

Palestine Fair Trade Association

Trees for Life Program 2017

“They planted so we ate. We plant so they eat.”

Arabic Proverb

Introduction:

The Trees for Life Program, which is implemented by the Palestine Fair Trade Association (PFTA)

www.palestinefairtrade.org, provides olive & almond saplings to Palestinian farmers.

While the program covers the majority of the cost of the saplings, the farmers



pay a symbolic percentage as a demonstration of their commitment. PFTA General Assembly, which is composed of elected representatives of 50 farmer’s coops, elects a committee of farmers called Trees for Life Committee. This committee is responsible for identifying sapling recipients, distribution, and implementation. The Trees for Life committee works within the priorities set by PFTA and targets young families, starter farmers, small farmers, women farmers, and farmers who have recently cultivated lands that have been impacted by the Israeli wall or have been subject to field or trees destruction by the Israeli military.

Insisting on Life

Palestinian farmers insist on a culture of life. They are committed to sustaining and enhancing the living environment even as they produce a living for their families and increase the economic viability of the larger community. In all their practices they promote a respectful, sustainable relationship with the land with an eye to the future. Through fair trade, they form great relationships with partners and customers throughout the world who appreciate their high quality products.



In the past decade, much of the land of Palestine has been made inaccessible to them. Farmers have been particularly hurt as their crops have been demolished and their land taken for Israeli settlements, by-pass roads, security zones, and the Wall. Often farmers are forced to watch without recourse as their olive trees are uprooted, and often they stand at a gate in the Wall hoping for access to plant, tend, and harvest crops on their land on the other side. Young and small farmers have found it particularly difficult to establish and expand their operations. PFTA and solidarity groups have, however, found creative ways in which to restore production and hope for such farmers.

This program helps to connect the Palestinian farmers and producers in the fair trade movement in Palestine to the grassroots fair trade movement in world in a meaningful way. In solidarity with olive farmers denied their livelihood, grassroots

solidarity organizations abroad have raised funds for the purchase of thousands of seedlings since 2006.

The history of The Program:

Since the program started in 2006, the number of participating farmers has increased. While the trees have provided significant financial benefits to the farmers and their families, perhaps the most important contribution has been the renewed sense of hope and commitment to the land.

<i>Year/Season</i>	<i>No. Of targeted locations</i>	<i>Total No. Of distributed saplings</i>	<i>Total No. of Beneficiaries</i>
2006	6	3600	129
2007	21	12096	279
2008	16	7374	207
2009	12	6843	358
2010	8	9071	255
2011	14	9660	257
2012	21	10560	377
2013	13	8000	560
2014	14	13865	230
2015	20	16700	328
2016	20	13542	250
2017	21	14063	252
	Totals	125,374	3154
<i>Trees for life Historical Data 2006-2017.</i>			

2017 Planting season

During "2017" planting season more than **14000** saplings have been distributed to more than **250** farmers in **21** various villages in the West Bank.

Contributions and Donations collected for 2017 planting Season:

Zaytoun, UK -----	24,105 £
Zatoun, Canada -----	11,035 \$
Land of Canaan Foundation, USA-----	10,191 \$
Verein fair handeln in cooperation with DWP-----	4,000 €
Harvest Peace, USA -----	709 \$
Deans Beans, USA -----	667 \$
Pal Crafts -----	200 £
Weltladen Fulda-germany -----	940 €

Trees for Life program is funded by PFTA's olive oil buyers, and a network of solidarity organizations in Europe, UK, USA and Canada. PFTA farmers extend sincere thanks and gratitude to these organizations and individuals who contributed through them to the livelihood sustainability of Palestinian farmers

Highlight Farmers Stories:

Na'eem Abu Hanani is a farmer from the village of Arraneh, near Jenin. When he was young, he had worked the land with his family. More recently, Na'eem was a taxi driver in Jenin. He was the PFTA driver during the Run across Palestine (ultra marathon to raise awareness of the plight of Palestinian farmers under occupation) in 2012. This introduced him to the concept and results of fair trade farming in Palestine. Two years ago Na'eem decided to leave his work as a driver and farm full time. When he



heard about the Trees for Life program, he immediately visited the PFTA and applied to receive trees. He was a perfect candidate as a small farmer with land and the ability and desire to nourish the trees. Na'eem received 100 olive tree saplings from the PFTA and planted them in January 2017. He said he hopes these trees will start producing in the coming years to increase his income from farming. Just as important, having these trees will 'insist on his attachment to his land'. He extends sincere thanks and gratitude to the organizations and individuals who contributed to the program in order to improve the livelihood sustainability of Palestinian farmers.



Mohamed Al Weshahi:

A farmer from the village of Telfeet near Jenin, he has more than 510 productive olive trees in his land; Mohamed is considered a full time real farmer. His family owns a large flock of goats and sheep, and every morning his wife and his



mother do the milking for the animals. The milk is processed and produces a high quality traditional white cheese and yogurt which is sold every day directly to the people in the area and nearby villages.

Every day he brings his tools and visits his farm to do the daily agricultural practices such as weeding, pruning and plowing. Since 2014 when he joined the Fair-trade program, Mohamed sells his organic certified olive oil through PFTA to Canaan Fair Trade company (CFT). He believes that all Palestinian farmers, even the farmers who are not registered in the PFTA programs, benefit from fair trade; he says “simply every year CFT export large quantities of our olive oil to the international fair trade markets and so the farmers of the PFTA have a direct benefit from this because they market their production, and also this process give a better opportunities for the other farmers who are not registered in the PFTA to market their production in the local Palestinian market with a better prices”.

This planting season Mohamed received 100 olive saplings from the PFTA after he applied to the trees for life program. He hopes these trees will start producing in

the coming couple of years which means increasing his income and also this will help in insisting on his attachment to his land, while Israel tries to uproot this attachment in Palestine.



Established in 2014, Telfet cooperative is one of the PFTA olive oil producing cooperatives, with all the farmers selling the majority of their olive oil to Canaan Fair Trade.

Trees for Life 2017.

Jenin, Palestine