

Banana Globingo

Aim - This activity can be used as an ice breaker. The statements that participants complete and discuss in the game encourage critical thinking about the banana trade.

Suitability - You can adapt this game for any group. This version is suitable for older children and adults.

You will need - One pen and one Globingo sheet per person

Get started!

Hand out the sheets and pens

Tell participants to find someone to answer the questions on the sheet and sign the appropriate box. They must find a different person for each box on the sheet. It does not matter if the answers are right or wrong.

They should fill in as many boxes as they can in the time available. If they fill in all the boxes find the workshop facilitator.

Discuss the answers that they were given relating them to the correct ones. Who found someone who...

1. can name 3 countries where bananas are grown
2. can guess how long a first class banana is according to the EU
3. knows whether the people involved in producing bananas for export mostly work on
 - a. large commercial, mechanised plantations which export nearly all of their bananas
 - b. small, family-owned farms
4. knows whether banana workers on big plantations are usually contracted for
 - a. life
 - b. during the summer season when bananas are ripe for the picking
 - c. short-term contracts of 3-6 months
5. can estimate how much a Nicaraguan banana worker takes home for a basic 8 hour day
6. can estimate roughly what percentage of the price of a conventional banana one of the large British supermarkets usually takes
7. what the Fairtrade MARK means for producers
8. knows which supermarkets sell Fairtrade bananas
9. can think of one way to promote Fairtrade

Banana Globingo

Find someone to answer the questions on the sheet and sign the appropriate box. You must find a different person for each box on the sheet. It does not matter if the answers are right or wrong.

1. Bananas are grown in

2. A first class banana according to the EU is at least cmcm

3. Most people who work in the banana industry work

on large plantations	<input type="checkbox"/>
small family farms	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. A banana worker's contract is usually

a. for life	<input type="checkbox"/>	b. in the summer	<input type="checkbox"/>	c. short-term (3-6 months)	<input type="checkbox"/>
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5. A Nicaraguan banana worker takes home US\$
 for a basic 8 hour day

6. A supermarket can take more than%
 of the price of a banana

7. The Fairtrade MARK means
for producers.

8. I've bought Fairtrade bananas recently in
 (which supermarket)

9. One way in which I could/do support Fairtrade is



Globingo answers and discussion

1. Three countries where bananas are grown:

Countries of the tropics - Africa, Latin America, Caribbean, Pacific etc - grow bananas. The important issue is that many countries produce bananas as a staple food, but that only around 20% of all bananas that are produced are actually exported. The world's biggest exporter of bananas is Ecuador. Most bananas sold on the British market are exported from Latin America, and increasingly West Africa, as companies relocate in search of ever 'cheaper' bananas, pursuing a 'Race to the Bottom' in terms of social and environmental standards.

Countries of export (the following lists are not comprehensive lists):

Latin America: Ecuador, Costa Rica and Colombia export the most bananas in the world. Other Latin American exporting countries - Guatemala, Honduras, Belize, Panama, Nicaragua, Suriname
Caribbean: Windward Islands (St Vincent and the Grenadines, St Lucia, Dominica), Jamaica, Dominican Republic

European supplying countries - i.e. that are part of the EU so don't actually 'import' bananas, although their bananas are traded within the EU: Martinique (France), Guadeloupe (France), Canary Islands, Greece, Portugal

African: Ghana (Fairtrade plantation only), Cameroon, Ivory Coast

2. How long a first class banana is according to the EU?

Minimum of 14 cms and with less than 1cm of marks on the skin - but do you care? Most supermarkets have much higher quality standards than the EU, and its apparently because consumers want perfect-looking fruit and vegetables. The consequences though are that there is more waste and more intensive production methods, including high levels of pesticides, to ensure quality perfection throughout the whole crop. And the fruit inside a banana can be perfect whether there are marks on the skin or not. Despite this, if there are many 'quality' problems with a box of bananas, the farmer or plantation owner who has supplied this fruit (this can be recognised through the codes on each box of bananas) will be told that there are problems, and may even lose the contract.

3. Do the people involved in producing bananas for export mostly work on large commercial, mechanised plantations that export nearly all of their bananas or small,

family-owned farms?

Most bananas are grown on the large-scale, monoculture plantations in Latin America. In the Caribbean it is mainly small family owned farms.

4. Are banana workers on big plantations usually contracted for life, during the summer season when bananas are ripe for the picking or on short-term contracts of 3-6 months?

Most banana workers on the big plantations are on short-term contracts. This means that workers have fewer rights than permanent workers, and often lower wages etc. (Bananas are not seasonal really, so 'during the summer season' is a red-herring!)

5. How much does a Nicaraguan banana worker take home for a basic 8 hour day?

Around US\$1.20 - about 75 pence. This is about one-third the estimated value of a basic food-basket in Nicaragua. However recent reports indicate some workers are not even receiving cash wages for their work - but only green bananas.

6. What percentage of the price of a conventional banana does one of the large British supermarkets usually take?

Around 30 to 40% whilst a worker can take 1.5%. Bananas are the single biggest profit making item sold in a British supermarket. Supermarkets have become the most powerful actors along the supply chain and their low prices they pay for bananas are having a direct and negative impact on the wage levels and working conditions of banana plantation workers.

The international banana supply chain is increasingly controlled by a handful of multinational companies: just five companies control 80% of the world trade in bananas whilst in Britain supermarkets, dominated by a handful of companies led by Tesco with over 30% of the sector, sell 80% of bananas.

Globingo answers and discussion

7. What does the Fairtrade MARK mean for producers?

The Fairtrade Mark guarantees producers a minimum price which covers basic food, housing, health and education needs. Suppliers commit to long term relationships with producers to ensure sustainable development. Farmers are supported to improve their environmental practices, to reduce dependency on pesticides and reduce waste. In addition there is a Fairtrade premium paid on every box of bananas sold which is invested by Fairtrade groups, formed by the farmers themselves, in their local communities. Visit www.fairtrade.org.uk to read more about how Fairtrade works and the benefits for over 5 million farmers, workers and their families.

8. Where can you buy Fairtrade bananas?

Waitrose, Sainsbury, Morrison's, Asda, Tesco, Budgens, Somerfield, Out of this World and Co-op (who were the first to launch in January 2000) all sell Fairtrade bananas in at least some of their stores in Britain. Waitrose announced in autumn 2005 that all of their loose Caribbean bananas would be Fairtrade certified. In the tiny Windward Islands nearly 20% of all bananas are Fairtrade labeled which equates to 1700 banana farmers benefiting directly from the Fairtrade system. There are plans for banana production on the islands to become 100% in 2006.

9. Ways you can support Fairtrade

There are many ways in which you can support Fairtrade production, below are just a few ideas!

- Choose Fairtrade products when you shop.
- If you cannot find Fairtrade bananas in your local supermarket, fill in a customer comment card or ask to speak to the manager and request that Fairtrade bananas are stocked.
- Encourage your local, independent shop to stock Fairtrade – Banana Link can provide information on wholesale sources.
- Work with friends and colleagues to make your church, village, town, school or university Fairtrade – visit www.fairtrade.org.uk for more information about how!
- Introduce Fairtrade products into your workplace – with information about what Fairtrade means for producers.
- Learn more about Fairtrade and tell your friends and family all about how it benefits farmers and workers – many people learn about Fairtrade by word of mouth!
- Submit a motion supporting Fairtrade at your union conference.
- Visit www.supportcaribbeanbananas.org.uk and find out about how to continue supporting Caribbean small producers, many of whom are Fairtrade registered.
- Contact Banana Link and become Supporters – receive information updates and requests for action from our Latin American and Caribbean partners and work towards creating a more sustainable banana industry.