

Palestine Fair Trade Association

Trees for Life Program

2018

*“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 52 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. This year **2018** more than **22,646** saplings have been distributed to more than **257** farmers in more than 22 various villages in the West Bank.

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 world grassroots fair trade movement 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
2018	22	22646	257
	Totals	148,020	3,154

Trees for life Historical Data 2006-2018.

2018 Planting season:

During the **2018** planting season more than **22,646** saplings have been distributed to more than **257** farmers in **22** various villages in the West Bank.

Regenerative farming and land race Seeds program. (Phase 1)

In this planting season PFTA included Regenerative farming and land race seeds, which aim to enhance and sustain the health of top soil by keeping an active biological life year round. Regenerative Agriculture increases the soil capacity to store carbon, which in turn allows for better moisture retention. Also Regenerative Agriculture calls for farm management that increases biodiversity, composting, cover cropping, inter-cropping and the integration of animals to the farm (Dairy animals, chickens and beekeeping) that improve and enrich the food type and quality for the farmers.

PFTA has been successful in encouraging the farmers to implement all the needed RA practices through:

- Capacity Building Trainings
- Agricultural extension and field visits
- Offering original landrace seeds

Providing landrace seeds:

Collecting (purchasing) native seeds from our organic farmers own production, then circulation and distribution of the seeds to new farmers (for free) according to the targeted area, type of the soil and the major crop in the targeted area. PFTA will recollect part of the produced seeds after harvest and re- circulate them to other farmers in the coming seasons (Seed Bank).

Totals from our 1st Phase of landrace seeds program:

- Total cultivated Area: 160 Donums (16 Hectares).
- Total Number of beneficiaries: 32 farmers.
- Total distributed quantity of seeds: 2450 kg

- The following table summarizes the types of seeds which were distributed to the farmers in our 1st landrace seeds program

Lima Beans	Vicia Legium	clover	Green Peas	onion
Fenugreek Seed	Potato	lentils	vetch seeds	

Jojoba seedlings

This year PFTA included Jojoba seedlings in the Trees for Life program. 800 seedlings were distributed by PFTA to a number of farmers, these trees will start producing fruit in the coming couple of years. PFTA is interested in encouraging farmers to plant this type of tree which produces high quality oil that is well suited for all types of manufacturing applications. Jojoba oil is known for its excellent skin conditioning properties. It is used as an ingredient in the finest skin care products as its chemical structure is very similar to the oil produced by human skin glands.



Contributions and Donations collected for 2018 planting Season:

Zaytoun, UK -----	29,135 £
Zatoun, Canada -----	11,987 \$
US Campaign to end Israeli occupation, USA -----	9,865 \$
Land of Canaan Foundation, USA-----	7,500 \$
SOLIVR, France-----	5,071 €
Fair Handlen e.V.Kongen, Germany -----	3,330 €
Andreas Tink-----	250 €
Fair Trade Shop, Aachen, Germany -----	248 €

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 farmer.

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