

Fair trade coffee hits UNB Fredericton

CAMERON MITCHELL
THE BRUNSWICKAN

Fair trade coffee has finally arrived at UNB, with a Tuesday launch at the Head Rest café in Head Hall.

The fair trade initiative is a joint project between Engineers Without Borders (EWB) and Sodexo foods.

Fair trade is a market-based approach that promotes sustainability in developing nations. The movement advocates the payment of a fair price for goods such as coffee beans.

Providing UNB students with a fair trade alternative has been one of EWB's goals for over two years, and to make it happen EWB needed the support of UNB's food supplier. Before initiatives could be taken, EWB had to make sure that fair trade coffee would work at UNB.

"Last year, EWB did some survey work around campus to see if people would support fair trade at the school," explains Martin Bayliss, the general manager of Sodexo. "As a result of that survey, we were able to get a supplier right out of the Maritimes to see if this could work."

Fair trade coffee has actually been available at the Head Rest café since just after Christmas, but EWB wanted to postpone the official launch so it would coincide with International Development Week, which runs from Monday to Friday this week.

"We decided we would have this day where we would give out free samples and tell people about fair



Andrew Meade / The Brunswickan

Alongside coffee available from Tim Hortons, Starbucks, and Sodexo's Viva Bica brand, UNB's Engineers Without Borders has orchestrated the advent of fair trade coffee at UNB as a friendly alternative.

trade," explains EWB's Vice President of Events Laura Malone.

"We wanted students to get the chance to taste it and find out that it's actually not that bad, and actually better than a lot of the other campus coffee."

So far, Bayliss says the reviews of the coffee have been great, and he says he expects the coffee to continue doing well.

"The response so far in terms of

the quality of the product has been fantastic," Bayliss continues. "And we have fair trade at quite a few other Sodexo accounts and it does very well."

Fair trade has been a main focus of EWB for some time. EWB is trying to show people that helping developing nations can be easy, and they are trying to make it as easy as possible. When a mug is filled up with fair trade coffee, the consumer can

take comfort in the fact that the beans were harvested in an environment promoting competitive wages and respectable working conditions.

"A lot of our focus has been on trying to change peoples' attitudes, with the hope that if people change their attitudes they will change their behavior," explains Malone.

"We're just trying to get [fair trade] out on campus and make it accessible for students," she continues.

If fair trade coffee continues to sell well at the Head Rest café, there are plans in place to expand the availability of the coffee to other Sodexo outlets on campus.

"If we're throwing away more than is actually purchased then it's just not going to be viable," explains Bayliss. "But ultimately, it's not really about the profit in this case, it's about having a choice available that is a good choice."

UNB Business students to attend national competition

CAMERON MITCHELL
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Last summer, UNB business students Bob Keleher and Simon Pearn started up a business called Power Washing Solutions. They went door-to-door with a heated pressure washer and cleaned the outsides of residential homes throughout Rothesay and Quispamsis, suburbs of Saint John, NB.

The business became a success, and the two students decided to take it even further by entering a business plan competition at UNB.

"The first business plan competition we went into was here at UNB," said Pearn. "Basically, you needed to

qualify in the top couple of that one to get into the CIBC Business Plan Competition."

Keleher and Pearn got through the initial competition and solidified their spot in the CIBC competition. That CIBC competition boasts a grand prize of \$5,000, with categories for graduates and undergraduates.

The competition takes place annually for two days in early November. Competitors compete in teams, and they are required to submit a fully developed business plan. Each team has to present their business idea to a panel of judges with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation. The presentations are limited to 12 minutes, which are followed by an eight-minute question and answer period. The judges are experts in the fields of marketing, finance, and

entrepreneurship.

"The CIBC one had two different tracks. There was a graduated and undergraduate track, and we were in the undergraduate track," continued Pearn. "And we actually won first prize (in the undergraduate category), and walked away with the \$5,000 dollars."

The UNB students didn't stop there – with two competitions already to their name, they decided to enter another one, Enterprise Canada.

This national competition has regional heats for qualified participants. There is one region for western Canada, two in central Canada, and one in Atlantic Canada.

"The top three teams from each region get to go to the nationals, which are held in Vancouver," explained Pearn.

The UNB students placed in the top three and won a trip to Vancouver for this February. They will compete against 11 other teams for a grand prize of \$20,000.

"There's going to be some really noticeable judges there. It's going to be the business leaders of the country, so we're really excited to go," said Pearn.

The duo's business plan lets them clean effectively at less cost than the competition.

"Our idea was basically to use a hot-water steam cleaner to clean the outside of houses," explained Keleher. "And because we were using hot water instead of cold water, like the competition, we are able to do the work for a lot less money. And a lot quicker too."

One of the reasons their business

plan has been so successful is because they have done a lot of research.

"We ran the business on a small scale last summer," explained Keleher. "We were really trying to do some market research because we want to expand quite aggressively in the future."

They travelled around and cleaned houses in Rothesay and Quispamsis last summer, learning about how marketing and sales work.

"We took our knowledge from working in just Quispamsis and Rothesay, and applied it to some market research we did in Saint John, Fredericton, Moncton, and Halifax," continued Keleher. "Our actual business plan is to expand that operation we started last summer into all of those cities over a three year period."

Working for our world: International Development Week

PRISCILLA GONZALEZ
SUBMITTED TO THE BRUNS

No country can reach any development goal on its own; it is a global project that involves each person's effort to achieve a better world for all human beings. That's why Canada works as part of the global community through

different projects that link various organizations and associations under one topic: international development.

But what is international development or what are we referring to when we address this issue?

International development is a broad term that deals with the creation, implementation and study of social, cultural, economic and political problems in the developing world, from which with a co-ordinated force we can eradicate and build more equitable and prosperous societies.

Whether a student, faculty or staff member here at UNB, you probably think that nothing can be done to

address the problems that people from distant places like Malawi or Bhutan are experiencing. It is possible, however, to make a difference.

Big achievements are made from everyday efforts – little efforts that may seem like vain actions to you, but at the end they can build up a project that might change hundreds of lives.

That's how actions like the Bhutan project, internships in Malawi, raising funds for Guatemala, etc. are right now playing a big role in how UNB contributes towards reaching the goal of international development.

"The people that I met and their attitudes made my internship

everything that I hoped it would be and more," says Amy Welsh, a kinesiology student who did her internship in Malawi last summer.

We received the same comments from Krista Craven when she talked about her internship at the Buduburam Liberian Refugee Camp in Ghana in 2005: "These international experiences have been extraordinarily important in helping me recognize the relevance of development work and research in this field; that is significant and that capitalizes on the strengths of the communities with which one works. Moreover, my experiences with international development work

have illuminated opportunities for pursuing related work in Canada." As a result, Krista is now studying in Ontario, doing specific research on the learning needs of the refugee children.

So, if you are a citizen of this world, this concerns you.

International development includes us all, independent of our nationality, gender, religion, etc., because in the end we all live in the same planet: Earth.

International Development Week will be held from Feb. 2-6 at the UNB campus. Check unb.ca/international for more information.