

## Resources Available from Banana Link

**Education Pack: “The Truth About Bananas”** is a participatory information and resources pack which explores the reality, for people and the environment, behind the production and trade of our favourite fruit, the banana (£8)

**Film: Los Alamos: “I don’t like Unions. I Will Fight Them”** tells the story of violent attacks on workers striking to gain basic labour rights on the Los Alamos plantation in Ecuador in 2002 - available on DVD/VHS (£5)

**Booklet: “The Race to the Bottom: Banana Workers Rights in Ecuador”** describes the conditions that Ecuadorian banana workers endure and the urgent need for solidarity action (£3)

A2 posters highlighting **fair trade, trade union rights, the environmental costs of production** and the ‘**race to the bottom**’ in the banana industry (free)

**Join our Urgent Action mailing list** to receive Urgent Action requests for solidarity by email.

Subscribe to the **News From The Banana Front** newsletter which keeps you up to date with the developments in the banana industry, focusing on the opportunities for solidarity.

### Websites

**Banana Link** - [www.bananalink.org.uk](http://www.bananalink.org.uk)

Visit the Union to Union section of our Banana Link website for more information on our international solidarity activities

**Support Caribbean Bananas** - [www.supportcaribbeanbananas.org.uk](http://www.supportcaribbeanbananas.org.uk)

Lobby to protect small farmers in the Caribbean

**Tescopoly** - [www.tescopoly.org](http://www.tescopoly.org)

Call for controls of supermarket buying power

Contact us directly for new resources or to receive any further information:

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# BANANA LINK



## BUILDING SOLIDARITY BETWEEN LATIN AMERICAN AND BRITISH UNIONS



## HOW YOU AND YOUR UNION CAN GET INVOLVED

## THE UNION TO UNION PROJECT

### Building solidarity between Latin American and British unions

Banana Link works with eight banana workers' trade unions in **Nicaragua, Peru, Honduras, Ecuador, Guatemala and Costa Rica**. The Union to Union project **builds solidarity links** between Latin American trade unions, at one end of the international banana supply chain, and British trade unionists, at the other.

A **'Race to the Bottom'** is being pursued in the **banana industry**, as companies seek ever 'cheaper' bananas, resulting in lowering social and environmental standards for the hundreds of thousands of workers producing the bananas sold on our supermarket shelves. In Latin America, **banana workers face appalling working conditions**, including wages well below the cost of living and exposure to toxic chemicals. Workers who try to join unions face repression - from daily psychological pressure to outright violence.

Through this project, banana workers' trade unions are **organising and training workers on the ground, whilst lobbying for changes to labour laws, company practices and trade rules at national and international level**. Banana Link and our union partners work closely with the International Union of Food and Agricultural Workers (IUF) to increase the impact of solidarity activities.

### Recent achievements include:

- increased capacity to organise workers: in 2007 our trade union partners in Ecuador, Honduras and Costa Rica increased their membership despite the many obstacles, with particular increases in the membership of women workers in Honduras
- the signing of the first Collective Bargaining Agreement in the Costa Rican banana industry for over 20 years
- youth workshops in Ecuador, which have increased awareness in young plantation worker members (now accounting for 75% of all members), and provided inspiration to unions in other countries in the region
- the first ever law governing labour-subcontracting in Ecuador

- facilitation of legal action against multinationals which used banned pesticides with a devastating impact on workers' health
  - the exposure of tens of thousands of plantation and pack-house workers to information and education about the role of independent trade unions, with an increased proportion of women participating
  - establishing dialogue between our union partners and the major British supermarkets whose banana price war has accelerated the lowering of wages and standards on Latin American plantations
- Solidarity activities of British trade union partners include:**
- building a trade union training centre and funding organisers and their travel expenses in Costa Rica, contributing to increased union membership and strengthened education and training programmes
  - lobbying British and Latin American companies, governments and supermarkets to respect core labour standards
  - responding to Urgent Action requests from our partners, forcing a large company supplying Chiquita to reinstate trade union activists with full back pay and give the union unimpeded access to plantations
  - a number of trade union activists from the UK visiting Costa Rica and Ecuador in the last few years to witness first-hand conditions on the ground with workers

### HOW YOU AND YOUR UNION CAN GET INVOLVED:

Become a **Banana Link Trade Union Supporter** at branch (£35), regional (£85) or national (£100) level

**Request input from Banana Link at union events** or activities (including Latin American speakers)

Join our **Banana Action mailing list** to receive requests for urgent action

Subscribe to and distribute the **Union to Union 'News from the Banana Front'** bulletin

**Submit a motion** from your branch to regional or national conferences