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Home ▶ All Journals ▶ Globalizations ▶ List of Issues ▶ Volume 5, Issue 2 ▶ Are Sustainable Coffee Certifications En ...

Globalizations > Volume 5, 2008 - Issue 2: Trading Morsels

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Part 3: Responses to Global Complexity—Ethical Trade

# Are Sustainable Coffee Certifications Enough to Secure Farmer Livelihoods? The Millenium Development Goals and Nicaragua's Fair Trade Cooperatives

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within the context of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. Findings suggest that households connected to Fair Trade cooperatives experienced several positive impacts in education, infrastructure investment, and monetary savings. However, several important livelihoods insecurities, including low incomes, high emigration, and food insecurity, persisted among all small-scale producers.

A Chinese version of this article's abstract is available online at:

[www.informaworld.com/rglo](http://www.informaworld.com/rglo)

En diciembre de 2001, los precios del bien de consumo de café verde alcanzaron su nivel más bajo en 30 años. Esto ha aumentado la crisis del sustento a millones de cultivadores de café y comunidades rurales. La industria especializada del café respondió perfeccionando varios programas de certificación del café sustentable, que incluye el comercio justo. Este estudio utiliza una investigación a nivel doméstico y de comunidad conducido en Nicaragua desde el 2000 al 2006 para evaluar la respuesta a la crisis del café después de 1999. Un equipo de investigación de acción participativa entrevistó a 177 hogares que vendían a los mercados convencionales y de comercio justo en 2006. En un esfuerzo de dialogar con la industria especializada del café y las agencias de desarrollo convencionales, los resultados se formularon dentro del contexto de las Metas de Desarrollo del Milenio de las Naciones Unidas. Las conclusiones sugieren que los hogares vinculados a las cooperativas de comercio justo experimentaron ahorros en gastos de transporte, ahorros en gastos de alimentos importantes y ahorros en gastos de alimentos importantes.

[摘要] 2001年12月，咖啡绿消费品的价格达到了30年来的最低点。这导致了数百万咖啡种植者和农村社区的生存危机。咖啡专业行业通过完善各种可持续咖啡认证计划来回应，其中包括公平贸易。这项研究利用国内和社区层面的调查，于2000年至2006年在尼加拉瓜评估了对1999年咖啡危机的反应。一个参与式行动研究团队采访了177户向传统市场和公平贸易市场出售咖啡的家庭。在与咖啡专业行业和发展机构进行对话的努力中，研究结果是在联合国千年发展目标背景下提出的。结论表明，与公平贸易合作社联系的家庭在交通、食品支出和食品支出方面节省了资金。



# Notes

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1. See the work of Crosby et al. ([2002](#)), Katzeff et al. ([2002](#)), and PEARL (2007) for examples of innovative strategies and projects to create sustainable chains within the specialty coffee industry.
2. The average production increases to 4,000 lb when we include the six largest farms in the study.
3. This cost estimate does not include farmers' labor time, training time, costs for farm-based quality improvement investments, and the organizational costs associated with creating a participatory and democratic cooperative organization. A study of these 'additional' costs for sustainable production estimated total real costs were from 1.25 to 1.51 US\$/lb for conventional Fair Trade coffee and 1.72 to 2.19 US\$/lb for certified organic Fair Trade coffee (CLAC, [2006](#)).

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