

Recent trade polling shows huge potential “fair trade” market

Conventional marketing estimates of the percentage of the American buying public interested in fair trade “products” tends to be quite small. But the percentage of the population interested in fair trade “policies” is enormous. Fair trade companies can boost their market share by branding themselves as also supportive of the policy component of fair trade.

Voters and elected officials are already bought in. In the 2006 and 2008 elections, 72 House and Senate members who campaigned on trade reform replaced those who had voted for NAFTA and similar pacts. President Obama himself picked up key swing states for the Democratic Party by campaigning loudly and articulately in favor of comprehensive trade reform. Meanwhile, the TRADE Act has 150 co-sponsors, including a majority of House Democrats. The House legislation is sponsored by 12 full committee chairs, 55 sub-committee chairs, Republicans and blocs of members from House caucuses that rarely agree on anything – including the Congressional Black (30 members), Hispanic (9), Blue Dog (25) and New Democrat (22) caucuses. Polls confirm that elected officials are responding to a broad public demand. Concerns about trade’s impact on jobs, the environment and import safety are already showing themselves in the 2010 election cycle, including in special elections and primaries in Kentucky and Pennsylvania. *Don’t be left out!*

USA Today / Gallup, Nov. 20-22, 2009

- Twice as many Americans volunteered that “keeping manufacturing jobs here / stopping sending overseas” and “Higher taxes on imports / Buy American” are the best single ways to create more U.S. jobs, as compared with other solutions (like lowering taxes).

Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, Oct. 28-Nov. 8, 2009

- Forty percent of Americans – including 42 percent of Republicans and 45 percent of Independents – said that “free trade agreements—like NAFTA, and the policies of the World Trade Organization” have been “a bad thing” for the United States, while 10-15 percent less of these demographics said they have been a good thing. This is a dramatic

reversal from a 2004 poll in which Americans believed that these trade agreements have been a good thing, by a 47-34 margin.

- Only 4 percent of Americans believe that these policies have helped the financial situation of them and their family; and only 11 and 13 percent respectively believe that they have led to higher wages and more jobs. By contrast, 33 percent don't even believe that these policies lower the price of products that they buy – a key claim of NAFTA-WTO supporters.

CBS, April 5-12, 2010

- Even the Tea Party boasts many fair trade supporters. Reports regularly discuss this largely middle class demographic's opposition to NAFTA and the WTO. And the April 2010 CBS poll found that 93 percent of this group thinks the state of the economy is at least somewhat bad, and that 58 percent feel America's best days are behind it on jobs – key indicators of fair trade sympathies.

CNN/Opinion Research Corporation, July 1, 2008

- 51 percent of Americans view foreign trade as a threat to the economy, compared to only 35 percent of Americans who felt free trade posed a threat to the economy in 2000.
- Nearly six in 10 voters say the country's poor economic conditions will be extremely important – ranking the economy as the No. 1 issue in this campaign out of 15 issues tested.

Rasmussen Reports, June 18, 2008

- Nearly three-quarters (73 percent) of Americans believe that a free trade agreement has had a negative effect on their families. Only 14 percent say their families have benefited from a free trade agreement.
- Over half – 56 percent – of Americans believe that NAFTA should be renegotiated. Only 16 percent believe it should *not* be renegotiated.
- 71 percent of voters say negotiation of trade agreements is important to them in terms of how they will vote. Only 20 percent say it is not important.

Wall Street Journal/NBC News, January 2008

- 58 percent of Americans think “globalization has been bad ... because it has subjected American companies and employees to unfair competition and cheap labor.”