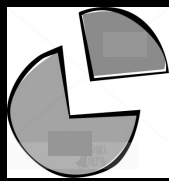


GO BEYOND THE PEEL



More than 80% of the bananas sold in the U.S. are controlled by four companies (Dole, Chiquita, Del Monte, and Bonita).



Luis Gamboa (left) and his son, Denny, members of El Guabo cooperative with a 12-hectare banana and cacao farm, wash bananas for export to the U.S. market.

IMAGINE THIS:

In a region of Ecuador where multinational companies own every stage of the industry from banana plantations to packing stations, warehouses, trucks, containers, and shipping lines, an association of **400 small banana farmers have decided that they've been controlled for long enough and have decided to join together to build their own democratically-organized export business.** Their dual goals: 1- running a top quality, sustainable Fair Trade business and 2- improving the economic and social conditions of the members' families and communities. In addition to earning a fair price for their bananas, the cooperative receives an additional \$1 per case (approx. 40 lbs. of bananas) as a **Fair Trade social premium.** El Guabo's members voted to spend the premium on education, health care, environmental projects and infrastructure improvements. Against all odds, the El Guabo Association of Small Banana Producers, a producer-partner of Equal Exchange, is gaining ground!

Equal Exchange has worked for 23 years to transform the coffee, tea, and chocolate industries. They are infinitely proud to announce that **YOU NOW HAVE A CHOICE! What kind of banana industry do you want to support?** Next time you purchase a banana, look to see if there's an Equal Exchange sticker on the bunch. If there is, you are choosing to connect yourself to these courageous banana farmers who are making history for themselves, and quite possibly, for the banana industry as a whole. Align yourself with these small farmers and become part of this new banana *revolution!*

Join the BANANA REVOLUTION
www.BeyondThePeel.com



WHAT'S NEXT?

The more volume of sales of Fair Trade bananas, the more banana workers and their families can escape the abuses of repression, slave wages, and pesticide poisoning. To increase sales, we need to get Equal Exchange bananas into more stores*. So, the next time you go shopping, ask your favorite grocer to carry Equal Exchange Fair Trade Organic bananas!

*Thanks to Mustard Seed Market & Café for being the first store in NE Ohio to carry Equal Exchange bananas.



Americans eat an average of 26 pounds of bananas each year!



Killer Bananas

Repression: Threats and Assassinations

Multinational banana corporations have historically had a lot of influence over Latin American governments. For instance, the United Fruit Company (now Cincinnati-based Chiquita) lobbied the US government to instigate the coup that **overthrew Guatemala's democratically-elected president** in 1954. By 1960, the country was plunged into a civil war that would last 36 years. The US backed the military during Latin America's **longest civil war**, known for its massacres of Maya peoples, leaving 200,000 dead.

The repression continues today, particularly in Colombia. Lawsuits against Dole and Chiquita accuse the companies of paying paramilitary death squads (classified as terrorist organizations by the US State Department) to **assassinate union leaders and striking workers**.

Chiquita pled guilty in 2007 to having paid over \$1.7 million to the AUC paramilitary organization. The company paid \$25 million in fines. (Incidentally, Chiquita's defense attorney was Eric Holder, the current US attorney general.) Now it's time for **Dole** to admit their complicity in the killings.

Sources: <http://smallfarmersbigchange.coop/2009/12/07/new-evidence-links-dole-food-company-to-paramilitary-assassinations-in-colombia/>
<https://nacla.org/node/6315>

"We would also get calls from the Chiquita and Dole plantations identifying specific people... In most cases those executed were union leaders or members or individuals seeking to hold or reclaim land that Dole or Chiquita wanted for banana cultivation...."

-sworn testimony of José Gregorio Mangones Lugo, who commanded a paramilitary cell in Colombia. He confessed to assassinating the president of the banana workers union and 15 others and ordering the murders of 500 others.



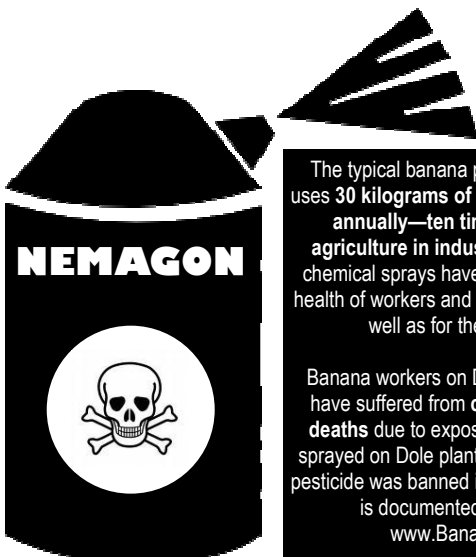
The Corporate "Race to the Bottom"

Consolidating supermarket chains (and Wal-Mart SuperCenters) demand ever lower prices, prompting transnational banana companies to cut costs and overproduce. These forces have prompted a "race to the bottom" for workers' rights, wages, benefits, and working conditions. In recent years, Del Monte, Dole, and Chiquita have all cut jobs, wages and benefits, and closed plantations.

Banana production is now being concentrated in low-wage, non-union Ecuador and the low-wage, non-union Pacific coast of Guatemala, creating pressure to lower wages and working conditions on union plantations elsewhere. West Africa and other regions are also expected to increase low-wage, non-union competition.

Work Conditions on Banana Plantations

- 12-hr work days
- unpaid overtime
- seasonal work of 6 months or less
- threats and assassinations of union workers
- just 4% of banana sales go back to the workers



The typical banana plantation in Central America uses **30 kilograms of active pesticides per hectare annually—ten times more than intensive agriculture in industrialized countries**. These chemical sprays have a very serious impact on the health of workers and people who live in the area, as well as for the surrounding wildlife.

Banana workers on Dole plantations in Nicaragua have suffered from **cancer, infertility, and early deaths** due to exposure to Nemagon, a pesticide sprayed on Dole plantations (even though the lethal pesticide was banned in the US in 1979). Their cause is documented in the film Bananas!*. www.BananasTheMovie.com

