Manitobans' Views on Fair Trade Products

Prepared for the MCIC

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1.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND BACKGROUND

This province-wide Omnibus survey was designed and conducted by Probe Research via telephone interviews taken between March 19 and April 4, 2012 among a random and representative sampling of 1,000 adults residing in Manitoba.

With a sample of 1,000 one can say with 95 percent certainty that the results are within ± 3.1 percentage points of what they would have been if the entire adult population of Manitoba had been interviewed. The margin of error is higher within each of the survey's population sub-groups.

Modified random digit dialing was used to ensure that all Manitoba adults would have an equal opportunity to participate in this Probe Research Inc. survey. Minor statistical weighting has been applied to this sample to ensure that age and gender characteristics properly reflect known attributes of the Manitoba population. All data analysis was performed using SPSS statistical analysis software.

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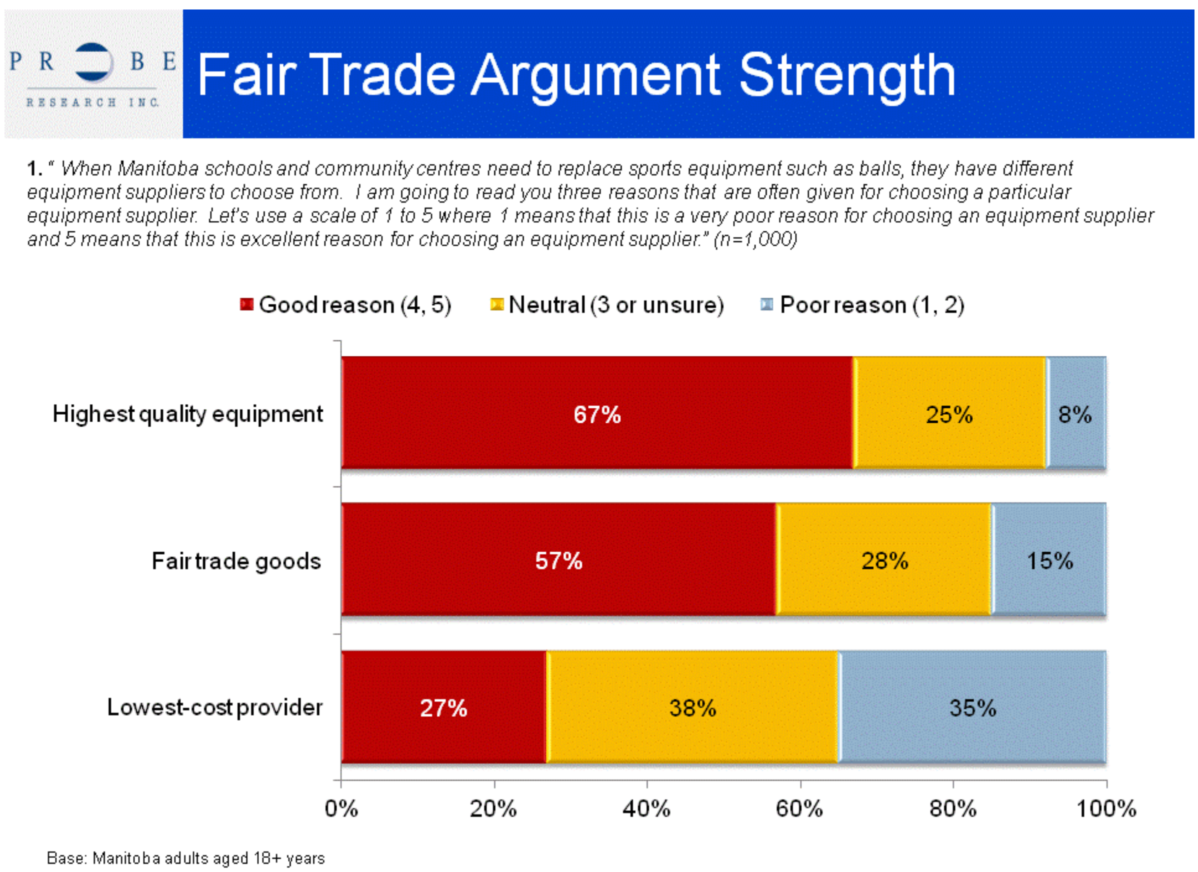
2.0 RESEARCH RESULTS

2.1 FAIR TRADE ARGUMENT STRENGTH IN PRODUCT PROCUREMENT

Respondents were presented with three reasons that schools and community centres are often given for choosing a particular sports equipment supplier. For each one, respondents were asked to rate the strength of this argument on a scale of "1" to "5", with a "1" meaning that this is a *very poor reason* for choosing a provider, and a "5" meaning this is an *excellent reason* for choosing a provider.

As the following graph illustrates, respondents considered **product quality** to be a most compelling reason for schools and community centres to choose one sporting goods provider over its competitors (67% considered this a *good reason* to choose a company, based on a score of "4" or higher). Slightly fewer considered **fair-trade certification** to be a compelling rationale (57% *good reason*), even when it was noted that the processes used to manufacture these goods protect the interests of overseas workers, including children.

Only about one-quarter of surveyed Manitoba adults (27%) consider having the **lowest price** to be a *good reason* for a sporting goods provider to be chosen over its competitors.



Notable variations among respondents include:

- The fair trade argument is most likely to resonate with:
  - Younger adults aged 18-34 years (65% *a good reason*, versus 54% among both 35-54 year olds and those aged 55 years and over)
  - Households with children aged 15 years or younger (62% *a good reason*, versus 54% among households without children)
  - Those who purchase fair trade goods at least monthly (65% *a good reason*, versus 45% among those who never or almost never purchase fair trade goods)

- The cost argument is most likely to resonate with:
  - Younger adults aged 18-34 years (34% *a good reason*, versus 18% among those aged 55 years and over)

- There were no significant differences between subgroups in terms of the quality argument's appeal.

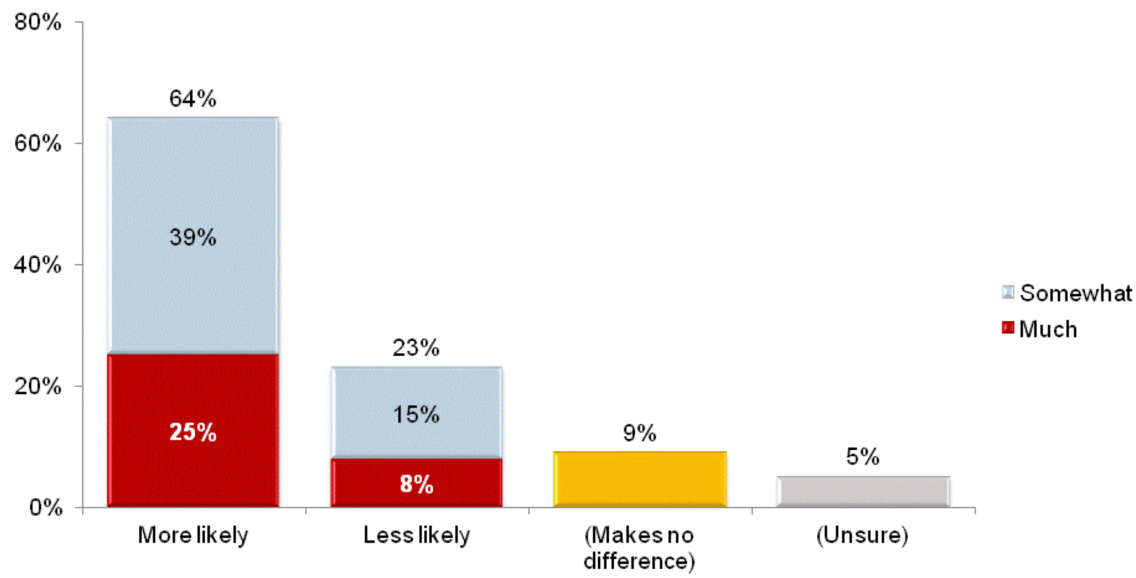
2.2 INCLINATION TO PAY A PREMIUM TO BUY FAIR TRADE GOODS

Respondents were asked if they would be more or less likely to purchase fair trade goods displayed side-by-side in a store with non-fair-trade goods, even if fair trade products typically cost 10 percent more than competing products.

As illustrated by the graph below, nearly two-thirds of respondents (64% *likely*) said they would be inclined to purchase the fair trade goods, though only one-quarter (25%) said they would be *much more likely* to buy the fair trade product. About one-quarter (23%) were disinclined to purchase fair trade products (8% *much less* and 15% *somewhat less likely*), while nine percent volunteered that the difference between the two products would make *no difference* either way. Five percent declined to answer.

Inclination to Pay a Premium for Fair Trade Goods

2. *"The term fair trade is often applied to coffee, tea, chocolate and other food produced under improved working conditions and higher wages for workers from poorer countries. Fair trade products typically cost 10% more than non-fair trade items. If you were in a store and saw goods marked Fair Trade next to some goods not marked fair trade, would you be more likely or less likely to buy the fair trade goods? Is that much or somewhat?" (n=1,000)*



Base: Manitoba adults aged 18+ years

Notable variations among respondents include:

- As might be expected, those who already purchase fair trade goods at least monthly showed the strongest motivation to purchase fair trade goods (36% being *much more likely*, versus 20% among infrequent fair trade purchasers and dipping to only 10% among those who *never or almost ever* purchase fair trade goods).

- Likewise, those who *never or almost never* purchase fair trade goods showed some aversion to fair trade products (43% would be *somewhat* or *much less likely* to purchase such goods, versus 29% among infrequent fair trade purchasers and 11% among those who purchase fair trade goods at least monthly.)

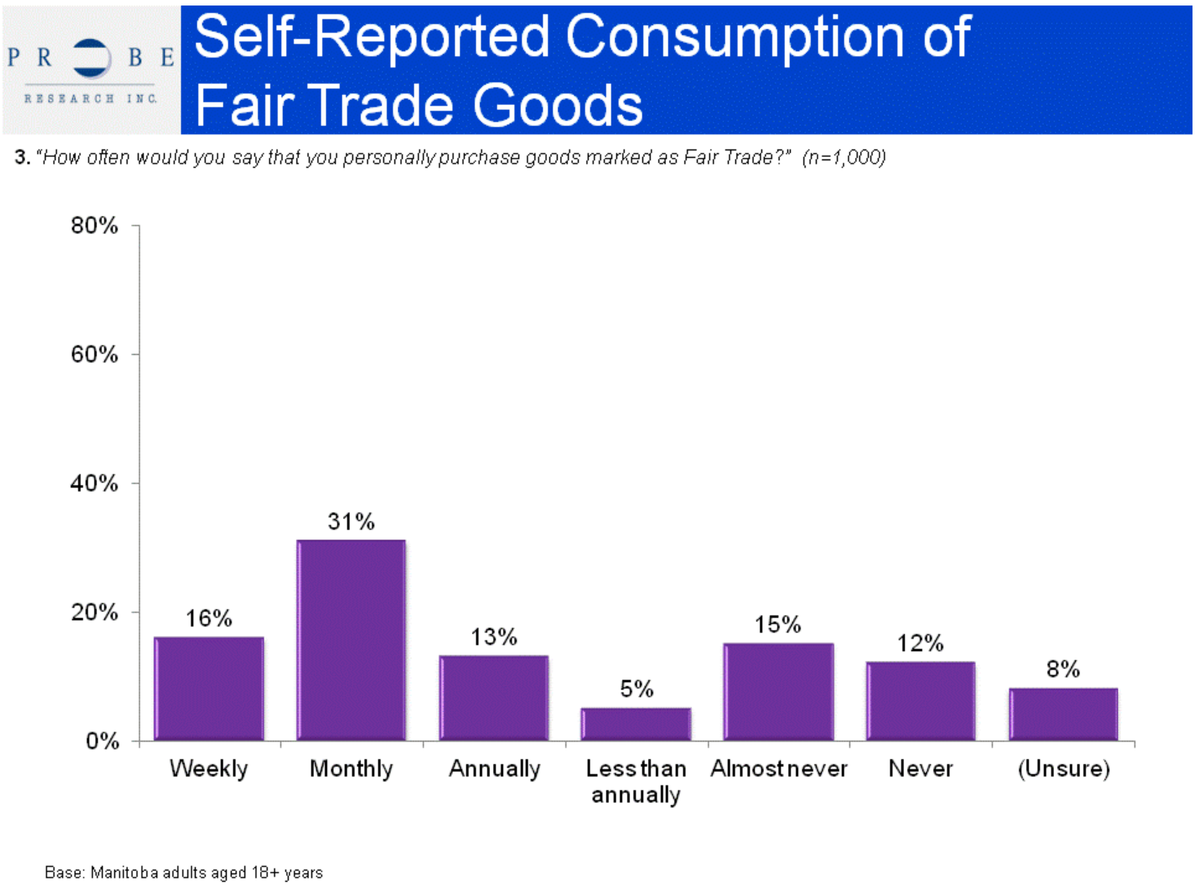
- Those from higher-income households earning $100,000 or more annually were more inclined to consider fair trade products (51% *somewhat more likely*, versus 35%-36% among all lower income groups), even though this group was no more likely to have a *strong* inclination toward fair trade goods than other income groups.

- Post-secondary graduates also showed greater willingness to consider purchasing fair trade goods (46% *somewhat likely*, versus 34% among those with a Grade 12 education or less), even though there was little difference between the two groups in terms of strong inclinations.

2.3 REPORTED CONSUMPTION OF FAIR TRADE GOODS

Respondents were asked how often they personally purchase goods carrying a fair trade designation. As the following graph illustrates, slightly less than one-half were regular fair trade consumers (16% *weekly* and 31% *monthly*), while about one-fifth (13% *annually* and 5% *less than annually*) described themselves as infrequent fair trade consumers.

About one-quarter (12% *never* and 15% *almost never*) rarely purchase fair trade goods.



Notable variations among respondents include:

- Older adults aged 55 years and over are the least common weekly consumers of fair trade goods (9% *weekly*, versus 20% among those aged 18-34 years and 19% among those aged 35-54 years).

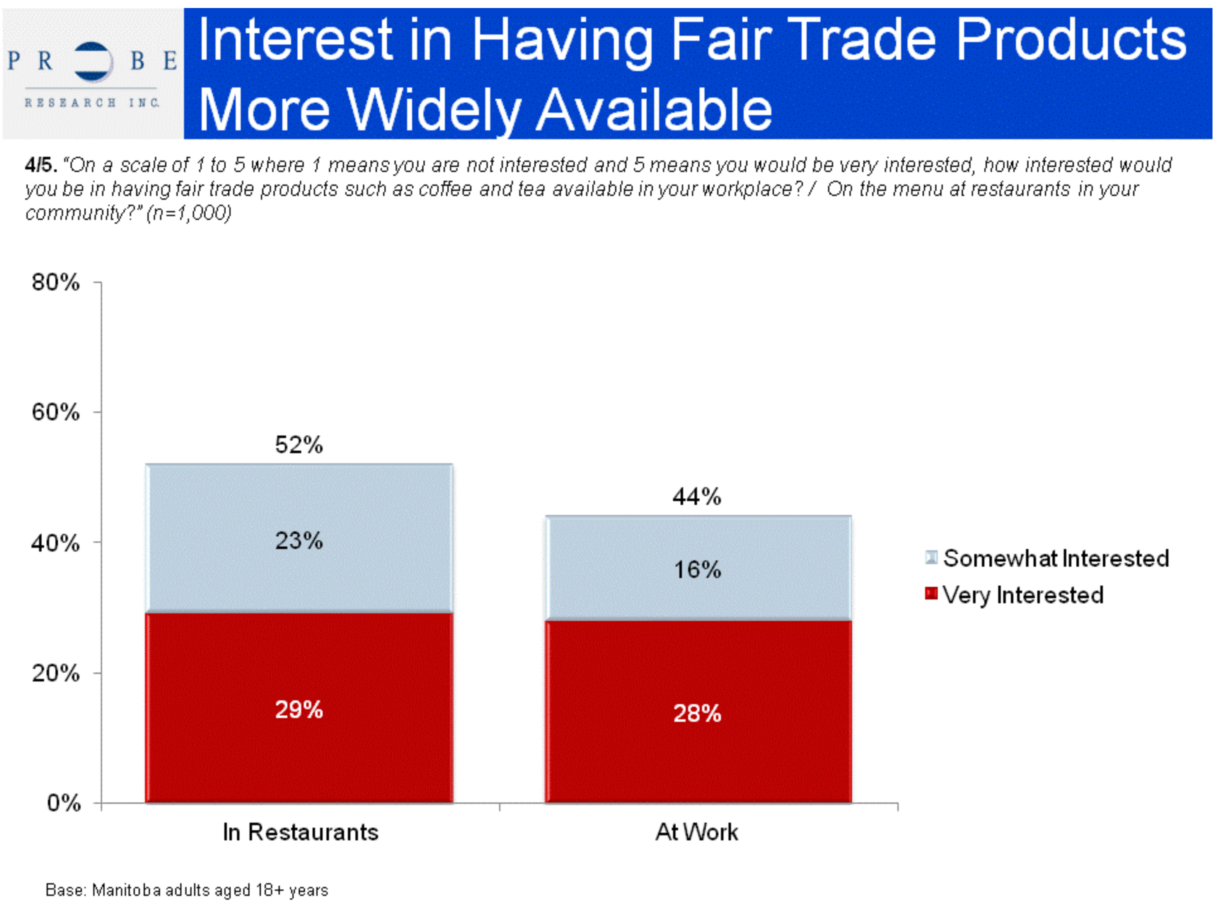
- Households with children are somewhat more likely than those without children to be *weekly* fair trade consumers (22% versus 13% respectively).

2.4 DEMAND FOR FAIR TRADE PRODUCTS IN WORKPLACES AND RESTAURANTS

Respondents were asked how interested they would be in having fair trade products, such as coffee and tea, in their workplaces; and in having more fair trade products on the menu at restaurants in their communities. For this, respondents were asked to use a "1" to "5" scale, where a "1" means they would not be interested and a "5" means they would be very interested in having these products available.

As the following graph illustrates, about one-half of Manitobans (52% "4" or higher) expressed an interest in having more fair trade products on the menu at local restaurants. This included three-in-ten who were *very interested* in having these options available (29% "5" on the five-point scale).

Slightly fewer (44% "4" or higher) expressed interest in having more fair trade goods like coffee and tea available in their workplaces. This included nearly three-in-ten who were *very interested* in having fair trade products in the workplace (28% "5" on the five-point scale).



Notable variations among respondents include:

- Core Area residents were more likely than other Winnipeggers to be *very interested* in having fair trade products in the workplace (38% "5" on the five-point scale, versus a 29% city-wide average) and on the menu in local restaurants (39% "5" on the five-point scale, versus a 32% city-wide average).

- Winnipeg residents expressed slightly stronger interest than did other Manitobans in having fair trade goods available in local restaurants (32% versus 25% "5" on the five-point scale, respectively).

- As might be expected, those who already consume fair trade products on a *weekly or monthly* basis showed strong interest in having fair trade products available in the workplace (39% "5" on the five-point scale, versus 15% among those who *never or almost never* purchase fair trade goods) or on the menu in local restaurants (42% versus 13%, respectively).

- Groups that also expressed interest in having fair trade products available in the workplace included:

  - Post-secondary graduates (50% "4" or higher, versus 41% among those with a Grade 12 education or less)

  - Respondents with children in the home (51% "4" or higher, versus 42% among those without children)

  - Younger adults aged 18-34 years (54% "4" or higher, versus 36% among those aged 55 years and over)

  - Households with annual incomes greater than $100,000 (56% "4" or higher, versus 40% among those with annual incomes of less than $30,000).