



Who is Stacey Toews?

Stacey Toews is co-founder of Level Ground Trading, a Direct Fair Trade company based out of Victoria, British Columbia. Since 1999, Stacey has travelled across North America educating and engaging audiences about Fair Trade, sustainability and ethical consumer choices.

Stacey is a dynamic and inspiring speaker who is passionate about social justice. He has quickly become one of Fair Trade's leading advocates, encouraging critical and independent thought about our everyday purchases and how they affect the people and communities that help make the products we buy.

Direct Fair Trade is about relationships

Since Level Ground's beginnings in 1997, Stacey has helped pioneer the company's Direct Fair Trade business model. Through direct relationships with producer groups, Level Ground maintains sustainable partnerships with long-term commitments to small-scale farmers in Colombia, Bolivia, Peru, Tanzania and Ethiopia. They offer a variety of products from coffee to cane sugar and tropical dried fruit.

The company is a member of the World Fair Trade Organization and has paid an average of 40% above the market price for green coffee and 25% above the Fair Trade minimum price. At least 65% of this payment goes directly to farmers. Level Ground purchases the harvests of approximately 2,300 coffee farming families each year and funds vital services such as health care and education.

Sustainability, both locally and globally

For Toews, sustainability is based on how people relate to each other and the environment, both locally and globally. His experience with Direct Fair Trade in producer communities has shown that environmentally sound practices flourish when people can be assured their livelihoods are secure.

Stacey has helped Level Ground become an environmental leader at home. The company operates a certified organic, zero-waste facility that uses 13 different streams of recycling and compost. Customers can have their empty packages 'upcycled' into new products like wallets and shopping bags by a women's group. Employees are also encouraged to use environmentally friendly modes of transport through green commute subsidies.

Understanding based on experience

Toews brings invaluable hands-on experience in promoting Fair Trade and sustainability, helping to establish Level Ground as a successful business among its peers. He has visited producer groups in developing countries, and negotiated with corporate boards on behalf of small-scale farmers.

Through practical examples and thoughtful questions, Stacey's speaking events make clear the need for a more involved and holistic approach to ethical consumption.

If you are interested in hosting a speaking event contact Stacey@LevelGround.com.