



For Immediate Release

NATIONAL DEFINITION OF FAIR TRADE ANNOUNCED

OTTAWA, March 29, 2007 – Canada set an example for all developed nations today by announcing a national definition of Fair Trade.

This definition will be launched on September 7 to empower the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) to review products currently labeled as Fair Trade. The CFIA will review these items and impose fines against retailers selling sweatshop produced items fraudulently labeled as Fair Trade.

Fair Trade is the label applied to items imported from the developing world that are purchased at a sustainable price. The higher purchase price of these goods ensures that growers in the developing world receive enough money from the sale of their goods to sustain their families and develop their businesses.

Many Canadians depend on Fair Trade labeling to identify items that were not produced under sweatshop conditions. However, until recently there was no federal involvement in the labeling of such products. Under the new definition, retailers will be required to pay sustainable prices for products labeled as Fair Trade.

Businesses misusing the Fair Trade name and logo potentially harm producers in the developing world as well as Canadian retailers. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency and the Government of Canada created this national definition in response to reports that over 460 tonnes of products fraudulently labeled as Fair Trade were sold in Canada last year. The definition enables the Canadian Food Inspection Agency to impose fines when the Fair Trade name is misused.

In Canada, Fair Trade products have traditionally been available through health-food stores. However, the introduction of Fair Trade products in mainstream grocery stores has pushed the explosive growth in the volume of Fair Trade products sold in Canada. The rapid growth in sales of Fair Trade items such as coffee show that Canadians are interested in sweatshop free, environmentally friendly products.

For more information on the national definition and forthcoming certification program, please visit our website at www.inspection.gc.ca.