

BLINC PROJECT: NICARAGUAN FAIRTRADE COFFEE PRODUCER VISIT

26 February – 13 March 2011

VISIT OVERVIEW

Our visitor, Jitzy Centeno from Nicaragua, is a Fairtrade, organic coffee producer from El Jocote, a remote, rural community located in the north-western part of the country. She studied on weekends to achieve a secondary and university-level education, but remains a grower with her own plot of coffee trees, the size of about two football pitches.



The visit was arranged by the Bristol Link with Nicaragua (BLINC). It was supported by the Co-operative and Bristol City Council, but most of the cash funding came from the schools (£1425 at the rate of £150/day). BLINC also made a significant input of funds and organisational time, including that of Jessica Randall, a talented American post-grad volunteer. She not only interpreted, but led classroom sessions to great effect at most schools. She also helped greatly with the preparatory organisation. The Bristol Fairtrade Network organised the non-teaching events and facilitated the Bristol schools' participation, and the South Gloucestershire Fairtrade group launched the scheme to

South Gloucestershire schools with the support of the Children and Young People Department.

We visited 13 sites, involving 20 schools, of which seven were feeder primaries. Whilst most students were year six, seven, or eight, we covered the entire age and ability spectrum from year four to sixth formers, and included a SEN school (Culverhill), a SEN class at Brislington, and a morning with the Pupil Referral Unit at Mangotsfield. This was, we believe, a first, and it is very pleasing to report that these sessions with less able and troubled children worked very well. It is, of course, in the nature of Fairtrade to enable participation at any academic level. The informal sessions with small groups of sixth formers were also very interesting for both us and the students, enabling them to get a first-hand picture of life in a rural community.

Jitzy gave presentations and allowed time for questions and answers. Activities included a range of well known Fairtrade games (e.g. chocolate, banana and coffee games), word searches, and poster-making, as well as the viewing of beans before and after roasting. Most schools had done some preparation, and students clearly benefited more where this had been done. Some had very good questions indeed. A few had rehearsed “*Goodbye*” and “*Thank you*” in Spanish, which was pleasing. Many classes were planning to follow up by completing posters or displays, and some schools had included the visit as part of a wider Fairtrade or citizenship programme.

Feedback from schools has been very positive, with all schools saying they would like a repeat visit next year. A number of staff spoke Spanish or had visited Nicaragua. A couple of schools were interested in an ongoing contact. The impact on staff was considerable; one teacher was kind enough to say it was inspirational. At the PRU one boy, normally withdrawn, became quite an active participant.

SCHOOLS AND CENTRES

South Gloucestershire: Pucklechurch, St Mary's Thornbury, Castle School, Winterbourne, Downend, Kingsfield, Culverhill, Mangotsfield PRU, Mangotsfield Secondary, and Mangotsfield and Tynings feeder primaries

Bristol: Ashton Gate, Sefton Park, St Patrick's, Brislington Enterprise College and 5 feeder primaries

Grand Total:

Sessions (i.e. presentation made to each child): 2577

Children: 2184

(Some children went to an assembly and then a workshop, so had two sessions).

For most schools the average cost per session was under 50 pence per child per session, which is very cost effective in hard economic times.

Jitzy also visited the Bishop's Brew and BLINC's International Women's Day event. She spoke to Bristol procurement officers and at the Burgess Salmon Fairtrade fashion show. She attended but did not speak at the Fairtrade fashion show in the Galleries, though she did find it fascinating; she had never seen a large shopping mall before. There were also a few private social events that she attended.

PRESS COVERAGE

Bristol Evening Post: We had brief duplicated entries at the start of the fortnight from the joint Councils' press release, (but omitting some schools); and a good photo and accurate report on Saturday 12th March from the final "coffee roasting" session at Mangotsfield. It was unfortunate that the two Councils' leadership in supporting this innovative programme was not more fully recognised. Follow up pieces are planned if they can be placed, and all the schools plan a newsletter feature, which should take the news reach of the project to thousands.

For some schools the programme contributed significantly to a bid for FT school status.

LESSONS LEARNED AND FUTURE PLANS

Some key lessons were:

1. Presentations can be to any size group (our largest was almost 300), but a PA system is helpful in large cacophonous halls. We had not asked for this. On another note, with an interpreter two microphones are needed.
2. The standard of student attention was very high. Even one group we had been warned were restless were sitting in rapt attention for 20 minutes of talk and Q&A.
3. Workshop games with a large group (30+) all together in a large hall are chaotic and ineffective. If schools want this in future they need to have breakout rooms available.
4. Green beans were offered in advance. Not many schools roasted the green beans, just the PRU and Mangotsfield Secondary, though some may follow up. Organisationally, it is very difficult to actually roast in a tight programme. Beans should be in a sealed container; biologically they are nuts. We realized they could potentially be a nut allergy risk.
5. It is important that the visitor is an active grower. Children have an acute sense of the real deal. (Jitzy does work for the cooperative, but she still has her own plot of coffee trees.)
6. Getting sixth formers to lead group activities is an attractive idea, but they need close briefing. It would be better to do this well in advance.
7. The programme was very intensive (with sessions for the whole school day every day bar one afternoon) and tiring for all three participants. The constant change of venue imposes an additional pressure. A future plan would try to avoid switching schools in the middle of the day, allow more time for visitor jetlag recovery, allow some slack in the programme to accommodate any illness (Jessica had lost her voice by the end of the programme), and allow a bit more time for local tourism.
8. We met several Heads and Jitzy presented bilingual certificates to the schools, but apart from a very small presence at Mangotsfield, the opportunity to engage Governors, parents, and the wider community in attending assemblies or presentations seems to have been entirely missed. Perhaps this was understandable caution, and another year we may see some movement on this.
9. IT arrangements were good and only once gave a problem, but back up is clearly a good idea.

LESSONS ABOUT FAIRTRADE

El Jocote, Jitzy's community of approximately 300 scattered residences, has neither mains electricity nor running water, and is an hour by bus from the nearest town. Local transport is on foot or horseback. It is however, well watered, and residents bathe and wash clothes in the river that runs through the centre of the community. There are wells for drinking water. Coffee picking is very hard work, from 6am to 6pm, day in and day out, in 40 degrees, for the 3 harvest months, November - February. Most food is home grown, chickens are kept for eggs and meat, and Rosa de Jamaica (a species of hibiscus) is grown for herb tea and artisan products.

Plots of land are usually well under 1 hectare, which yield a very modest income for most families (we estimated an average of about £270). The majority of households are large (Jitzy's "small" family includes herself, her mother, two siblings and her eight year old daughter, a total of 7) but families live in small, usually mudbrick houses. Jitzy belongs to the Tierra Nuestra cooperative which is composed of 30 women, one of five similar cooperatives that are part of a larger umbrella cooperative called La Fundación Entre Mujeres (La FEM).

As we progressed with questions and discussions, we gained a clearer picture of how these women's cooperatives work. It had previously been unusual for women to grow cash crops and secure an independent income.

One of the very clear lessons was that Fairtrade can sometimes have a far greater impact than the modest social premium might suggest. Because of the Fairtrade requirement to buy from an organized community group and the steep cost of becoming Fairtrade certified, the Tierra Nuestra cooperative and the five other cooperatives joined together with La FEM, and are now able to fill a container and sell green coffee directly to Just Coffee, a Fairtrade roaster in the US. They gain about twice the price that local dealers paid previously, which was well below the global market price. They also roast and sell coffee locally at farmers markets, again securing a much better price in return for the considerable extra work.

The extra income so far has been spent on crop diversification, training for women in new vocational skills, esteem-building workshops, education (including finishing primary education for previously illiterate women) and healthcare (including family planning). Tierra Nuestra has also arranged loans for very small (75 watt) solar panels, enough for a couple of lights, for 5 households. This was not directly from Fairtrade money, as the cooperative is able to access loans; however the higher coffee price makes loan repayment possible.

The cooperative also encourages all the women, not just its members, to secure land title jointly with their male partners so that they can access government loans for improvement. The government will only give loans to person whose name is on the land title. In such a machista country, it was extremely rare for a woman to own land. Now, the women of the cooperative ensure that their name is on the land title and thus benefit from such loans.

We were told that after initial hostile reactions, the men in the community have come to accept the role of the cooperative, undoubtedly influenced by the much higher price for the coffee. One of the organisational standards of Fairtrade is respect for human rights, and the women use this as a leveraging point to curb domestic violence which is a huge problem in a machista society. The continuation of domestic violence could lead to the forfeit of Fairtrade status, which would result in a significant loss of money (i.e. the Fairtrade premium) for the households involved in the cooperative.

We learned that the Fairtrade certification and annual recertification processes are expensive and need the umbrella organisation, La FEM, to fund the costs, and arrange contracts and coffee shipment to the US.

As growers, the women are very proud of the quality of their product and the close relationship they have with the buyer in the US. Jitzy had visited them four years ago, and some of Just Coffee's staff go to El Jocote annually to visit the cooperative and help with the coffee harvest.

More generally, the Fairtrade programme allied to the cooperative gave the community hope and a willingness to plan for the future - the same story as in so many other Fairtrade projects. When asked a very perceptive question by a student, "*Why don't you just move to a bigger city where there is water and electricity and you don't have to work so hard?*" Jitzy said she would stay in her community because someone needs to work to make it better for the future. She said it would be easier for her to move to a city, but her family and friends would all be left behind in El Jocote in the same conditions. Jitzy affirmed that the work her cooperative is doing and the progress they are making will create big changes in the community, and establish a future that is more "liveable" for its residents.

One girl with the directness of youth asked Jitzy "*Are you rich or are you poor?*" She replied that in material things she was poor, but she had a wonderful family and friends, and lived in beautiful surroundings, and would never consider herself to be poor.

THANKS

BLINC would like to thank Jonathan and Jill Seagrave, Janet Biggins, and Alix Hughes and family for hosting Jitzy during her time in Bristol. BLINC also extends its thanks to Jonathan Seagrave for taking part in organising the school visit programme, taxiing, and concisely reporting back about the two-week tour, Jenny Foster for coordinating the Fairtrade events, Bishop Mike of Bristol for hosting the Bishop's Brew, Alix Hughes and Gioconda Arostegui for coordinating Jitzy's visit, the Bristol City Council and South Gloucestershire Council, the South Gloucestershire Fairtrade network, and the Co-operative for financial support.

VISITOR BIOGRAPHY

JITZY MARIANELA RUIZ CENTENO

My name is Jitzy Marianela Ruiz Centeno. I was born, grew up in, and currently live in a small community called Jocote, 33km outside the municipality of Condega, in Estelí, Nicaragua.

I am 25 years old, and the single mother of my 7-year old daughter, Jennifer Carolina Centeno. I am also a member of the cooperative, *Tierra Nuestra* (“Our Land”).

I am the daughter of a wonderful, beautiful, and smart woman, named Rosa Amelia Centeno. All her life, my mother has incessantly fought against all odds to accomplish her dreams, which at one point had been crushed and broken. Even now, she works hard to make sure that others achieve their dreams as well. My mother comes from a very poor, religious family, and is one of nine children. She grew up doing domestic housework (fetching water, feeding the animals, and taking care of her brothers and sisters). She was expected to take care of all the house chores, and behave in an submissive and very modest manner; values that, among others, according to my maternal grandparents, identified her as a “good housewife”.

My mother did not finish her studies because she was held back from doing so when she turned 12 years old. Since she didn’t finish elementary school, she continued to do everyday chores around the house, and at the age of 20, she decided to give catechism classes to children while also working as a volunteer member of the Sandinista brigade.

My mother had me at the age of 30. I was the fruit of a relationship that did not end well, since when my father realized that my mother was pregnant, he abandoned her and never again returned, not before nor after my birth, to support her in that situation. As a result, my mother had to return to live with her parents. She lived there until she was 37 years old. Then she married another man, with whom she had three more children.

The things that my mother had to endure through these years and the jobs that she carried out helped her to become a community leader – a leader who fought to live and feel better, and one that was able to fix many things that tormented her. It was through this that, in 1995 at the age of 40, my mother organized a group of single mothers that set out to make changes in their lives, no longer allowing themselves to be manipulated, nor have their rights as women violated. They wanted to be able to decide and express what they felt.

They organized with other women in the community and municipalities, and although they were insulted, humiliated and discriminated against for raising their voices and defending their rights, at the end they were able to empower themselves, as much ideologically as politically and economically. They were trained in diverse subjects, such as gender, sexual and reproductive health, and organic production, and they received significant information and support from another organization, La Fundación Entre Mujeres (La FEM) – (“Foundation Between Women”). Their aim was to gain value for being a woman, to be able to love oneself, take care of oneself, and fight to attain their goals and ideas. Basically, they wanted to feel proud for what they have accomplished and for who they are. A short time after, the women learned to cultivate the land through the diversification of their farms and then began the commercialization of their products. All of this was accompanied by the

radical changes occurring in the lives of the protagonist women in this story.

In this same year, a collective of 5 women formed in the community, which my mother coordinated. In doing so, she obtained more experience in working the land and in getting to know the process of producing the crops that they cultivated on the farm, especially that of organic coffee. She also began to give classes to women who didn't know how to read or write. Although she didn't finish her elementary education, she was ready and willing to assist the women that needed her help.

During this time, I lived with my maternal grandparents. I grew up with them, but my mother and I always maintained close communication.

Growing up with my grandparents was very difficult for me because, on top of living a bit far away from my mother and my siblings, my religious and demanding grandparents didn't let me decide what I wanted to do in my life. They wanted to educate me in the same way they educated my mother. I finished elementary school and continued studying in secondary school in Condega. I had to travel 33km every day to go to class. It was very difficult and tiring to not have any support from my father and to see him reject his children, but I prevailed, and in this way I finished my high school diploma.

At the age of 17, I had my daughter. I suffered a lot, but my mother held my hand and supported me more than ever. She brought me to live with her.

My daughter was born; my mother's new activity, her new life. The change in her was so visible. All of the organization and all the results of her hard work motivated me so much that I began to get involved in the activities of FEM and participated in gender workshops. After, because of my level of participation, they elected me to be an instructor in the education program for adults and young, rural girls. This one was of the programs that FEM sponsored. It allowed my mother to finish her elementary education.

With all the training and exchanging of experiences, and seeing the many needs of the women in the community and the great benefits that accompany being an established organization, my mother decided to form a cooperative of women in 2004, called "Tierra Nuestra" (Our Land). The cooperative was comprised of 20 women, with me included as a member, and with my mother serving as president. This was how she began to commercialize organic coffee. It has had great success as much on a national level as on an international level in the fair-trade market.

Now, I help with the accounting for the cooperative. I am a promoter of sustainable agriculture, and I am involved in the process of roasting the coffee beans for the coffee brand, "Las Diosas", that is sold on a local level in Estelí. I am also a defender of rural women, just like my mother.

I have always counted on the support of my mother and my family, and thanks to them and many other sources of strength, I have just finished my university career. Although women face many obstacles and it is difficult for us to own land, I am very satisfied with what we have achieved, such as being an organized cooperative and selling our products in a free-trade market. Having a fairer, more direct relationship with the consumers of our products has given us more security and better benefits. That is our fight; to achieve development personally, within our families, in our community and in the cooperative as well.

The development and progress we have achieved up until now is a result of the forces, unity, solidarity and the desire to overcome that every one of the women involved in this process of change expresses. We desire to live in a space that is freer, enriched and prosperous, and to have well-being in all of the areas of our lives. We want better living conditions, a better quality of life.

I feel excited and fulfilled to be a participant in this change, and to know that we are capable of creating a different route for our lives; one that we like and makes us feel good, and knowing that tomorrow we won't regret that we couldn't achieve our dreams. I have hope that we can achieve them.

Although there are still difficulties that impede us from achieving one-hundred percent of what we want, we keep on our feet, and continue to fight with other women that need to empower themselves and be themselves.

I live happily with my family, and I have a beautiful relationship with my mother. She is my best friend and the best mother in the world.



BLINC FAIRTRADE COFFEE PRODUCER VISIT PROGRAMME

Saturday, 26th February

13:50 – Arrival at Bristol International Airport to be met by Jonathan Seagrave, FT

Steering Committee member

15:00 – Return to Jonathan's house for the night

Sunday, 27th February

10:00 – Briefing with Jessica Randall at Jonathan's house

14:00 – Lunch with Jonathan and Jessica

Monday, 28th February

9:00 – Arrive at *Ashton Gate School*

- Expecting Jitzy for the whole day, working with year 4 (22 children) in the morning 9.00 till 10.00, a whole school assembly at 10.10 for 20 minutes, then another year 4 class (22) at 11.00. Lunch at 12.00, and then visiting a year 5 class (28) at 1.00 till 2.00 and year 6 (approx 30) 2.00 till 3.00. The children in year 5 and 6 have been introduced to Fairtrade already. The year 4 children are keener on finding out about Nicaragua as we have a partner school there. Might be best to bring some beans as the visit is the first day after half-term. Could do some follow up work then.
- There are plenty of car parking spaces on the road close to the school. Happy with the prizes mentioned, especially as they are Fairtrade. Have asked IT co-ordinator, who is also the first teacher we are with, to organise the projector in the hall and all the classes have smart boards and should be well equipped for drawing materials. Should be fine with the press and if they want to interview children it can arranged at lunchtime.

15:45 – Briefing with Jonathan and Jessica

Tuesday, 1st March

8:00 – Arrive at *Culverhill School*

- The school day starts at 9AM with a whole school assembly which Jonathan said Jitzy can do a presentation for with PowerPoint for about 10 minutes. Will provide a laptop.
- Expecting Jitzy to work with two year 9 classes and do the same intro/session for each group. They have both had a basic intro to Fairtrade and what it's all about. Need to leave by 11:45AM to get to the Ridings School so will have time for two hour-long workshops – one per group. There are 10 pupils in each group plus two staff members to support. The pupils all have SEN of a complex nature, so low level language skills and basic understanding. Even though they are 13-14 years old they need a primary-styled approach.
- Kerry teaches Fairtrade for a term and one class is fully up to date, and one has just started but they will have a basic understanding. Has used the coffee game but prefers the banana game and does this as the intro to Fairtrade with year 9. Can definitely do the competition for a coffee label as part of the workshop– they would really enjoy this. Has have coffee beans, and yes to prizes/rewards.

12:10 – Arrive at **Winterbourne International Academy**

- Start with period 4 (12h20 to 13h20): a group of 19 students (two year 13 students, aged 18 and seventeen year 11 students, aged 16). Followed by lunch, then period 5 (14h15 to 15h15): a group of 19 year 11 students aged 16. Would like Jessica and Jitzy to deliver short and fun activities (I would say 3 to 5 activities) on whichever aspect of Fairtrade seen relevant. All students are studying Spanish and are good at it, hence why they have been invited. Will need to translate certain things, but students will understand some of it and will enjoy the opportunity.
- Room has sound, projector and an interactive WB. Only need USB key. Would quite like the following format if at all possible:
 - Jitzy's presentation (15 mns)
 - Q&A (10 mns)
 - Marketing activity to design coffee packaging
- Students would quite like to taste coffee from Nicaragua.

15:10 – **Bishop's Brew** at the Bishop's Palace

- Afternoon tea and cakes provided. 5 minute presentation on the benefits of Fairtrade and how it has affected Jitzy and her community. Meet and greet the dignitaries.

17:30 – Return to Jonathan's house for the night

Wednesday, 2nd March

8:00 – Arrive at **Sefton Park School**

- Jitzy will do a whole junior school assembly and then go and work with two year 6s during their workshops. Each year 6 classes will spend an hour or so doing a Fairtrade role play kind of activity. Jitzy can be in the classroom as they do this activity. Lunch will be provided.

13:15 – Arrive at the **Castle School (6th Form)**

- Arrive sixth form centre for 1.30 and meet year 13 students for brief informal chat. From 1.45 -2.15PM Year 7 come to the hall for talk. From 2.20 -3.05PM the year 7 students return to classrooms to be taught by year 13. Visitor moves between classrooms and looks at/discusses their work. Posters given in and judged. Leave 3.30

18:30 – Private evening event at Jonathan Seagrave's house

Thursday, 3rd March

9:15 – Arrive at **Pucklechurch Primary School**

- Year 5/6 (9-10 years old): Two sessions, 9.45-10.30 and 10.45-11.30. Students will prepare questions before the visit. They are researching Nicaragua over the holiday break.

12:15 – Arrive at **St Patrick's Primary School**

- Hold an assembly for KS2 which is approximately 120 children (Staff will be there also) then a workshop with year 5 and another workshop for year 6 (both year groups contain the Fairtrade Steering Group). School session starts at 1pm and school finishes at 3.15. Parking is available at St Patrick's and easy access to the school hall is available as well. Lunch will be provided from 12pm until 12.40.

18:30 – ***Fairtrade Fiesta*** at the Malcom X Centre

- Drinks, food samples and Fairtrade stalls. 10 minute presentation on the benefits of Fairtrade and how it is affected by Jitzy and her community, followed by a radio interview with the DJ that is hosting the event.

Friday, 4th March

8:15 – Arrive at the ***Downend School***

- Two, hour-long presentations/workshops with year 7s, followed by two year 9 workshops and an hour-long chat with 6th form geography and politics students.

Saturday, 5th March

12:00 – ***Fairtrade Fashion Show*** at the Mall Galleries followed

15:00 – Sightseeing and shopping in Bristol

Sunday, 6th March

17:00 – Jitzy moves to Janet Biggin's house for the week

Monday, 7th March

8:15 – Arrive at the ***Kingsfield School***

- Three workshops with year 9 students (about 30 students each) from 8:50 – 9:50, 9:50 – 10:50 and 11:10 – 12:10. Then a workshop from 12:10 – 1:10 with sixty year 7 students, followed by lunch. Meet with year 13 geography students from 1:55 – 2:55.

Tuesday, 8th March

8:30 – Arrive at ***St Mary's Primary School***

- Mini lessons on Fairtrade on the Monday before Jitzy's visit. Visit from Fairtrade farmer: 9:30 – 10:30 – Class 6, 11:00 – 12:00 – Class 5, 1:15 – 2:15 - Class 3, 2:15 – 3:15 – Class 4. These will primarily be presentations followed by question and answer sessions and an activity.

17:30 – ***Burges Salmon Fairtrade Fashion Show***

- 10 minute presentation with PowerPoint, followed by a question and answer session. Taxi will collect Jitzy and Jessica at 6:20PM.

18:45 – ***BLINC's International Women's Day Event*** at La Ruca

- Meals provided from 6-7PM. First speaker, Nathalie Vivas from the Venezuelan Embassy to begin at 7PM. Screening of documentary, *Con la memoria en el futuro*, provided by the Bristol-Cuba Solidarity Group.
- Jitzy to speak at 8PM. Presentation on the women's cooperative, Tierra Nuestra, and the role of women within her community. Followed by screening of Tierra Nuestra's documentary and question and answer session.

Wednesday, 9th March

8:15 – Arrive at the ***PRU Mangotsfield***

- From 8:45-9:45AM, a 20 minute presentation from Jitzy with Q&A, which Jonathan said could take up to an hour with the translation. We could then do a role play game - either the chocolate trade game or banana game. The chocolate trade game looks great and maybe have

more of the growers than numbers in the other groups. From 11- 12 will colour in flags for bunting project/design a poster to sell Jitzy's coffee & roast the coffee beans. Could take students in groups of 3-4 to the kitchen to do this. And plenary. Could do the poster and/or the bunting, depending on the time.

13:00 – Lunch at the harbour side with Jonathan and Jessica. More sightseeing in Bristol.

15:00 – Meeting with Christine Storey and Bristol procurement officers.

- Hour-long presentation followed by a question and answer session.

18:30 – Dinner with Jessica in Bristol

Thursday, 10th March

9:00 – Arrive at the *Brislington Enterprise College*

- Running a Fairtrade conference with year 5s from local primary schools. Jitzy to do an assembly presentation to the whole group (9:30AM), including Q&A at the start of the day about her life as a fair trade farmer. Have allowed 40 minutes for the assembly.
- Short break at 10:25 and then start rotation of workshops at 10:35. The workshops last 45 minutes each. Jitzy to do one workshop with one group until 11:15. - there will be 30 in a group & the Year 12s + staff will lead the workshop. After, have students produce a display about what it is like to be a coffee farmer in Nicaragua and design a pack for Jitzy's coffee. Jitzy to visit some of BEC classes to talk to them about her life. School ends at 3PM.

Friday, 11th March

9:00 – Arrive at the *Mangotsfield School*

- Primary schools (aged 5-10) have been invited for the session in the morning 9.30-12. Should be about 40 pupils. Will then invite about 25 year 7 pupils (aged 11&12) in from 12-3 (lunch provided in the canteen). Finishing the day Jitzy will give a short 5-10 minute presentation in assembly for year 7 (240 pupils). She will be working in the learning resource library (LRC) all day except for the assembly.

16:00 – Afternoon celebratory high tea at Jonathan's house

Saturday, 12th March

10:00 – Shopping in Bristol Centre with Jessica

17:00 – Jitzy moves to Alix Hughes' house for the night

Sunday, 13th March

6:25 – Jitzy's flight departs from Bristol International Airport

FT COFFEE PRODUCER TIMETABLE

DATE	MORNING	AFTERNOON	EVENING
Sat, 26 th Feb.		1:30p: Arrival, Bristol Airport	Return to Jonathan's House
Sun, 27 th Feb.	10a: Briefing with Jessica Randall	Lunch with Jonathan & Jessica	FREE
Mon, 28 th Feb.	Ashton Gate School	Ashton Gate School	Debriefing with Jonathan & Jessica
Tue, 1 st March	Culverhill School	Winterbourne Academy	Bishop's Brew at Bishop's Palace
Wed, 2 nd March	Sefton Park Primary	The Castle School	Evening event at Jonathan's house
Thur, 3 rd March	Pucklechurch Primary	St Patrick's Primary	Fairtrade Fiesta, Malcom X Centre
Fri, 4 th March	Downend School	Downend School	
Sat, 5 th March	FREE	Fairtrade Fashion Show at the Mall Galleries	Sightseeing and shopping in Bristol
Sun, 6 th March	FREE	FREE	Jitzy moves to Janet Biggin's house
Tues, 8 th March	St Mary's Primary	St Mary's Primary	Burges Salmon FT Fashion Show, BLINC's IWD event at La Ruca
Wed, 9 th March	PRU Mangotsfield	Bristol Procurement Officers (Chris Storey)	Dinner with Jessica
Thurs, 10 th March	Brislington Enterprise College	Brislington Enterprise College	FREE
Friday, 11 th March	Mangotsfield School	Mangotsfield School	Celebratory high tea at Jonathan's house

DATE	MORNING	AFTERNOON	EVENING
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Sat, 12 th March	Shopping with Jessica	Shopping with Jessica	Jitzy moves to Alix Hughes house for the night
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Sun, 13 th March	Jitzy's flight departs at 6:15a from Bristol		
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PRESS RELEASES

EVENING POST, 26th February 2011

Coffee made the Fairtrade way by guest

A COFFEE producer from Nicaragua will visit schools in Bristol and South Gloucestershire during Fairtrade Fortnight.

Jitzy Centeno, who works for coffee grower Tierra Nuestra – translated as Our Land – will meet pupils to talk about her work and help them roast some coffee beans.

She will also make a contribution to the Fairtrade Foundation's attempt to break the world record for the longest piece of bunting.

The visit has been arranged by the Bristol and South Gloucestershire branches of the Fairtrade Network, which are supported by each area's local council, and Bristol Link with Nicaragua.

Schools involved helped to cover the cost of the visit as part of lessons about fairly-traded products. A grant was also given by the Co-operative group.

Among schools to be visited will be Ashton Gate Primary and Brislington Enterprise College in Bristol and South Gloucestershire's Downend and Mangotsfield secondary schools, Culverhill special school in Yate and Pucklechurch Primary.

In all about 2,500 pupils will take part in the fortnight, which runs from Monday.

Jitzy said: "I am really looking forward to visiting South Gloucestershire and Bristol and telling my daughter when I return home how support for Fairtrade in these areas will help to provide her with a brighter future."

Pupils learn how to roast coffee

NICARAGUAN coffee producers will visit schools across the city next week as part of Fairtrade Fortnight.

Jitzy Centeno, who works for coffee grower Tierra Nuestra, will meet pupils to talk about her work.

She will also help them to roast coffee beans, and with the Fairtrade Foundation's attempt to break the world record for the longest piece of bunting.

The visit has been arranged by the Bristol Fairtrade Network and the South Gloucestershire Fairtrade Network, which are supported by the respective councils, and BLINC – Bristol Link with Nicaragua.

Ms Centeno said: "I am really looking forward to visiting South Gloucestershire and Bristol and telling my daughter at home how support for Fairtrade in these areas will help to provide her with a brighter future."

Schools taking part include Ashton Gate primary school, Culverhill School, Winterbourne International Academy, Downend School, Kingsfield School, St Mary's, St Patrick's primary schools, Brislington Enterprise College and Mangotsfield School.

To order this picture, log on at www.thisisphotosales.co.uk/bristol or call 08444 060 269 and quote BRDB20110311C-002_C 0

Pupils full of beans about fairer trade

NICARAGUAN coffee producer Jitzy Centeno helped youngsters roast coffee beans when she visited Mangotsfield School as part of Fairtrade Fortnight.

Jitzy works for coffee grower Tierra Nuestra, which translates as Our Land, and has been touring Bristol and South Gloucestershire to meet pupils at a number of schools to talk about her work.

The visit was arranged by local branches of the Fairtrade Network, which are supported by their respective councils, and the organisation Bristol Link with Nicaragua.

Schools helped to cover the cost as part of lessons about fairly traded products, while a grant was also given by the Co-operative group.

Some 2,500 pupils took part in the fortnight of activities that were arranged to give them a better idea of the Fairtrade system.

A number of youngsters from primary schools were also at Mangotsfield to receive certificates for their involvement.



Visit: Pupils with Jitzy Centeno, fifth from left in second row, and translator Jessica Randall, at a talk on the production of coffee where they also made Fairtrade-themed bunting

Photograph: Dave Betts

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ALLIANCE FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT,

Tuesday, 8th February 2011

(Article from LG Alliance Website)

Bristol schools experience Fairtrade impacts first hand

Tuesday, 08 February 2011 14:02

Bristol school children will get a real life experience of the impacts of Fairtrade at the end of this month when Jitzy Centeno, a Fairtrade Coffee producer from Nicaragua visits Bristol during Fairtrade Fortnight (Feb 28 to March 13). Local authorities in South Gloucestershire and Bristol have been involved in the preparations and procurement officers at Bristol City Council will also have the



opportunity to meet with Jitzy and see how their efforts in promoting Fairtrade and ethical procurement in Bristol is impacting lives overseas.

As well as visiting 12 schools in Bristol and South Gloucestershire, Jitzy will also be involved in the Fairtrade Fiesta, the Burges Salmon Fashion Show and an International Women's Day event. All schools are funding the visits themselves and it is expected that over 2,500 local children will benefit from the experience. Local Primary School Governor, Richard Jones, highlighted the benefits to his school children:

The Fairtrade producer visits are hugely beneficial to the children because they touch on so many different aspects of the curriculum - geography, language, numeracy, healthy eating and much more. They also challenge the pupils to use skills such as research (to prepare for the visit) and analytical skills to understand the nature of trade with other countries. I have observed the producer visits over four years and always find that the children are completely engaged by the subject and ask a wide range of intelligent questions. It's a real bonus for the children that we have been able to arrange these visits through the Bristol Fairtrade Network and Bristol Link with Nicaragua.

For further information on the Bristol Link with Nicaragua [click here](#) to find out more about Jitzy's story visit [this link](#).

<http://www.lg-alliance.org/the-news/news/245-bristol-school-children-see-the-impacts-of-fairtrade-firsthand.html>

THE BISHOP'S BREW

Tuesday, 1st March 2011



The Bishop's Brew took place at the Bishop's Palace in Winterbourne. Tea and cakes were served. Bishop Mike began the event by welcoming the attendees, and then continued with the brief screening of the documentary, *Fairtrade in Uganda*. Jitzy followed the documentary with a short presentation on the benefits of Fairtrade, detailing how selling to a Fairtrade buyer affects her and the people in her community. More tea was served after the presentation, and Jitzy had the opportunity to 'meet and greet' the dignitaries that were present.



FAIRTRADE COFFEE PRODUCER TOUR SCHOOL FEEDBACK

WINTERBOURNE INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY



Feedback from Nathalie Adams, Acting Head of International/Teacher of Languages at the Winterbourne International Academy

“Jitzy’s visit to our Academy was the highlight of our week! Students were delighted to hear about the impact Fairtrade has had on her life and that of many others. Being able to see and taste Fairtrade products was definitely their favourite activity. This visit raised awareness for the tremendous work this organisation is doing to improve living conditions for many farmers in developing countries.”



Spanish students at Winterbourne examine some of Jitzy’s products, including Las Diosas coffee, and tea and jam made from *Rosa de Jamaica* (a type of hibiscus flower).

THE SEFTON PARK SCHOOL

Nicaraguan coffee farmer visit for Fairtrade Fortnight

Jitzy Marianela Ruiz, a coffee farmer from Nicaragua, visited the Junior School as part of Fairtrade Fortnight. The children learnt all about her life as a coffee farmer working on a women's cooperative which supplies coffee beans to a Fairtrade producer. They also learnt about what everyday life is like for Jitzy and her family, as well as the benefits that being part of the Fairtrade Market brings. The Year 6 were then given the chance to participate in a Question and Answer session with Jitzy and she played a game with them which showed just how unfair the market can be for producers. They then designed a logo for Jitzy's "coffee of the goddesses" - the winners' designs and photos can be seen in the gallery section under Fairtrade Fortnight.



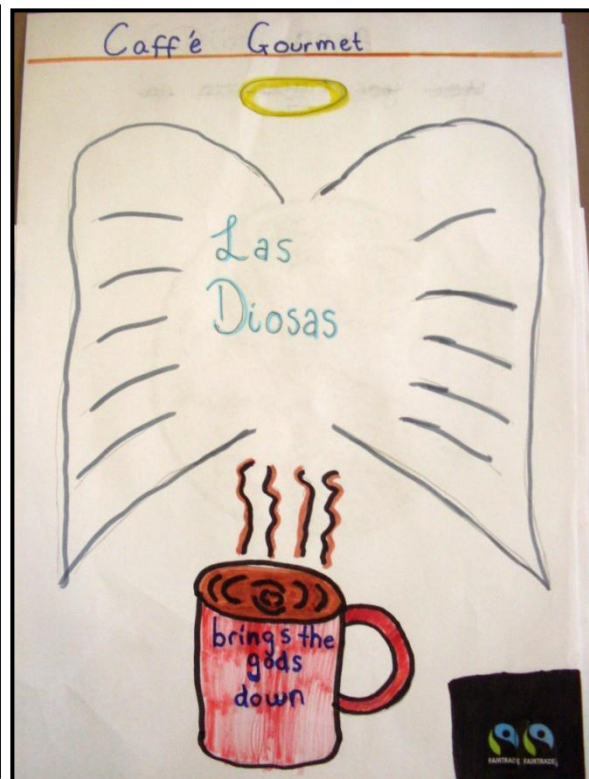
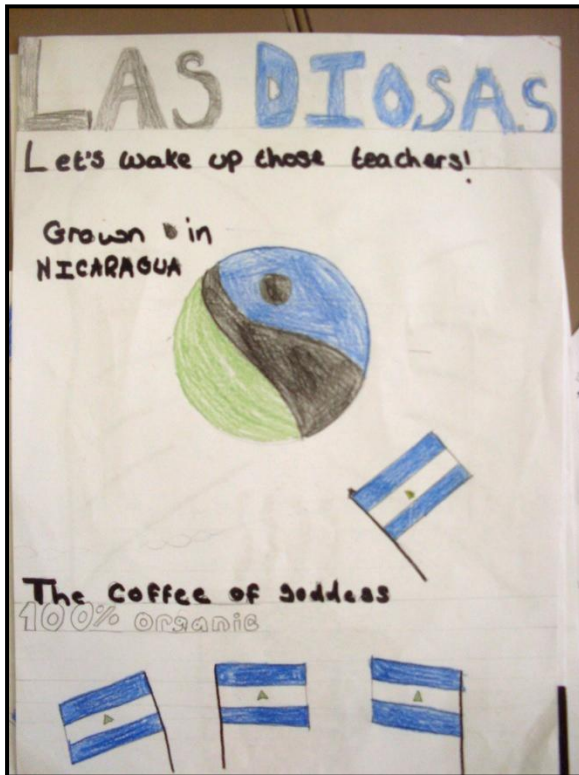
Many thanks to Jitzy for such an interesting day
and to Jessica for translating so well!!

Feedback from Claire Carpenter, Sefton Park School teacher:

"The visit was great as I had introduced the children to Fairtrade the week before, but the fact they got to meet someone who benefitted from Fairtrade really gave meaning to the term and what it stands for. The year 6s had just completed a "Young Enterprise" topic and they had to work in companies to create a product to sell for profit, so they had learnt all about buying and selling; they were all very much in favour of Fairtrade after experiencing buying and selling themselves.

On the day of Jitzy's visit, the children really enjoyed the chocolate game, and as the coffee producers were awarded their few cubes of chocolate there were cries of "that's not fair!!" and the children could instantly visualise the Fairtrade concept. Many of them also started to question the "middle-man's" involvement in the process!! The visit also strengthens the school's link with Nicaragua which is slowly being built up this year."

THE WINNERS OF SEFTON PARK'S FAIRTRADE COFFEE POSTER COMPETITION!



THE CULVERHILL SCHOOL



Dear Jessica,

Just thought I'd drop you a picture of the display we created after your visit with Jitzy and Jonathan.

Thanks,

Kerry Hiscock

(programme coordinator and teacher at Culverhill)

A few bits from staff at Culverhill:

“Having producers visit our pupils during Fairtrade Fortnight put the reality in front of them and gave it a context. Jitzy was a great inspiration for many pupils who realised that real people need the Fairtrade support to get paid a fairer wage for the hard work they do. The reality of meeting a producer helped out SEN pupils to understand and ask questions to further understand the life of a coffee grower.”

“The assembly was a great kick start to our week and pupils were engaged by meeting Jitzy. For many weeks afterwards pupils asked me when she was coming back again! The activities and games were fun, engaging and provided our pupils with hands on opportunities. They especially enjoyed the coffee grinding exercise.”



Feedback from pupils at the Culverhill School:

"The assembly was interesting. I liked seeing the lady [Jitzy]."

"The Fairtrade stuff is good because Jitzy needs it for her coffee."

"I liked grinding the [coffee] beans - they smelt lush."

"Jitzy was nice and I liked the American lady - she made me laugh."

THE CASTLE SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM CENTRE



BRISLINGTON ENTERPRISE COLLEGE



MANGOTSFIELD



Janet Biggin, chair of the South Gloucestershire Council, joins students at Mangotsfield in receiving a certificate for participating in the Jitzy's Fairtrade speaking tour.

FEEDBACK FROM JITZY

Email from Gioconda (BLINC's Nicaraguan Development Worker) to Jitzy, regarding the Bristol visit evaluation:

Hi Jitzy,

I hope that your time in Bristol was successful and I'd like to thank you for your efforts. Now, could you please help us by completing the following evaluation? The evaluation is for our own purposes so that we can make each visit better. Below are the questions. You should give a mark from 1 to 5 (5 being the best mark, 1 being the worst). Please put the mark that you give in red.

A. Do you think your trip to Bristol was valuable?

5

B. Did you acquire new skills during your time in Bristol? If so, what skills did you acquire?

I learned so much. Part of what I learned was to be able to give feedback from activities which I've completed and to share the work that the cooperative does in relation to the Fairtrade system. I learned and improved my ability to handle different groups (in respect to other cultures and ideologies), and control myself as well by effectively overcoming the fear of speaking publicly. I improved my ability to communicate and relate to those that surrounded me. I improved the structure of my responses to questions by striving to respond logically and not instinctively. I learned to quickly adapt to my surroundings. I also learned to enjoy the work that I was doing, taking advantage of both time and opportunities. I improved my ability to be autonomous by making my own decisions and not depending on others to fight for my goals (for example, having the will to participate in the event, overcoming the fear of travelling such a long way by myself, and being ready to work cooperatively in order to reach the next level of development in our lives).

C. Were you happy with the accommodation provided?

5

D. Were you happy with the food provided?

5

E. Were you happy with the program that was organized for you?

5

F. Were you happy with the school tour program that was organized for you?

5

G. Were you happy with the interpreter selected for you?

5

H. Do you think that your visit to Bristol helped you, being a woman, to overcome the machista authority within the cooperative?

5

I. Do you think it's important that BLINC continues to invite women to participate in the program during Fairtrade Fortnight?

5

J. How will you share your experience in Bristol with other women in the cooperative?

My promise is to build on my experiences and what I've learned and share it with the women through an assembly in my cooperative and a meeting with la FEM and other directives from the other cooperatives to discuss all the work that has been carried out in Bristol, and to evaluate the participation in the event. I think that besides sharing my own personal experience, it would be really useful for us to pause for a moment, because it would be very beneficial to emphasize and reflect on the benefits and opportunities that we have achieved by being part of the Fairtrade system. Now, the six small cooperatives are working united for better representation of the associated cooperatives negotiating and arranging, in a more centralized way, for resources for their own development, which is at the core of our continued efforts to sell a greater quantity of our products in a Fairtrade market

K. Do you have any other comments you'd like to make?

I would like to thank everyone for the opportunity to participate in these activities involving Fairtrade, and moreover the fact that I was chosen from a small cooperative that has a great ambition for improvement. Also, I think the fact of having participated in these activities is relevant because we are more informed on how Fairtrade projects are distributed throughout Europe, specifically in Bristol. This motivates us to improve and persevere every day to sell our products into this market, and involve ourselves more actively in order to improve this system, which still is not fair enough for us.

In general, I am very satisfied with my trip to Bristol. With respect to the activities, it was a very rich experience to be able to share and have the opportunity to talk with the children, the teachers, and people in general about life in Nicaragua, specifically the work that we do in the cooperatives to be able to make changes in the lives of women, and in our community as well.

In reference to my stay there, everything was perfect. Jonathan and Janet were great. They are very kind, hospitable people, and I am very grateful for that. There was nothing more that I could have asked for, and I felt very comfortable in every aspect. I am also immensely grateful for the unconditional support of Jessica. I greatly appreciated her support with respect to translating for me. She is an excellent person and what she does is very interesting,

I think it is very important that BLINC continues to include the participation of women in Fairtrade Fortnight. It showcases the work that we do to be active subjects of change, as in our work as cooperative members, and allows that we do not continue to be totally invisible.

I thank you all enormously for this opportunity, and wish you luck in your every day work, and in the rest of the events that you have planned.

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EXTERNAL INFORMATION

Capital for Communities' *Spotlight on La FEM*

“It’s a priority of ours to build horizontal relationships with organizations where we can mutually illuminate each other to find viable and sustainable projects,” said Diana Martinez, Executive Director of the Fundación Entre Mujeres (La FEM) at a meeting on WCCN’s June study tour. As noted in a preceding article by Executive Director Carlos Arenas, the relationship which WCCN helped facilitate between La FEM and Madison-based coffee roaster Just Coffee culminated in the purchase of the full coffee harvest of the co-ops with which La FEM works.

Opening up North American markets through Just Coffee will undoubtedly have a significant impact on the lives of its coffee producers. However, to look at La FEM as simply rural coffee producers would only be telling one small portion of their story.



La FEM’s history is unique in that its beginning as a Nicaraguan non-governmental organization is rooted in helping rural women access land for productive purposes. “It’s important for women to hold land. It’s hard for them to have a life based on equality without it,” said Martinez.

Following the 1990 elections, much of the land that had been state-operated in the 1980s was privatized. During the 1980s, the founders of La FEM had been active as part of the Women’s Secretariat of the Asociación de Trabajadores del Campo (ATC) or Farm Workers Association. However, during the privatization process that occurred in the early 1990s, rural women were excluded from the decision-making process on who would be the proprietors of the newly-privatized land and how that land would be operated under private businesses. The idea behind the creation of La FEM was to build an autonomous organization for rural women that would challenge the traditional, male-dominated hierarchal model of rural organizations such as the ATC.

Today, La FEM is committed to the social, economic and ideological development of rural women. It uses a variety of strategies, including raising women’s consciousness about the struggle against gendered violence, promoting sexual and reproductive rights, and raising the

education level of rural women. Additionally, La FEM aims to build a model of sustainable economic production based on principles of solidarity and cooperation among women.

To address these development issues, La FEM operates a number of different programs, such as a mobile health clinic, gender workshops, and a land parcel program in which women learn to raise pigs, cows, chickens and roosters on their land.

Through this multilayered development process, La FEM has seen that the women with whom they work have become greater advocates for themselves in their homes, their communities and also at the national level. “Their development begins in the subjective, and emerges in the public sphere. This transition is able to happen in large part because of land ownership,” stated Martinez.

WCCN is committed to helping address the struggles of rural Nicaraguan women and is currently working with La FEM in creating a pilot project which will help make land access a reality for landless women. On a final note, we would like to thank Just Coffee for their shared commitment to the ideology of empowerment that La FEM exudes, and to encourage readers to buy Just Coffee’s La FEM blend when it becomes available later this year.

Published in [WCCN's Newsletter, Summer 2007, Volume 23, No. 2](#)

<http://www.capitalforcommunities.org/node/258>



About Just Coffee Cooperative

Just Coffee Cooperative is a worker-owned coffee roaster dedicated to creating and expanding a model of trade based on transparency, equality, and human dignity. We strive to build long-term relationships with small-scale coffee growers to bring you a truly incredible cup of coffee.

Why 100% Fair Trade?

Just Coffee is a 100% Fair Trade roaster. Why is that important? We believe that you either get it or you don't. Some companies do 5%, 25%, or 50% of their coffee using Fair Trade criteria. While any fair trade is great, we don't know how you can commit to doing the right thing by some growers and not others. It winds up being charity as opposed to economic justice.

Doing a small percentage of fair trade has many advantages for a less-committed coffee company. A company can use their fair trade coffee to get accounts they could not with their "conventional" coffee like universities, churches, and food co-ops. They can also offer their fair trade coffee at dirt cheap prices and subsidize the loss by offsetting it with profits made for coffee bought at cheaper prices.

We see fair trade as a tool to change the global economy and to help equalize the disparity of wealth between countries in the global north and the global south. By our way of thinking, anything less than a 100% commitment to the model would be disingenuous.

Small-scale farmers everywhere deserve a decent wage for their hard work. And they deserve it all of the time, not just some of the time.

For further information:

<http://www.justcoffee.coop/>