Dear Wendy’s Manager,

As a Wendy’s customer and supporter of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers’ (CIW) groundbreaking Fair Food Program, I am writing to inform you that I am joining the CIW and consumers of conscience in boycotting Wendy’s until the world’s third-largest hamburger chain joins the award-winning Fair Food Program.

Wendy’s has the opportunity to join the CIW’s Fair Food Program (FFP), a historic partnership among farmworkers, Florida tomato growers, and 14 multibillion-dollar food retailers, among them McDonald’s, Subway, and Burger King. Participating retailers commit to 1) buy their Florida 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 directly to workers by the growers. The FFP guarantees rights never before truly seen for Florida farmworkers, such as rights to shade and rest breaks from their grueling work and zero tolerance for sexual harassment and modern-day slavery. Since 2011, participating buyers have paid more than $28 million through the FFP, constituting the first real pay increase for workers in over 30 years.

Rather than participate in what has been called the "best workplace monitoring program in the U.S.,” Wendy’s ran away from their responsibility by switching their tomato purchasing from Florida to Mexico, abandoning the Florida tomato growers who are doing the right thing. When the CIW and consumer allies began to demand that Wendy’s stop doing business with the abuse-ridden Mexican agricultural industry, Wendy’s again shifted its purchases, this time purchasing from greenhouses in the U.S. and Canada. However, consumers know that greenhouses do not equal better working conditions for farmworkers and that the best way to end abuse in Wendy’s supply chain is to join the Fair Food Program.

Through a corporate code of conduct for its suppliers, which took effect in January 2016, Wendy’s is championing the failed practice of Corporate-led Social Responsibility (CSR). In response to increasing pressure from consumers to join the Fair Food Program, Wendy’s current code is a perfect example of the failed, widely-discredited, corporate-controlled approach to social responsibility. From its vague “expectations” for ethical behavior from its suppliers to its toothless approach to consequences for suppliers who fail to meet those expectations, Wendy’s corporate response simply does not measure up to the Fair Food Program.

By refusing to participate in the Fair Food Program, Wendy’s has opted to profit from farmworker abuse and poverty by deriving a very real cost advantage over its competitors who have done the right thing and joined the FFP. Of the big five fast-food companies, Wendy’s is the only one not participating in the Fair Food Program. McDonald’s, Yum! Brands, Subway, and Burger King all pay a penny more per pound for their tomatoes to help alleviate farmworker poverty. They also only buy Florida tomatoes from growers who agree to protect their workers' human rights by complying with the Fair Food Code of Conduct.

Countless farmworkers and consumers have called on Wendy’s to join the Fair Food Program, and thousands more will join them in a boycott as they learn that your company has thus far turned its back on true social responsibility.

I look forward to the day when Wendy’s 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 Wendy’s pockets. Until then, you will not receive any of my business. For more information, please contact the CIW at 239-657-8311 or workers@ciw-online.org.

Sincerely,