

**Domestic Fair Trade Association  
Criteria for Evaluating Domestic Fair Trade Standards and Certification Programs  
Short Version for Initial Evaluation  
Updated September 25, 2012**

**Introduction**

This is a shorter version of the full DFTA criteria. It is intended to be used as an initial evaluation of key issues. If this initial evaluation indicates a strong program, DFTA may conduct a full evaluation to determine whether we can endorse it. Please refer to the DFTA principles and full criteria for evaluating standards and certification

This version of the DFTA criteria is based on the full version of the criteria but does not overlap in a strict way. Because the goal is an initial assessment of a program and determination of whether a full evaluation is warranted, it includes a broad cross-section of key issues. In some cases two or more criteria are combined or a criterion may be shortened or slightly reworded. Most are based on essential criteria, meaning they would need to be met for endorsement or validation. However, in some cases a program may not meet a criterion here but still have a strong program overall. In general, those cases are noted in the third column.

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Relevant Principle</b>	<b>Further Explanation</b>	<b>Criterion Met?</b>	<b>Evaluator Notes</b>
1. There is a transparent, clear, <b>understandable</b> , and formal written appeals and complaints process for this program and it is applicable and accessible to participants or potential participants at farms or businesses, employees at certifying agencies, the general public, and any other stakeholders.	Democratic & Participatory Ownership & Control/Transparency & Accountability	This is essential for any fair trade or social justice program. If it is not clear how stakeholders including workers at certified farms and businesses and the general public can voice concerns, there is a violation of the fundamental elements of democratic control, transparency, and accountability and DFTA will not endorse the program or validate the program's claims.		
2. If a buyer contracts with a farm, the contract is negotiated between the farmer and the buyer or a third	Family-scale farms	This is essential as are several details of the negotiated contract. A comprehensive fair		

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party that is acceptable to both.		trade program should seek to ensure fair contracts as a way to protect family-scale farmers and producers.		
3. All farmers participating in this <b>program</b> are free to associate with other farmers free of retaliation from any buyer.	Family-scale farms	Freedom of association is a fundamental right that should be guaranteed to all stakeholders, especially farmers and workers participating in a fair trade program.		
4. The certification <b>program</b> ensures that workers have freedom of association and the recognized right to hold meetings of any kind outside of working hours.	Rights of Labor	Freedom of association is a fundamental right that should be guaranteed to all stakeholders, especially farmers and workers participating in a fair trade program.		
5. Programs favor smaller scale and/or family farms over large-scale, corporate, or industrial operations in terms of both eligibility (application process) and outcomes and benefits of certification.	Family-scale farms	Additional DFTA criteria further define family-scale farming and though not all farms need meet a strict definition of family-scale, fair trade and agricultural justice programs should seek to support family-scale farms in general.		
6. The program has clear policies regarding program eligibility that are tied to a mission or goal of empowerment of those traditionally marginalized.	Equality & Opportunity	This is an essential element of strong programs engaged in creating social change.		
7. Employers provide any necessary protective equipment or gear to the workers at no cost, require that the equipment provided is appropriate to the task(s) that the workers carry out,	Rights of Labor	Although ultimately the goal of a strong program should be to reduce or eliminate toxic exposure, an essential minimum requirement is that adequate protection be both provided and		

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and require that workers use the protective equipment.		required.		
8. Workers have full information about any toxic or potentially toxic materials and ideally have the explicit right to opt out of using toxic materials with no penalty.	Sustainable Agriculture/Rights of Labor	Although ideally toxic materials are reduced, it is essential that at least full information is provided and workers can opt out of using any materials that may affect their health.		
9. <b>Living wages</b> are paid, relative to local prevailing wages and cost of living (above local minimum wage); total wages equal a <b>living wage</b> without affecting ergonomic health if piece rates are paid.	Rights of Labor	This is currently considered an ideal rather than essential criterion in recognition of how difficult it is to achieve, but a strong and legitimate program should have living wages for workers and farmers as a goal at a minimum.		
10. The <b>program</b> seeks to ensure that prices received by farmers from the sale of products cover the cost of production, including <b>living wages</b> and benefits for the farmer, working family members, and non-family farmworkers, standard production expenses, profit to invest in the future of the farm, training for farmers and workers, retirement funds, and health coverage.	Family-scale farming	It is essential that pricing is addressed with these factors in mind with the acknowledgement that it may be difficult to always achieve.		
11. Basic needs and protections for workers are ensured, including, for example, access to potable water, access to functioning sanitation facilities, procedures for emergency medical care, safe and functional housing if it is provided, safe transportation if it is	Rights of Labor	This list is a condensed list of multiple criteria, some considered essential and others idea; a strong program should address most of these.		

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provided, access to shelter from extreme weather including shade, and adequate breaks.				
12. Child labor is prohibited; farms/businesses have written policies and procedures ensuring children’s participation does not adversely affect their health, security, education, and recreation.	Rights of Labor	Strong programs ensure protection of children. Child labor, defined as the labor by a child under 16 years old that interferes with formal schooling or culturally appropriate education should be prohibited at a minimum; further farms and businesses should have policies on working minors that ensure their adequate health, security, education, and recreation.		
13. Written employment contract are required and farms/businesses allow employees to negotiate the contract through independent trade unions, workers’ associations, or collectively on their own, if they choose any of these options.	Rights of Labor	The right and ability negotiate as a group reinforces the basic right to freedom of association; workers need not choose this option, but employers should not prohibit it.		
14. The use of labor contractors is discouraged or prohibited; if labor contractors are used, all rights of labor are still upheld and the employer is still held ultimately responsible for upholding all labor rights.	Rights of Labor	Ideally strong programs address contract labor; in all cases worker rights should be upheld.		
15. The governing structure of the <b>program</b> is publicly available; The program has a clear, written decision-making policy in place, covering decisions regarding topics such as standards,	Equality & Opportunity/ Transparency & Accountability	How a program is structured, how decisions are made, and who the specific people are that have decision-making status and their qualifications should be easy to determine by any		

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verification protocol, oversight, and other policies; the decision-making policy promotes consensus and ensures balance among stakeholders; the decision-making policy also includes a process for decision-making in the absence of consensus that does not favor any stakeholder group over another.		interested stakeholder, for example, clearly outlined on a website.		
16. The program has a balance of stakeholders on governing boards, standard-setting boards, advisory committees, and accreditation boards; this includes authentic representation of and accountability to the stakeholders the program claims to support.	Equality & Opportunity/ Transparency & Accountability	It is difficult for a program to be strong and reach fair trade and social justice goals without all stakeholders authentically represented in all decision-making bodies.		
17. The <b>program</b> development and/or revision process includes soliciting input from all stakeholders including workers or their representative, farmers, indigenous communities, processors, and retailers from the region and demographic where the <b>program</b> will be applied.	Transparency & Accountability	A strong program actively seeks input from all stakeholders.		
18. The communities or stakeholders that the <b>program</b> claims to help show support of the <b>program</b> , as demonstrated by active participation or engagement or favorable public reviews or comments during evaluations.	Democratic & Participatory Ownership & Control	Although DFTA currently lists this as an “ideal” criterion, it is a good test of stakeholder engagement and program’s perceived effectiveness among those it is designed to benefit.		
19. The farm/business policies cover all workers, permanent and seasonal, documented and	Equality & Opportunity	It is important to include all workers in all policies.		

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undocumented, as well as any hired by labor contractors.				
20. When applicable, the program reviews fair working conditions of intermediary stages of processing and handling of product(s).	Direct Trade	Ideally “fair trade” and “social justice” means fair and just throughout the entire supply chain.		
21. The farmer/processor and buyer reach a mutually agreed upon price, for example by participating directly in a price negotiation.	Fair and Stable Pricing	A price that works for all parties is important and a direct negotiation may be a good way to achieve that goal.		
22. Buyers make fair and prompt payments.	Shared Risk and Affordable Credit	This is essential for any strong program to monitor.		
23. All parties uphold all aspects of the agreements, including quality specifications, once they are established.	Long Term Trade Relationships	Contracts should be meaningful and contribute to building long-term relationships.		
24. The program favors or encourages long-term trading relationships throughout the supply chain.	Long Term Trade Relationships	Building long-term relationships is an essential distinguishing feature of fair trade.		
25. Farms/businesses follow a sustainable agriculture protocol or have organic certification or other certification that promotes environmental stewardship.	Sustainable Agriculture	Environmental sustainability is an important component of a strong program.		
26. Plants, animals, and biological processes that have been genetically engineered or genetically modified are prohibited from direct program approval.	Appropriate Technology	Due to concerns about health, safety, and rights of both farmers and workers, it is essential to prohibit GMOs.		
27. Indigenous peoples are identified as stakeholders for standard-setting and other decision-making.	Indigenous Peoples’ Rights	DFTA’s Criteria for Indigenous People’s Rights need further development, but at a minimum we look to programs to identify this group as a stakeholder.		

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<p>28. The auditor/monitor interviews a broad cross-section of workers who are selected by the auditor not the management.</p>	<p>Program Implementation and Monitoring</p>	<p>This helps to ensue an accurate picture of working conditions.</p>		
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