



Fact sheet

Fairtrade Standards for Baobab and for Marula

New Opportunities for Women in rural Southern African Communities

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Photos courtesy of Phytotrade Africa

The Challenge...

In remote communities in Southern Africa, women walk from their villages to gather the fruit from baobab and marula trees on communal lands. For generations, women have been collecting these fruits to use at home or to sell in local markets to support their families. Many in the area have few possibilities for income since the land is not good for farming and most earn less than US\$100 a year.

The baobab tree has become a symbol of Africa. This iconic thick-trunked tree can live up to 3,000 years. The pulp and seeds inside the football-sized brown fruit are high in Vitamin C and calcium. The fruit of the marula tree is the size of a golf-ball and golden yellow. It is high in oil and protein.

While local communities have many uses for the nutritious fruits, baobab and marula are also gaining popularity in international markets for use in cosmetics and specialty foods. Their pulp and powder can now be found in jams, juices, liquor, and health foods. This growing market gives the women who harvest the fruit a unique opportunity to gain greater income for themselves, their families and their communities – but only if they can get a fair deal.

The new standard at a glance

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Which prices are set?
Fresh fruit for processing

Who it is for: The products are open to Small producers only.

Where to read more:
The premium figures can be found on the FLO website under the price and premium table. For the full standard please see our website:
www.fairtrade.net/standards.html

Fairtrade Responds...

Including baobab and marula in Fairtrade's scope will allow men and women from Southern Africa to get fairer terms of trade. With higher income, they can expand their operations and make the necessary investments to process the fruit themselves or improve its quality.

Premium prices for Baobab and Marula

Fairtrade has added the baobab and marula fruits to its 'fresh fruit' category. Certified harvesters receive a fixed Fairtrade Premium of 50% over the average market price for every kilo of fruit they sell to processors or Fairtrade certified buyers. Fairtrade producers most often invest the Premium in education and healthcare, farm improvements to increase yield and quality, or processing facilities to increase income. Although this Premium may seem high compared to other Fairtrade products, it reflects the great need of these marginalized, rural families, and the relatively low value of the raw fruit in the final products. By setting the Premium at this level, Fairtrade ensures that the harvesters earn enough to make a difference to their lives and their communities.

Easy entrance scheme ensures faster results

This interim Premium-only Standard allows the harvesters to get certified quickly and begin reaping the benefits of selling on Fairtrade terms. Over the next year, FLO will collect information on the harvesters' costs of production and look into establishing a suitable minimum price for these two products.

One Standard for all countries

The new Standard for baobab and marula allows harvesting groups in any African country to become certified. The Standard is for small-scale farmers only. The majority of the baobab and marula is expected to come from countries in Southern Africa, with groups from South Africa, Malawi and Namibia already interested in applying.

“We are excited to see the inclusion of baobab and marula into the FLO scope of certification. The products are significant to the region, not only because they support the livelihoods of thousands of people but also because they are part of African culture.”

***Boudewijn Goossens,
Executive Director, Fairtrade
Label South Africa***

Support for harvesters

Several marula and baobab groups who are interested in becoming certified are already receiving support on the ground from alternative trade organizations and NGOs, as well as from FLO's regionally-based liaison officers and the African Fairtrade Network. This support comes in the form of guidance through the application process, assistance in creating the necessary organizational structures, and help with gaining market access for their products. Organizing themselves in a more formal structure will help the harvesters receive the best possible price for their produce and help improve their business practices.

About Fairtrade Labelling Organizations International:

Fairtrade Labelling Organizations International (FLO) is a non-profit, multi-stakeholder association of three regional Producer Networks and 21 National Organizations. The Producer Networks represent the interest of producers in the system while the Labelling Initiatives promote Fairtrade to business and consumers. FLO's role is to set the strategic direction for Fairtrade, to produce the standards by which Fairtrade is conducted, and to support producers to gain Fairtrade certification and secure market opportunities. The FAIRTRADE Certification Mark is a registered trademark of Fairtrade Labelling Organizations International. It signifies that products meet international Fairtrade standards.

For further information about the new Fairtrade Standards for marula and baobab, please contact:

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