

Domestic Fair Trade: Opportunities for New York State Agriculture?

On November 12, the Cornell Farmworker Program will bring together a group of faculty, extension professionals, and agricultural producers to discuss future research directions on fair trade opportunities for NYS. Our discussion will focus on three synergistic research components that will offer evidence-based observations on the perspectives of consumers, farmworkers, and producers. We will examine how we might conduct research on a series of basic questions: Are consumers willing to pay more for a product that will support a living wage? How much are they willing to pay? How should the premium be divided between workers and producers, and what are the specific mechanisms to ensure that the premium reaches farmworkers? Through what mechanisms should the premium be allocated to workers? How much premium is needed to cover grower investments and offer meaningful benefits to workers? What certification system will ensure that the premium is paid to its appropriate beneficiary? How can current legislative and regulatory processes be changed to promote fair trade? We anticipate that other areas of inquiry may evolve through our discussion.