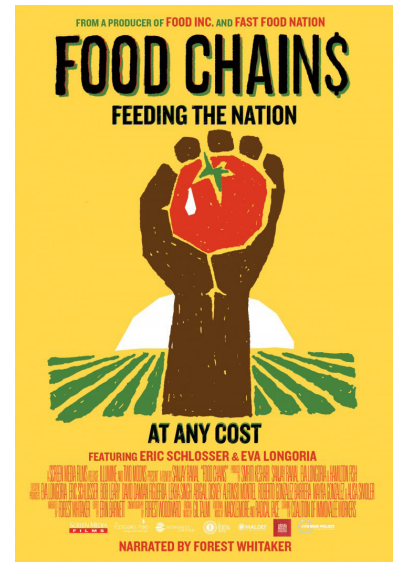


Dear Publix Manager,

Recently, “Food Chains,” the feature-length documentary that highlights the Coalition of Immokalee Workers’ (CIW) Fair Food Program as the long-sought solution to the exploitation faced by farmworkers in the U.S., hit theaters nationwide. Co-produced by Eva Longoria and Eric Schlosser (producer of Food, Inc. and author of Fast Food Nation) and narrated by Academy Award winner Forest Whitaker, the film follows the CIW as they stage a six-day fast outside of your company’s headquarters in Lakeland, FL to call on Publix to support the human rights of the farmworkers in its supply chain. **I am writing as a Publix customer to urge Publix to join the Fair Food Program and support the work of the CIW and the Florida tomato industry that is ending the forced labor, sub-poverty wages, and other human rights abuses historically faced by Florida farmworkers who harvest your tomatoes.**

“Food Chains” illustrates that for decades, Florida’s farmworkers faced poverty wages and daily violations of their basic rights in order to harvest the food on our plates, including sexual harassment, physical and verbal abuse, and in the most extreme cases, modern-day slavery.



The good news is that a new day has dawned in the fields through the CIW’s Fair Food Program (FFP), an historic partnership among farmworkers, Florida tomato growers, and 13 multibillion-dollar food retailers, among them Subway, McDonald’s and Walmart. Participating retailers commit to 1) buy their tomatoes exclusively from farms where workers’ fundamental human rights are upheld according to the Fair Food Code of Conduct and 2) pay a small Fair Food premium on their tomatoes which is passed down through the supply chain and paid out to workers by the growers. **The FFP guarantees rights never before seen for Florida farmworkers, such as rights to shade and rest breaks from their grueling work, and zero tolerance for sexual harassment and modern slavery. Since 2011, participating buyers have paid more than \$15 million through the FFP, constituting the first pay increase for workers in over 30 years.** The FFP was called “one of the great human rights success stories of our day” in The Washington Post and “the best workplace monitoring program in the US” on the front page of The New York Times. You can learn more about the FFP at www.fairfoodprogram.org.

Despite these tremendous and widely celebrated gains, **for more than five years, your company has steadfastly turned its back on farmworkers and their allies — your customers — and denied its responsibility to the people who make Publix’s profits possible,** shielding itself with one simple phrase: “Put it in the price.” According to Publix’s public relations department, your company is not opposed to paying a fairer price for its Florida tomatoes; it just doesn’t like the way the FFP implements the premium that goes to increase farmworkers’ wages. Publix says that if the “penny-per-pound” premium were put in the price of the tomatoes it buys, it would be happy to pay. But, that is precisely how the FFP works. The Fair Food Premium is put into the price charged to Walmart, for example, by its suppliers, who then back the premium out and pass it on to their workers as a line item bonus on their weekly paychecks, a process tracked and audited by the Fair Food Standards Council, the independent organization that oversees the auditing and monitoring of the FFP.



Thirteen other major retailers and the vast majority of the \$650 million Florida tomato industry have already committed to the FFP. These grocery stores and restaurants will now be able to display the Fair Food label (left), indicating to their customers that they have made a commitment to respect the dignity of farmworkers in their supply chain. **When will I be able to find the Fair Food label at Publix?**

Publix founder George Jenkins famously said: “Don’t let making a profit get in the way of doing the right thing.” More recently, Publix CEO Ed Crenshaw declared, “Social responsibility is the life blood of our company.”

Countless farmworkers and consumers have already called on Publix to live up to these values, and thousands more will join them with the nation-wide release of “Food Chains” as they learn that your company has thus far turned its back on true social responsibility.

I look forward to the day when Publix joins farmworkers and consumers in the movement for fundamental, verifiable human rights for the people who do the backbreaking and underpaid work to put food on all our tables, and profits in Publix’s coffers.

For more information, please contact the CIW at 239-657-8311 or workers@ciw-online.org.

Sincerely,