advocate for the adoption of Fair Trade certified products.
- Spreading information on new Fair Trade materials (film, web, print).

- Encouraging deepening of Fair Trade awareness in Mankato area schools, especially Loyola Catholic School, the first K-12 Fair Trade School in the country (May 2012).
- Liaising with national Fair Trade Campaigns over a new curriculum development initiative.
- Supporting appropriately any Fair Trade campus activity that develops at MSU.
- Working with East and West Builders Club classes.

4. REFLECTIONS

4.1 MAFTTI's distinctiveness lies in its

- focus on relations with, and poverty alleviation within, the Global South.
- holding three dimensions of 'Sustainability' together, in line with the thrust of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, 2016-2030:
 - social: empowering women; countering use of child labor.
 - environmental: promoting agricultural diversification and adaptation to climate change.
 - economic: stabilizing incomes; funding development projects through Social Premium.
- raising awareness about what adoption of Fair Trade principles means, e.g.
 - for 'the Doe family', when they think about how they spend their money, especially on products (mainly, but not entirely, agricultural) imported from the Global South.
 - for individuals (and institutions), recognizing that, as an example, the sustainability of favorite coffee brands depends on the sustainability of the environment in coffee-producing areas and of the incomes of coffee farmers.

4.2 MAFTTI is well aware of the scope of its task and, after seven years' work and five years after the Fair Trade Town Declaration, can easily point to areas where more emphasis could be given if resources allowed. These include

- focusing on the securing of more institutional support for Fair Trade products in business, civic and service-oriented organizations in order to scale up the impact of Fair Trade purchasing in the area.
- strengthening work on Fair Trade principles within the school curriculum.
- developing new ways of raising further the public's awareness of Fair Trade and the issues it presents to local consumers.
- MAFTTI feels, nonetheless, that it has followed the Council's own maxim in "leading the way" in the Mankato area and is encouraged by signs of growth of knowledge about the Fair Trade movement elsewhere in the Minnesota River valley.

4.3 MAFTTI will mark the 5th anniversary of the 'Fair Trade Town Resolution' in Mankato on October 27 through a one-day conference at MSU on "Fair Trade for a Sustainable Future", and at a celebratory event in the evening. Guest speaker at both will be Mark Ritchie, former Minnesota Secretary of State and, before that, a long-term advocate on agricultural trade issues both locally and in relation to the Global South. MAFTTI hopes this his presence and contribution will help provide a valuable stimulus for MAFTTI's program as it is shaped over the next few years.

Presented on behalf of the MAFTTI Steering Committee by Paul Renshaw, Margo Druschel, Paul Prew and Arlene Renshaw.

MANKATO CITY COUNCIL

**RESOLUTION DECLARING MANKATO TO BE A FAIR TRADE TOWN
ACCORDING TO THE CRITERIA OF THE NATIONAL FAIR TRADE TOWNS USA CAMPAIGN**

WHEREAS the City Council of Mankato expresses its support for sustainable and equitable commerce and economic development; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of Mankato issued a Proclamation supporting the work of the Mankato Area Fair Trade Town Initiative (MAFTTI) on May 10, 2010; and

WHEREAS, "Fair Trade" is an innovative, market strategy that promotes fair labor practices and healthy, safe work environments through the production of food and other goods; and

WHEREAS, Fair Trade provides producers with fair prices that translate into truly livable wages; and

WHEREAS, production of Fair Trade goods is achieved through sustainable and ecologically friendly means, thus supporting the future of a healthy planet for all; and

WHEREAS, as consumers, referring to individuals as well as private and public entities, we all have a responsibility to be aware of the impact that our consumption has on the communities that purchase the goods we purchase; and

WHEREAS, we consumers have a voluntary choice to make such purchases of Fair Trade goods; and

WHEREAS, we recognize that supporting our local economy by purchasing locally and ethically produced goods and services is in keeping with the values of Fair Trade; and

WHEREAS, the City of Mankato has the opportunity to lead by example and present a model of social responsibility for other towns and cities to follow;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council for the City of Mankato that, when purchasing goods, the City of Mankato will commit to procuring local and Fair Trade products when those products are readily available, meet applicable city standards, are competitively priced, are of comparable quality, and procured in accordance with existing procurement policies.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the City Council for the City of Mankato that the City Council encourages ongoing education, media exposure and commitment to Fair Trade within the community and the use, sale or provision of Fair Trade products whenever possible for the wellbeing of producers, consumers and the planet.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the City Council for the City of Mankato that the City Council will consider taking a more active role on issues of Fair Trade if it proves beneficial for the City.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council for the City of Mankato, following consideration of information received evidence from the Mankato Area Fair Trade Town Initiative (MAFTTI) and a determination that the criteria of the national Fair Trade Towns USA Campaign have been met, hereby declares Mankato to be a Fair Trade Town.

This Resolution shall become effective upon its passage and without further publication.

Dated this 24th day of October 2011

Eric T Anderson
Mayor

