



NEWS RELEASE

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La Pêche Celebrates its First Year as Québec's First Fair Trade Town

The Municipality of La Pêche is celebrating its first year as Québec's first official Fair Trade Town on November 16th at Wakefield's United Church from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. The celebration will include a screening of the movie *Black Gold* (www.blackgoldmovie.com) and some songs from local folk musician Alise Marlane. Fair trade coffee and goodies will be available. Admission is free, but a donation jar will be available.

Robert Bussières, Mayor of La Pêche is proud of the Municipality's accomplishment: "It is by taking small actions toward important goals that one can improve the world. I encourage the Committee to continue in its efforts to make La Pêche a better place to live."

This celebration is also an occasion to highlight some new concrete actions that the *La Pêche Fair Trade Steering Committee* has taken in the past year to pursue its commitment to implement the values of fair trade, including a new labelling program to identify local producers at the Wakefield Market this past summer. Each local merchant was asked to indicate the number of kilometres their goods had travelled before they were sold at the Wakefield Market. According to Rob Moeller, member of the *La Pêche Fair Trade Steering Committee* and a local artist who spearheaded the project, this program raised awareness among market buyers about the importance of buying locally for the benefit of the local economy and to reduce one's impact on the environment.

The next challenge that the *La Pêche Fair Trade Steering Committee* wants to tackle as part of its commitment toward sustainability and the environment is the reduction of plastic bag consumption within the limits of the Municipality and beyond. In order to achieve this goal, the Committee is asking anyone interested, be they business owners, consumers, activists, to come forward and contact Chantal Plamondon, co-owner of Wakefield-based business Life Without Plastic. As the holiday season is fast approaching, consumers need to be reminded that plastic bags are a serious cause of needless waste and environmental damage.

While a plastic bag is used on average only 12-20 minutes before being discarded, it takes between 400 and 1000 years to degrade. Consumers of the world use an average of 1 million bags every minute of every day, but only one in 200 bags used is recycled. While plastic bags accumulate in landfills and in the ocean they harm wildlife such as turtles and birds who eat them thinking they are edible. The animal dies and decomposes, but the plastic remains and is re-released into the environment to kill again.

For more information please visit La Pêche's Fair Trade Town's website: www.fairtradevillage.ca.

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Plastic Bag Reduction Initiative:

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