

MANITOBA ECO-NETWORK

ENVIRONMENTAL/FAIR TRADE/LOCAL/ORGANIC PURCHASING POLICY

At its meeting in September, 2008, the MEN Steering Committee adopted a Fair Trade/Environmental/Local/Organic purchasing policy to guide the organization. Such a policy is an awareness-raising tool, for use both within and outside of the organization and assists in increasing the volume of environmental/Fair Trade etc. business. It also can be used to encourage businesses, institutions and other entities to follow suit.

The Policy:

Manitoba Eco-Network (MEN) purchases a variety of items and services, including office products, food, textiles, cleaning products and small gifts, for use in the office, at events and meetings, and as promotions. For reasons of human and environmental health, social justice, and greenhouse gas reductions, we commit to endeavour to make these purchases Environmentally Sustainable, Fair Trade, Organic and Local, whenever possible.

Environmentally sustainable means bearing the EcoLogo, or otherwise meeting the highest standards in our best judgment for environmental protection, waste reduction, energy use and sustainable resource use. This may include paper, printing, and cleaning products. It will also include transportation for work-related purposes, where possible (eg. encouragement of car pooling, video conferencing or use of public transportation, walking or bicycle for local errands – bike helmet use is strongly recommended).

Fair Trade means a product that bears a label indicating certification by Fair Trade Canada. These are often products such as coffee and tea, which are imported into Canada. For our purposes, "fair trade" may also refer to products from companies adhering to Community Economic Development principles (provided below). This includes our cleaning and courier services, and some catering services.

Organic means certified by an accredited certification agency, and will include food items, and textiles such as T-shirts.

Local means produced as close as possible to the area in which the product will be used. It may include food, services and gifts.

MEN will also endeavor to promote Fair Trade/CED, organic and local purchasing principles in our partnerships and dealings with other organizations and entities.

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (CED) GUIDING PRINCIPLES

(Courtesy of Neechi Foods Worker Co-op)

1. USE OF LOCALLY PRODUCED GOODS AND SERVICES.

purchase of goods and services produced locally; circulation of income within the local community; less income drain; stronger economic linkages within the local community; less dependency on outside markets; greater community self-reliance; restoration of balance in the local economy

2. PRODUCTION OF GOODS AND SERVICES FOR LOCAL USE.

creation of goods and services for use in the local community; circulation of income within the local community; less income drain; stronger economic links within the local community; less dependency on outside markets; greater community self-reliance.

3. LOCAL RE-INVESTMENT OF PROFITS.

use of profits to expand local economic activity; stop profit drain; investment that increases community self-reliance and co-operation

4. LONG-TERM EMPLOYMENT OF LOCAL RESIDENTS.

long-term jobs in areas with chronic unemployment or underemployment; reduced dependency on welfare and food banks; opportunities to live more socially-productive lives; personal and community self-esteem; more wages and salaries spent in the local community.

5. LOCAL SKILL DEVELOPMENT.

training of local residents; training geared to community development; higher labour productivity; greater employability in communities with high unemployment; greater productive capability of economically depressed areas

6. LOCAL DECISION-MAKING.

local ownership and control; co-operative ownership and control; grassroots involvement; community self-determination; people working together to meet community needs

7. PUBLIC HEALTH.

physical and mental health of community residents; healthier families; more effective schooling; more productive workforce

8. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT.

healthy, safe, attractive neighbourhoods; ecological sensitivity

9. NEIGHBOURHOOD STABILITY.

dependable housing; long-term residency; base for long-term community development

10. HUMAN DIGNITY.

self-respect; community spirit; gender equality; respect for seniors and children;. Aboriginal pride; social dignity regardless of psychological differences, ethnic background, colour, creed or sexual orientation

11. SUPPORT FOR OTHER CED INITIATIVES.

mutually supportive trade among organizations with similar community development goals