

Fairtrade coffee

Located high up in the mountains of the Amazonas region of Northern Peru is the small village of Ramon Castle. The farmers here belong to a cooperative of coffee farmers called Bagua Grande that sells 30 per cent of its coffee to the fair trade market.

While the price of coffee on the international market continually fluctuates, the price that the farmers receive for their fair trade coffee hasn't changed since the cooperative began selling fair trade in 1998. It is more than double that of the current conventional market price.

The farmers also receive a premium from the fair trade market. It is used to part-fund a health insurance scheme for the farmers and their families. The premium also allows the farmers to receive training in business management and technical advice in the sowing of coffee, the management of soils and improving the quality of their crops.



Pedro Huaman, coffee farmer.
Photo: Geoff Crawford

“We have bought more pots and pans for the kitchen, we've been able to buy some goats and we've bought a battery charger. We also get technical help with our coffee. Even though I am an experienced farmer, there are still things I can learn. I used to cut off the branches of my coffee trees with machetes but I have learnt that this damages the trees, so now I use a saw.” (Pedro Velayarce Huaman, coffee farmer)

“I am very pleased because my children and I have the health security. With the higher price we've received we've been able to educate our children. With what remains we've been able to improve our fields. Also we go to the training workshops. I'd like to say to our friends in Europe, please carry on buying our coffee at a Fairtrade price in order for us to be able to live a better life.” (Maridelsa Contrina Vera, coffee farmer)



Maridelsa Contrina Vera, coffee farmer.
Photo: Geoff Crawford



Martias Huaman, coffee farmer.
Photo: Geoff Crawford

“I entered the cooperative in 1989. Before I joined I was suffering through negotiating with the middlemen. After I joined I received technical support on how to improve my fields. With the help of the technicians we always produce our coffee with organic fertilizers. I am happy with the cooperative because we have strong bonds between the farmers and we're gaining a lot of technical skills. About five years ago I suffered with arthritis. I was insured by the cooperative through their health insurance and I was able to improve my health ... Without the insurance I would be below the ground I would be organic fertilizer!” (Martias Huaman, coffee farmer)