



## **ACTION ON FAIRTRADE: LONGO'S BECOMES FIRST RETAILER IN NORTH AMERICA TO OFFER EXCLUSIVELY FAIRTRADE BANANAS**

(TORONTO, ONTARIO May 6, 2021) - Longo's Brothers Fruit Market ("Longo's") has become the first grocery retailer in North America to commit to offering only Fairtrade bananas in their 36 stores and through delivery on Grocery Gateway. This is made possible through a partnership with the Canadian company, Equifruit. The landmark decision sets a new standard for sustainable produce supply chains in North America. The announcement is aligned with Fairtrade Month, which takes place each May in Canada.

With this commitment, Longo's is ensuring that the farmers and communities where its bananas are sourced are guaranteed a fair and sustainable income and that farmers get financial and technical support to lower their impact on the environment. For Longo's, a full commitment to Fairtrade bananas comes as the latest in a long line of sustainability initiatives centred around environmental stewardship, responsible sourcing, and healthy communities, including waste diversion, use of renewable energy, and community donations.

"We aim to be the most trusted and relied upon food partner, and that includes setting sustainability precedents" said Mike Longo, Chief Merchandising Officer at Longo's. "We're proud to be the first North American retailer to initiate what is becoming a global purchasing standard for bananas."

Fairtrade aims to create more respectful trading partnerships between producers and consumers, and so Longo's has chosen to partner on this project with Equifruit, the Canadian leader in Fairtrade banana imports and marketing, to connect with their Guests on both supply and support with in-store messaging. In meeting Fairtrade's social sustainability standards, Equifruit and Longo's reinvest US\$1 per standard 40lb case sold back to the communities where the bananas were produced. These funds are used for projects like clean water facilities, schools and health clinics.

"Fairtrade standards provide essential income stability to banana farmers working in an otherwise highly volatile market and empower them to invest in their communities," said Jennie Coleman, President of Equifruit. "Fairtrade purchasing is the most pragmatic approach to ensuring these communities continue to develop and provide the world with its favourite staple fruit."

"Produce has always been the backbone of our business, and responsible sourcing is not only incredibly important to us but is at the core of our family values," said Mimmo Franzone, Director of Produce and Floral at Longo's. "We are proud to be taking these important steps with Equifruit to ensure we can continue to fuel happier and healthier lives around the globe for years to come."

Following a successful Longo's pilot of Fairtrade-only bananas and the positive feedback from Guests, Longo's was confident that making this exclusive offering was not only the right decision for its Guests, but for a sustainable future.

To meet International Fairtrade Standards, banana producers must provide fair wages and safe working conditions for workers, forbid child labour, minimize the use of chemicals, and properly sustain the local environment. Learn more about the impacts of Fairtrade banana production on [Equifruit's website](#).

Effective May 6th, all 36 locations of Longo's and Grocery Gateway delivery will exclusively offer both conventional and organic Fairtrade bananas.

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### **About Longo's Brothers Fruit Market**

Longo's is a family-operated Canadian organization that started in 1956 when three brothers, Tommy, Joe and Gus opened their first fruit market. What began as a small family-run store has since grown to a company that operates 36 stores in communities across Toronto and the GTA, as well as Grocery Gateway, the leader in online sales of home-delivered groceries.

Today, Longo's maintains the same family-based values as they did 65 years ago, putting Family Standards at the heart of everything they do. Longo's is proud to serve their Guests the quality standard of food they believe every family deserves, and to give back to the communities they operate in through the Longo's Family Charitable Foundation.

### **About Equifruit:**

Equifruit is a group of diehard believers in ethical fruit sourcing. Especially when it comes to bananas. We're righting the wrongs of banana business history by making it fair from the start, especially for farmers. Established in 2006, Equifruit is Canada's leading Fairtrade-certified banana importer. We're a growing produce aisle sweetheart with current distribution in Quebec and Ontario. Stay tuned for our worldwide Fairtrade banana domination – starting with North America.

### **Longo's Media Contact:**

Kate Johnny  
Public Relations  
[kate@bluedoor.agency](mailto:kate@bluedoor.agency)

### **Equifruit Media Contact:**

Kim Chackal  
Director of Sales & Marketing, Equifruit  
[kim.chackal@equifruit.com](mailto:kim.chackal@equifruit.com)  
514.993.7736