

## WWJD? Frankincense distiller considers Fair Trade certification

*Paul E. Olsen, Saint Michael's College*  
*Anjanette DeCarlo, Saint Michael's College*  
*Steve Passarelli, Saint Michael's College*

### Abstract

This case discusses Boswellness, a Vermont-based company that distilled, packaged, and distributed organic frankincense and myrrh products. Founded in 2005 by Mahdi Ibrahim, Jamie Garvey, Bill Lanzetta, and Casey Lyon, Boswellness sourced its frankincense and myrrh resins from Somaliland in northwestern Africa and processed them in Vermont for use as incense, anti-inflammatories, natural colognes, immunostimulants, and facial toner and acne treatment. Boswellness obtained Organic Certification in 2010 and was now struggling with whether Fair Trade certification would add value to the company's credibility and bottom line.

### Learning Objectives

After completing this case, students will be able to:

1. Describe a company's supply chain
2. Explain the steps involved in organic certification
3. Evaluate the implications of positioning a business as socially responsible
4. Propose and defend a recommendation regarding fair trade certification

### Application

The decision case could be used primarily in undergraduate *Business Ethics, Management, or Environmental Studies* courses.

### Key Words

Organic certification, fair trade, socially responsible business, supply chain management.

### Contact

Dr. Paul E. Olsen, Department of Business Administration and Accounting, Saint Michael's College, One Winooski Park, Colchester, VT, 05439. Email [polson@smcvt.edu](mailto:polson@smcvt.edu). Phone 802.654.2661.