

CLASS TOPIC: Balancing commercial with human interests in global trade policy.

Part 1: 3 sources

IFAT: The International Fair Trade Association. 10 Feb. 2004. The International Fair Trade Association. **3 Mar. 2004** <<http://www.ifat.org/>>.

Based in England, the International Fair Trade Association promotes trading partnerships and seeks greater equity in international trade. It contributes to sustainable development by offering better trading conditions to, and securing the rights of, marginalized producers and workers – especially in the developing nations. Fair Trade organizations (backed by consumers) are actively supporting producers, and campaigning for changes in the rules and practice of conventional international trade. Their focus is on protecting the interests and rights of peoples in developing nations from adverse economic effects of global trade policies promoted by organizations like the WTO.

The Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy. **3 Mar. 2003** <<http://www.iatp.org/>>.

Based in Minneapolis MN, the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy promotes family farms, rural communities and ecosystems around the world through research and education, science and technology, and advocacy. The website includes news and updates, and IATP programs. Also, The IATP Listserv Archives contain valuable information on dozens of related topics -- everything from antibiotics to farm policy to genetically modified food to WTO concerns can be found within this extensive database of messages and discussions. This organization presents a more objective and science based perspective on the issues relating to the class topic.

WTO. **3 Mar. 2004** World Trade Organization. **3 Mar. 2004** <<http://www.wto.org/>>.

Based in Switzerland, the World Trade Organization (WTO) is the global international organization dealing with the rules of trade between nations. The site provides both html and PDF copies of WTO agreements, negotiated and signed by the bulk of the world's trading nations and ratified in their parliaments. The organizations help producers of goods and services, exporters, and importers conduct their business. This is the single most important organization driving global policy for international trade in an attempt to reduce trade barriers to facilitate reducing trade barriers.

Part 2: Evaluation of the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy

PURPOSE: to inform and educate the public and provide information for public policy.

AUTHORITY: Content developed by researchers and sponsored by member organizations (among them many environmental and health organizations) and range from journalists to university professors.

ACCURACY Documents reflect research based evidence for decision and policy making.

OBJECTIVITY Presents multiple perspectives for economic, environmental, and social concerns. Bias is toward questioning policy makers and need to balance commercial with social and environmental concerns.

CURRENCY: very current, updated regularly

COVERAGE: Based in the U.S. but covers global issues

Part 3: The Internet for research on class topic

1. Two of the sources were from Infomine search on “fair trade” and “trade policy” and the last was discovered with a Google.com search: “fair trade” + policy + agriculture
2. URLs available in MLA Citations. I would consider using all three because they represent three different perspectives on the issues. The international Fair Trade Association is clearly protecting the interests of farmers in developing nations, the WTO promotes free trade, but if I had to choose, I would pick the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy Website because it does take a more balanced approach.
3. What do you think are the greatest advantages and disadvantages of using the World Wide Web for research? The greatest advantage of the WWW for this project has been access to primary resource material for opposing interest groups. The greatest danger is that it is sometimes hard to determine who is behind the information and what their agenda might be.
4. For this topic, the Web provided primary resources that supported the information available in books and periodicals.