



ACTION ALERT: HELP STOP HUMAN TRAFFICKING BY BUYING FAIR TRADE CHOCOLATE FOR PASSOVER AND EASTER

The NGO Committee to Stop Trafficking in Persons is encouraging sales of fair trade chocolate for Passover and Easter to help stop the epidemic of human trafficking in Africa.

Some facts:

Hundreds of thousands of children in Mali, Burkino Faso and Togo are purchased from poverty-stricken parents or simply stolen, and then shipped to Cote D'Ivoire where nearly half of the world's cocoa supply is grown. The children are enslaved: They are paid nothing, receive no education, and are barely fed and often beaten. (See: www.johnrobbins.info/blog/is-there-slavery-in-your-chocolate?)

Fair Trade is an international movement of companies that promotes investment in local communities through fair prices and an emphasis on environmental sustainability, gender equality, and safe and healthy working conditions. Companies also provide third-party oversight to certify that supply chains are free of child labor. To find out more, go to: Global Exchange (www.globalexchange.org) or the Child Labor Coalition (www.stopchildlabor.org).

Chocolate sales in the United States for 2015 are estimated at \$21.2 billion. More than one-third of U.S. chocolate sales are for Easter – placing the holiday ahead of Christmas, Valentine's Day and Halloween (www.confectionerynews.com).

What can you do?

Consumer buying power is a highly effective tool for promoting corporate social responsibility and fair business practices by large chocolate companies in sourcing their cocoa beans.

Look for the Fair Trade Certified logo when you buy chocolate. Some companies that use cocoa not produced by slave labor include: Cadbury (UK), Clif Bar, Cloud Nine, Dagoba Organic Chocolate, Denman Island Chocolate, Divine Chocolate, Equal Exchange, Gardners Candies, Green and Black's, John and Kira's, Kailua Candy Company, Koppers Chocolate, L.A. Burdick Chocolates, Montezuma's Chocolates, NewLeaf Chocolates, Newman's Own Organics, Omanhene Cocoa Bean Company, Rapunzel Pure Organics, Shaman Chocolates, Sweet Earth Chocolates, Taza Chocolate, Endangered Species Chocolate Company, and Theo Chocolate.

For the coming holidays, Passover (April 3) and Easter (April 5), several companies are offering special Fair Trade certified products: Equal Exchange, T'ruah, and Fair Trade Judaica are offering the first-ever Kosher for Passover and Fair Trade Chocolate (shop.equalexchange.coop/pesach). Sjaak's also offers organic chocolate for Easter (sjaaks.com/categories/show/Easter).

Don't see the big-name chocolate products you are used to buying? Some of the largest global chocolate corporations have made promises to adopt Fair Trade certification in the coming years, but have yet to implement the necessary changes. **You can help them move along faster by hitting them where it hurts -- their bottom line.**

The NGO Committee to Stop Trafficking in Persons is a consortium of organizations dedicated to the eradication of human trafficking in all its forms through education, advocacy, research and monitoring compliance with UN protocols, laws and resolutions. See our website: www.ngocstip.com