

---

# Opinion Editorial

---

## Go Nuts For Fair Trade Coconuts

By JoJo Neary

You might not notice how much you use coconuts in everyday life. But if you think about it, you may use coconut oil, shampoo, conditioner, body wash, hand soap, candles and more coconut products. While you're enjoying your coconut products, did you know 60% of coconut farmers live in poverty? Their average income a year is \$355.00, and with that money they must take care of their family. A lot of farmers aren't getting back the money they deserve to take care of themselves and family. That is why you should only buy fair trade coconuts, so the farmers can make a better income, and repair their farms after damage from climate change.

First, 60% of coconut farmers in the Philippines live on less than \$2.00 a day. The supply chain with conventional coconuts is very long. For example, an average coconut costs \$0.89, but farmers who work for non-fair trade companies don't get much of that money back to pay to grow more coconuts to make money for their families. With fair trade, the supply chain is very short and the coconuts come directly from the farms to us. Farmers then get enough money for their families and to grow more coconuts.

Secondly, the places where coconuts are grown are being affected by climate change and this affects farmers because their coconut trees can get damaged and they can't pay to regrow them. For example, the Philippines get hit with an average of 20 typhoons per year. When a typhoon strikes most of the coconut trees get destroyed. This is devastating for farmers because it takes 10 years for a tree to start producing coconuts. Fair trade helps with this problem because they are paid fairly enough to be able to plant and grow more coconuts and then more of the trees will survive.

As you can see it is very important to buy fair trade certified coconuts so the money can get back to the farmers that deserve money. One solution is to stop buying non fair trade certified coconuts so that the companies that sell the products become a fair trade certified company. So to sum it up it is important to buy fair trade products so everyone gets an equal pay.



*JoJo Neary is a fifth grader at Vermont Day School. She enjoys Sing and dancing and participating in musical theater.*

## Works Cited

- Fair Trade Campaigns. "Fair Trade Coconut 101." 5 Mar. 2018, [fairtradecampaigns.org/wpcontent/uploads/2018/03/CAM\\_FTCoconut101\\_180305.pdf](http://fairtradecampaigns.org/wpcontent/uploads/2018/03/CAM_FTCoconut101_180305.pdf).
- Segars, Elise. "It's Time for the World to Start Caring About Coconuts." *Fair Trade Certified*, [www.fairtradecertified.org/news/power-of-coconut](http://www.fairtradecertified.org/news/power-of-coconut). Accessed 5 June 2018.