



Member Profile | La Siembra Co-operative

La Siembra Co-operative Inc. is a worker-owned co-operative incorporated under the Co-operative Corporations Act in August 1999. This year the Co-operative will celebrate its 20th Anniversary.

Industry Pioneers

In 2002, La Siembra worked with Fairtrade Canada (then Transfair Canada) to develop a certification system for cocoa, chocolate and sugar products in Canada and became the first registered importers of Fairtrade certified cocoa and sugar in North America. Under the brand of **Camino**, La Siembra imports, manufactures and sells Fairtrade certified and organic certified food products intended to improve the livelihoods of family farmers, support rural economic development in the global south, and support the well-being of communities at home and abroad through economic co-operation.

Most of La Siembra's 9M in annual sales consist of chocolate and sugar products, in both bulk and processed formats, although it is gradually diversifying its product offerings to include coffee, tea, nuts and dried fruit produced by small farmers in democratically organized co-operatives.

La Siembra considers its commitment to fair trade to be the cornerstone of its mission-driven business model. Most of the products it distributes are Fairtrade or Small Producer certified; La Siembra does not handle conventional products even if doing so would allow it to achieve higher margins. Over the past two fiscal years, La Siembra estimates that it has paid approximately \$497,000 in Fairtrade premiums direct to their producer partners, and have imported approximately 10M in fairly traded food.

Just this year, La Siembra moved its operations into a new warehouse space in Ottawa that is staffed and operated by the members of the Co-operative. This move was intended to end the Co-operative's outsourced warehousing contract with a third party and move La Siembra closer towards the vertical integration of its operations, increase the depth and expertise of its membership and participate in the economic development of their community and home-base.

Capital

The Co-operative's capital includes \$1.4 million in issued Preference Shares which are held by Co-operative members, associations, and fair trade supporters. In addition, La Siembra has built a social-solidarity partnership with caisse d'économie solidaire Desjardins that continues to support the growth and development of its co-operative business model and small-farmer value chains.

If you are interested in becoming a La Siembra supporter please email us at invest@camino.ca or visit our website at <https://camino.ca/>

