

# Learning about where our food comes from

## *Gaining firsthand experience in Mexico*

---

### **The Trip:**

For over a year now, Discovery Organics has been working with an Ejido, or common land that is owned and operated by local farmers, to set up a small farm operation in Northern Mexico. The farm is surrounded by a small village, where participants will live in an unheated adobe house. Fair Trade Vancouver is excited to partner with Discovery Organics and excited to announce the sending of two individuals for this once in a life time opportunity. Participants must be able and willing to work 10 hours/day, six days/week, cook their own food, and be prepared to charge their iPods from a car battery. It will be very rustico! Tambien, ella o el aprenderá mucho español!

### **Where:**

The participants will be housed at Ejido Benito Juarez Leyes de Reforma. The nearest towns are San Luis de Colorado and Guadalupe Victoria, in the Sonora State, 40 km south of Yuma, Arizona.

### **Accommodation:**

The accommodation will be basic...! One step up from camping would be the most accurate!

### **Transportation:**

This is an independent internship; it will therefore not be sponsored by FTV or Discovery Organics. Discovery however will be donating the air fare rather than paying it and making all the arrangements on the ground. Airfare will be from Vancouver to Yuma or El Centro, where participants will be picked up by field managers and taken to the farm.

### **What it involves:**

Participants will work full-time with farmers and coop members, picking and preparing fruits and vegetables for export. Full-time work consists of 10 hours each day, six days a week. Discovery Organics will donating the equivalent wage for this individual's hard work in the fields to Fair Trade Vancouver, so your labour will directly contribute to both the productivity of the farm and to Fair Trade Vancouver as an organization. The total amount donated to Fair Trade Vancouver will be equivalent to \$10/day, or \$1/hour, which amounts to about three times the average wage of local farm hands, who make about \$3.50/day.

### **What to expect:**

This trip is meant to expose the participant to the everyday life that belongs to the majority of agricultural producers in Mexico. In other words long hot days, little water, no electricity, and few amenities!

### **The work:**

The work will be quite labour intensive which will involve things like weeding, moving irrigation lines and pipes, transplanting and seeding. The participants will be working with the employees of the project including the "ejidotarios" generally working 10 hours a day, starting an hour after sunrise – 6 days a week.

### **Health and legal expenses:**

Participants will be responsible for their own health and legal matters, which include:

- Health insurance (for the U.S. and Mexico).

- Liability Insurance
- Participant must sign a waiver with Discovery Organics and Fair Trade Vancouver

### Language:

Some people at the Ejido speak English, if needed, but this will be a good opportunity for people wanting to brush up on their Spanish. The managers of the projects who are all fluent in English will be available if needed, and in contact with the participant.

### When:

The trip will run for a two week period sometime between January and June:

- The departure dates for the trip will be the following:
  - All trips 15 days (including 2 days of travel)
  - Available Trip dates include:
    - Feb 18 / return March 3
    - Marc 3 / return Marc 17
    - March 17 / return March 31
    - March 31/ return April 14
    - April 14 / return Apr 28
    - April 28 / return May 12
    - May 12 / return May 26

## Expectations for Fair Trade Vancouver:

### Goal for Fair Trade Vancouver:

To work with Discovery Organics to provide a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for individuals to experience what farming and agricultural production is all about. To provide an opportunity to learn about the impacts of trade, organic agriculture, and what alternate systems are doing to help producers globally. To have the participant provide a detailed account of their experience and of the lessons they learned throughout the trip. Full documentation, pictures and videos are expected. A full debrief and recap report is expected upon return to Vancouver. Fair Trade Vancouver hopes to use stories from the experience to share with others and to develop educational tools for future use.

### It will be expected that the chosen participant will:

The participant will be expected to produce a full report of their experiences as well as a daily diary, and photographs, which may be used by FTV, discovery, or Baja Organic Agriculture.

- Debrief/share experiences by:
  - Reporting to the FTV core team
  - Holding a Meetup to share their story
  - Writing a blog story
  - Writing an article for submission to local newspapers
- Participant will be encouraged to stay engaged and become part of the FTV leadership team

### Expected financial contributions made to Fair Trade Vancouver:

The trip is valued at \$1500–\$2000, which includes flights, transportation, accommodation, food and connections arranged by Discovery Organics. Positions have been made available to Fair Trade Vancouver as an opportunity to fundraise. It will be expected that the individual chosen will fundraise the cost of the trip, with a target amount of \$2000. The participant can choose to contribute this sum directly, or work to fundraise independently to cover the costs.

## Selection process that will be conducted by Fair Trade Vancouver:

### Selection panel

- 2 board members: Eileen Knowles and Jasel Reyes
- The Executive Director: Sean McHugh
- One individual from Discovery Organics: Miranda Radok

### Application process

- Applicants must provide information regarding: general personal information, background, personal goals, and goals for working with FTV.

### Application period

- The application process will be January 24<sup>th</sup>–February 6<sup>th</sup>
- Four finalist will be selected and contacted for a brief phone interview on February 7<sup>th</sup>

### Fundraising period

- Once selected, the participant will have from selection date (February 7th) in till departure date to fundraise the target amount.
- A personal fundraising page will be setup on the Fair Trade Vancouver website to assist this process.