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MEDIA RELEASE

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As local cafe culture thrives, concern for third world farmers grows

Whilst local café patrons choose between a cappuccino or a short black, coffee farmers in the third world are failing to enjoy the same good trade as many Hobart cafés. A local volunteer group is showing consumers how to ensure their enjoyment of this popular caffeine kick sends benefits back to the growers.

The group is organising a Fair Trade Fiesta to share their message and give consumers a taste for Fairtrade products such as tea, coffee, chocolate and, surprisingly, soccer balls that are independently certified to ensure producers receive fair wages and decent working conditions.

“Many coffee drinkers aren’t aware that coffee is grown in sub-tropical and tropical regions of the world and that 25 million people depend on coffee for their livelihood,” says Yvonne James, member of the Hobart Fair Trade Fortnight organising group.

“Coffee farmers in countries such as our closest neighbours, East Timor and Papua New Guinea, are at the mercy of fluctuating world prices of coffee. This affects their ability to send their children to school and access basic health services.

“As consumers right here in Hobart, we can make a difference by choosing coffee with the FAIRTRADE Label – this guarantees the farmers received a fair deal, which in turn helps whole communities have a better life in simple ways we take for granted.”

In Australia and New Zealand, sales of FAIRTRADE labelled products have increased five fold from 2004 to 2006, demonstrating strong community support for this ethical certification system. Ours is now the fastest growing market for fairtrade labelled products in the world.

The Fair Trade Fiesta will be held on Parliament House Lawns on Sunday 29th April from 12 noon to 3pm following Oxfam Australia’s Walk Against Want. As well as Fairtrade stalls and soccer, there will be live music by local talent Adam Cousens, reggae band Bredda and seven-piece band Trumps. The Fiesta will be the first of a series of events held in Hobart during the national Fair Trade Fortnight (28th April to 13th of May). Visit www.fairtrade.com.au/ftf07 for further information.

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Photo opportunity: Volunteers from the organising group are available to meet on Parliament House Lawns with Fairtrade cappuccino's in hand and Fairtrade soccer balls at their feet.

Note to Editors:

1 The FAIRTRADE Label is a certification mark and a registered trademark of Fairtrade Labelling Organisations International (FLO) of which the Fair Trade Association of Australia & New Zealand (FTAANZ) is the Australian and New Zealand member. This independent consumer label appears on products as a guarantee that disadvantaged producers are getting a better deal. Today, more than five million people – farmers, workers and their families – across 58 developing countries benefit from the international Fairtrade system.

Visit www.fairtrade.com.au for more information.