



Fancy a cuppa?

This year's Fairtrade Fortnight takes place from 22nd September until 5th October, and the Fairtrade Foundation are encouraging us to 'Do it Fair'. By choosing Fairtrade, or other ethically sourced products, our actions can have a positive impact on real people's lives, leading to fairer pay, fairer treatment, and fairer futures.

One product at the heart of this campaign is tea and Fairtrade are asking the UK government to 'Brew It Fair' in order to protect human rights, collaborate for change and honour their international climate finance commitment. For more information visit the Fairtrade website: <https://www.fairtrade.net/uk-en/get-involved/campaign-with-us/current-campaigns/brew-it-fair.html>

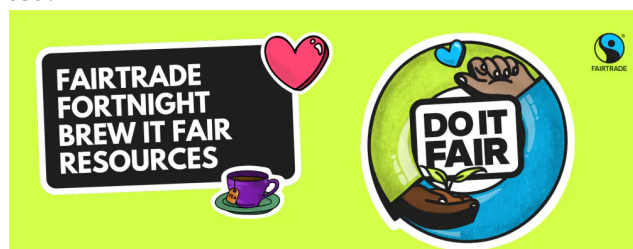


On an individual basis, our choice of tea can make a small but positive impact on human rights, helping to ensure the small farmers who produce around 60% of the world's tea, and their communities, receive a fair price for their harvest and better working conditions. How we brew our cuppa can also have an effect on the environment.

When making a cup of tea:

Don't overfill your kettle – only boil as much water as you require, overfilling your kettle wastes energy and money. Some figures suggest that in the UK we boil twice as much water for every cup of tea consumed which means we would be wasting 3,525 tonnes of CO2 per day at a cost of £68 million pounds in wasted energy.

Choose plastic-free tea bags – many tea bags contain a small amount of polypropylene plastic which, until recently, had been essential to help the tea bag paper seal together. Fortunately, even most mainstream brands are phasing out the petroleum-based plastic sealant in favour of a plant-based alternative, polylactic acid or PLA. This is a biodegradable bioplastic typically made from corn or other starchy crops and is more sustainable than traditional plastic because it comes from renewable sources. You can put PLA-based tea bags on the compost heap as there will be no chemical residue. However they will probably not break down completely so any remains would have to be removed and put in the bin or they can go in with the green bin or brown sack waste to be taken to an industrial composter. Alternatively why not try loose leaf tea.



Remember to bring your reusable cup - In the UK, 7 million single-use cups are thrown away every day. The carbon footprint for single-use cups in 2023/24 was 763 tonnes of CO2, the equivalent to driving three million miles.

These may seem like small, rather insignificant actions, but when multiplied by 100 million, the number of cups of tea drunk every day in the UK, they will have a considerable positive effect on the environment.

With more than 400 Fairtrade-certified tea products available in the UK there are plenty of options to choose from, whether you're a traditional tea drinker or you prefer a herbal option. Please drink (tea) responsibly!

To discover more about Ely Cathedral's role as a Fairtrade Church see: <https://www.elycathedral.org/community/social-action-and-community/fairtrade>.

Rebecca Mundy
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