

# Cumbria Local and Fair

Fair dealing for a sustainable future: the case for Fairtrade and local

## A Day Conference

Friday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2011, Rheged, Penrith

9.45 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.

### For:

Cumbrian farmers ▪ Cumbrian food and wool processors ▪ Distributors ▪ Retailers ▪ Sustainability and public procurement officers ▪ Elected Members of Cumbrian Councils ▪ MPs and MEPs ▪ Fairtrade campaigners ▪ Anyone with interests in local farming, local food and wool processing, local consumption, sustainability and Fairtrade

### Background:

Cumbrian farmers and food producers face a range of challenges which include: poor milk prices; increasing costs of farming inputs; increasing costs of distribution; reluctance of retailers to market local products; insufficient awareness by the public of local products and insufficient commitment to buy them, and inadequate commitment from the public sector to procure local products. Many of these challenges, if not all, are faced by farmers in developing countries, and for a particular group, that is those who sell their produce – their bananas, coffee, sugar, cocoa, etc. – in our markets Fairtrade has offered long term, sustainable solutions.

### Aims:

The conference will:

- i. Examine existing good practice, in Cumbria and beyond, including Fairtrade, to determine ways in which more local farmers and more local food and wool processors can work together for a fairer deal and a more sustainable future, mindful of the challenges which farming faces post 2013.
- ii. Consider the parallels, similarities and differences between the situation of small farmers in developing countries and farmers in Cumbria.
- iii. Generate ideas and make recommendations for action through workshops on seven topics.

### Structure:

#### I. Arrival and Registration (9.15 – 9.45)

#### II. Morning Plenaries: Setting the Scene (9.45 – 12.00 with coffee break)

- Prof Frank Peck, Research Director, Regional Economic Development, University of Cumbria, and Dr Lois Mansfield, Principal Lecturer for the School of Outdoor Studies, University of Cumbria, will speak on the context of Cumbrian farming now and the changes post 2013.
- Harriet Lamb, Executive Director, Fairtrade Foundation, will speak on the Fairtrade model.
- Robert Craig, Chair, Cumbrian NFUs and Eden Valley Dairy Farmer, and Renwick Rose, CEO, Windward Islands Farmers' Association and Fairtrade Banana Farmer will reflect on visiting one another's farms.

#### III. Lunch (12.00 – 1.00)

#### IV. Afternoon Workshops: Tackling the Issues (1.00 – 3.00)\* (*See note below*)

The seven workshop topics are as follows, each framed in the form of a headline question:

1. **Connecting local producers with local consumers:**

There is a high level of awareness of and commitment to Fairtrade in Cumbria, and for some shoppers, both residents and visitors, a parallel commitment to local.

***What must be done to increase the awareness and commitment of consumers in Cumbria, both residents and visitors, to buy local produce?***

2. **Farmers together:**

Much of the Fairtrade system is predicated on producer cooperation and associative ways of working. So, too, with farming in Cumbria.

***What can Cumbrian farmers do to work more effectively together to make their futures more secure?***

3. **A Cumbrian brand:**

The marketing of Fairtrade products has been successful through the development of a strong and trusted 'brand'. ***What would be the added value to local food producers of a 'Cumbrian Fare' Mark, and how might it work?***

4. **Adding value to local wool:**

The Fairtrade system has enabled farmers all over the world to add value to their products, and many sheep farmers in Cumbria have been able to add considerable value to theirs by selling into special markets.

***How can Cumbrian sheep-farmers best attract the highest income, and promote and add value to local wool?***

5. **Distributing local produce:**

Fairtrade businesses and local food producers often market relatively small quantities of product lines.

***How can the distribution of local produce be improved for the benefit of Cumbrian farmers, producers and consumers?***

6. **Dedicated supply chains for milk:**

Fairtrade works through dedicated supply chains and there is already a dedicated supply contact sector in other parts of the Country, notably for liquid milk.

***How could a dedicated supply sector for Cumbrian dairy farmers be introduced and would the concept of 'Fair Milk' be helpful to that introduction?***

7. **Public procurement:**

The potential for local authorities and the NHS to source their supplies from local as well as from Fairtrade suppliers is very great. While some bodies have made serious progress on this, most have not.

***How can public procurement in Cumbria do more for both local and Fairtrade producers and how can local and Fairtrade producers access public procurement supply chains?***

There will an additional question for every workshop participant:

→ ***'Having participated in this workshop, what will you do personally to ensure that Cumbrian farmers, Cumbrian food and wool processors, and Fairtrade producers achieve a fairer deal and a more sustainable future?'***

For elected representatives (Councillors, MPs and MEPs) there will be a further question:

→ *'How will you, as an elected representative, take forward the proposals of this workshop?'*

**\* Note:** Each workshop is two hours long. Coffee and tea will be available during that time. Each workshop will be run by a facilitator with good knowledge of the issues being discussed and each will have at least one key expert to feed into the discussions. Participants will be asked to sign up to a particular workshop at the time of their application (*see below*). Three to four weeks before the Conference each applicant will be sent a briefing paper on the subject of their chosen workshop, together with further details on the Conference.

## **V. Reports from Workshops, Next Steps and Conclusion (3.00 – 4.00)**

### **Exhibitors:**

There will be exhibition stands for a small number of organisations (all, with one exception, non-commercial) including amongst others: Cumbria Fells and Dales, Cumbria Fair Trade Network, Cumbria Food Direct, Cumbria Rural Enterprise Agency, Lake District National Park Authority, North Eastern and Cumbria Coop and University of Cumbria Upland Management.

### **Tickets:**

Tickets will be available (at £10.00 each) from Monday 15<sup>th</sup> August from [Joe Human](#) by email. Because we are anticipating great interest and because spaces are limited, tickets will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis, within specific sectors of interest as follows:

▪ Cumbrian farmers	50
▪ Cumbrian food and wool processors	30
▪ Cumbrian elected representatives (Councillors, MPs and MEPs)	25
▪ Cumbrian Fairtrade campaigners	15
▪ Cumbrian retailers and distributors	15
▪ Cumbrian sustainability and public authority procurement officers	10
▪ Country-wide Fairtrade campaigners	10
▪ Representatives from Cumbrian tourism sector	10
▪ Other agencies / organisations	10
▪ Cumbrian Young Farmers	5

### ***When applying please:***

- 1. give your full name, address with postcode, and telephone number;***
- 2. indicate into which of the above categories you best fit;***
- 3. state which of the workshops you would like to contribute to. (If you are interested in more than one workshop, please state your preferences in order.)***

Thank you.

**Note:** You will receive an acknowledgement of your application by email, and at that point you will be asked to make payment of £10.00 by cheque. When that is received your place will be confirmed.

## **Funders:**

**Cumbria Local and Fair** has been generously funded by North Eastern and Cumbrian Coop and the Lake District National Park Authority.

## **Organisation:**

**Cumbria Local and Fair** has been organised by Cumbria Fair Trade Network in partnership with representatives of Cumbria Chamber of Commerce, Cumbria County Council, Cumbrian NFUs, Cumbria Rural Churches, Cumbria Rural Enterprise Agency, Fairtrade Foundation and Lake District National Park Authority. Advised and supported by Cumbria Fells and Dales, together with many individuals involved in and concerned for the future of Cumbrian farming, food and wool processing, and in distribution, procurement and sustainability.

## **Outputs:**

Within two months of the Conference a report will be produced summarising the key ideas and recommendations of each workshop. The report will:

- identify what can be done in the short, medium and long terms to implement the recommendations of each workshop;
- identify which individuals and organisations will be best placed to take on that work.

## **Outcomes:**

We believe that this Conference has the potential to contribute significantly to the long term (post 2013) sustainability of:

- the Cumbrian farming economy;
- livelihoods connected with food and wool processing;
- our rural communities;
- our Cumbrian landscapes.

After the Conference we anticipate that funding will be made available for initiatives from the workshops to be continued. We anticipate that action will be taken by groups and alliances formed or confirmed at the conference, which will lead to actions designed to increase ease in identifying Cumbrian products and willingness by the public to purchase them.

For example, a group could be established to find ways of making consumers more aware of the benefits of buying local, and signalling genuine local products by branding. Associations of dairy farmers committed to making 'Fair Milk' a reality, and sheep-farmers to promoting wool, could be strengthened. Invaluable contacts will have been made with decision makers in the retail sector and local authorities which can bear fruit. There is potential for the long-term benefits to be enjoyed by the entire population of Cumbria, and its many visitors.

Within 4 to 6 months of the Conference a follow up meeting of interested participants from each workshop will be held to share progress, to give encouragement and to keep the momentum going.

**For more information:** *Contact [Jo Alberti](#) by email up to 8<sup>th</sup> August and [Joe Human](#) by email after 8<sup>th</sup> August.*