

The Grocer

Focus On: Fairtrade by Amy North (amy.north@thegrocer.co.uk)

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The Story

Volume sales of Fairtrade food & drink have surged by almost a third, meaning British shoppers are contributing more than ever to supporting certified farmers in the developing world. But value is up just 1.1%, indicating a fall in the retail price per kilo of certified goods. What's going on? To what extent has the waxing and waning of Fairtrade's fortunes in recent years been impacted by the entry and exit of big brands? What impact - if any - will the removal of the Fairtrade logo from the front of Dairy Milk packs in May have on the market? And what does the coming year hold for Fairtrade?

Key themes:

Rival schemes: Schemes such as Rainforest Alliance and UTZ are gaining ground in the UK as a growing number of brands and retailers become certified by them. Now Cadbury is putting its own Cocoa Life scheme's logo front and centre on pack/ What impact is this having on the Fairtrade movement? How is the growth of rival schemes impacting public perceptions of Fairtrade?

Innovations, new listings, de-listings, certifications and de-certifications: This feature will pay close attention to any new arrivals or exits from the Fairtrade scene over the past year, in terms of brands, new product types and retailers. With confectionery now Fairtrade's biggest sector, which categories and brands could be the next 'big wins' for the movement?

Prices: Fairtrade products tend to carry a premium over standard food & drink. Still, they are getting cheaper. Average price per kilo has fallen by 14.3% in the past year. Why? And how likely is it that lower prices will attract consumers that do not fall into the movement's key middle class, middle aged demographic?

Retail share: Sales of Fairtrade products are up by around a fifth in the Co-op, Ocado and Asda, yet are down significantly in Lidl and Morrisons. How come? Have the big risers put more emphasis on ethical products? Have those in decline delisted Fairtrade products?

Advertising and marketing: This feature will also investigate how the marketing and advertising strategies of the category's biggest players have evolved over the past year and how they will develop in the coming year to sustain growth or return brands to growth.

Key questions the feature is likely to address:

- What consumer trends have impacted the category over the past year?
- How have promotional strategies (both in terms of price and marketing) evolved?
- How have individual retailers' strategies impacted the market?
- How has merchandising changed in the market?
- What impact has own-label had on branded players?
- What's next for the category?