

REGINA – DOMINICA

The farmer: Regina Joseph is the single parent of five children. Two of her children and five grandchildren live with her, ten minutes from the farm.



Regina Joseph, Dominica

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Location: Carib Territory in the east of Dominica. Can you find Dominica on the Odd Pod? It is part of the Windward Isles, not far from St Lucia.

How big is the farm? 1 hectare (2.5 acres) or just a bit smaller than a cricket field. Regina harvests enough bananas to fill 35 boxes every two weeks, with the help of two other workers.

What does she grow? Regina grows food for her family to eat but also different fruit and vegetables to sell

including bananas, coconut, yams, cabbages and lettuces.

And where does it go? Her bananas and coconuts are exported to the UK. Hot peppers go to two large spice companies also for sale abroad. She sells other produce like cabbages in local markets.



Regina at work on her banana farm

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How long have you been a farmer?

I have been a farmer all my life, to provide for my family with food from the fields and cash from the bananas.

What do Fair Trade stickers, mean to you?

I am getting more for my bananas now. This helps pay the bills and send my children to school. Also I don't have to use chemicals, which is good for my health, and a healthy environment.



Fairtrade bananas

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What is the best bit about your job?

My ancestors have farmed the land in this reserve for a thousand years. I am proud to be part of that long tradition.

How has your job changed?

The extra money that my neighbours and I receive for Fair Trade fruit has been spent on making local roads better. This means that collection lorries can drive to me on harvest days. Before I had to carry my bananas on my head for half a mile to the main road – I didn't enjoy this, but it is something Fair Trade has already changed.

How does the place you farm affect you?

Our warm tropical climate allows us to grow beautiful fruit like bananas and coconuts for sale abroad. But the weather is not always a helper and my banana trees are

in danger of being blown over in hurricane season which is why I have planted many other trees around them as a buffer.

How do you use technology on the farm?

Harvesting bananas is a very hard manual job using a machete, but my packhouse has been changed for good by a clean water washing system which makes our preparation of fruit for sale much quicker and easier.

How does your farm affect your local area?

Extra money from my Fair Trade bananas has been spent on the local school, street lighting – which is a new thing for us - and invested in a new local hospital. Also as a group of farmers we have bought a lawnmower to cut a sports field for football and cricket – my grandchildren are delighted!