



STUDENT/FARMWORKER ALLIANCE CHAPTERS HANDBOOK

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the ever-growing movement for Fair Food!

As Student/Farmworker Alliance (SFA) Steering Committee members and staff we are so excited about the opportunity to support you in starting an SFA Chapter on your campus. **We got you!** This guide will serve as a helpful starting point for figuring out what that process will look like. Some of the points included are:

- An overview of the purpose of SFA Chapters in our network and *acuerdos* (or community guidelines) for you and staff in Immokalee;
- Insights into what it will be like to work together as we take leadership from farmworker members of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW);
- Resources such as sample constitutions and bylaws and pointers on how to cultivate and sustain your SFA chapter; and,
- Contact information of people you can be in touch with to support you as you begin organizing.



Whether you have a large community of support to get you started in your SFA journey, or you're still building a base on campus, getting an SFA Chapter started is a great way to deepen your involvement in the struggle for dignity, respect and justice in the fields. At any point throughout the process we encourage you to keep in touch and depend on us as people who will help you make this SFA Chapter happen!

In solidarity,

Joa, Annabelle, Natalia, Jordan, + the SFA team

STEP 1 IDENTIFYING GOALS & KEY QUESTIONS

So, you're thinking about starting an SFA Chapter on your campus?

The first step in figuring out if starting an SFA Chapter on your campus is the right move for your group is getting in touch with the **SFA staff in Immokalee**. Our role is to provide guidance and support for students looking to further their involvement in organizing alongside the CIW, so don't be shy to reach out!

- Joa Jeanmarie, joashilia@ciw-online.org, 239-322-6770
- Annabelle Chapman, annabelle@ciw-online.org
- Student/Farmworker Alliance, organize@sfalliance.org, 239-657-8311

TIPS!

Since the end goal is to determine whether or not setting up an SFA Chapter is a next step in your group's campus organizing, it's important to be thoughtful and optimistic in the initial visioning process. **Dream big - you can do it!** Before hopping on the phone with a staff member, take some time to think carefully about the following questions:

- What has your group's involvement in the Campaign for Fair Food been so far?
- How many students are committed to organizing around the Campaign for Fair Food on your campus?
- What is the organizing landscape of your university?
- Do you anticipate having a supportive community of students, institutions and faculty to help start your SFA Chapter? What challenges do you anticipate?
- Are you familiar with the on-campus process for registering new student organizations?
- What are your goals with starting an SFA Chapter on campus? How do these goals fit into the broader Campaign for Fair Food and other grassroots struggles in your community?
- Is there anything else that would be important to keep in mind when setting up an SFA Chapter on your campus?

STEP 2 STARTING YOUR SFA CHAPTER

What exactly is an SFA Chapter anyway?

SFA Chapters are unique groups within the vibrant and diverse SFA network, which is the student/youth branch of the broader Alliance for Fair Food. Students at different campuses across the country begin SFA Chapters for the primary purpose of working alongside the CIW to strengthen and advance the Campaign for Fair Food and build strong organizers in our communities for long-term systemic change. Whether you've been working to get Wendy's booted off your campus or barely getting your toes into the organizing scene, SFA Chapters exist as a structure to facilitate action in the Fair Food movement, develop leadership and organizing skills, and establish relationships with other community leaders on a wide-range of social justice issues.

Acuerdos (Community Guidelines)

SFA has been practicing solidarity with farmworkers in Immokalee for over 20 years. And if we've learned one thing from CIW's unique organizing style is that **we are all leaders.** As an organization with a flat leadership structure, we believe that each member of our team has an important role to play in advancing our work and we count on each other to keep ourselves accountable. Here, we value collective learning and resource-sharing. This is critical in deconstructing hierarchies of power that are replicated in many student organizations on your campus.

As allies in the movement for farmworker justice, we commit to the following *acuerdos*:

- **Follow the leadership of the farmworker community in Immokalee.** This means ensuring that your chapter is in the loop and communicating with staff in Immokalee about new initiatives to ensure your organizing is inline with farmworkers' vision for the Campaign for Fair Food. When in doubt, reach out!
- **Use SFA's organizing philosophy to guide your work.** In all aspects of our work, we are committed to building a youth base whose understanding of systemic change and injustice in the fields leads them to act in solidarity with farmworkers to work toward a shared vision of collective liberation. You can learn more about those principles here: sfalliance.org/how-we-roll

Expectations

As **SFA chapter leaders**, we strive to upkeep an active and healthy SFA Chapter in the following ways:

- Respond to SFA and CIW's national coordinated calls to actions by planning demonstrations and events on your campus or in your community
- Mobilize to your best capacity for the annual SFA Encuentro (usually in the fall) and CIW's major action (usually in the spring)
- Hold regular general meetings with active membership
- Organize at least one educational event and one action each semester
- Maintain an active voice online for your SFA Chapter through social media
- Whenever possible host CIW and SFA on campus for a speaking engagement
- Ensure you are seeking and cultivating new leaders in your chapter
- Maintain communication with SFA staff and/or an SC member at least once per month

As **SFA staff and SC members**, we commit to supporting your chapter in the following ways:

- Make ourselves available to any support needed by the SFA chapter and be responsive to communications by chapter leaders
- Provide materials and resources as needed for students to carry out organizing
- Share new messaging, campaign development and other important updates from Immokalee with SFA chapter leaders at least once per month
- Plan in-person visits to SFA chapters at least once a year
- Provide leadership development opportunities to chapter leaders, including training, webinars and regional meetings
- Respect the local leadership and internal decision-making process of each campus chapter

Process with Administration

Let's face it. Going through the university bureaucracy of forming a chapter can suck. But don't sweat it, we can help you get it done!

The first thing you should do is research what is the process for starting a new registered student organization on your campus. This varies from school to school, so you will have to learn what specific requirements and deadlines apply for you. Here are some things to look out for:

- **Is there a required number of student leaders to form the organization?** Some schools require at least three "officers" or "chairs" in order to start an org. Typically, these roles are president, secretary and treasurer. While SFA does not adhere to this particular hierarchy in leadership, you can always assign point people to these roles in the system and then determine how the organization carries out its tasks independently. In other words, do what you have to do to set up your SFA Chapter on paper with your university, and the rest is up to you. If you have more questions about navigating leadership roles within your group, please reach out.
- **Is there a required faculty advisor?** Even if your school doesn't require it, and chances are it does, it is important to seek out supportive professors and faculty on your campus. Advisors serve as resources for your group, and can be instrumental in advocating for your organization when needed. Think of your advisor as a mentor for your SFA chapter's needs. Ideally, your advisor is familiar and supportive of CIW's campaign and understands the goals you have for your SFA Chapter. If you aren't sure who to ask to join you in this role, reach out to staff in Immokalee and ask about existing professor contacts that may be a good fit.
- **Do you need to submit a constitution or bylaws?** SFA staff can share samples of these documents with you, and also can support in drafting these from scratch as well. It's all possible!
- **Do you need to submit a budget in order to be approved for student government funding?** Likely, the answer to this is yes. And you should definitely be taking advantage of the funding that is available to your student organization so we can funnel wealthy university money to our grassroots organizing! SFA staff can help you set up a budget or review one that you put together.
- **What are the important deadlines to meet?** Sometimes you have to submit your application to create a new student group by a certain date, otherwise, you have to wait until the next cycle. So mark your calendars with these!
- **Is there a required orientation session or meeting to explain your organization's purpose?** Sometimes there is an orientation planned by the student affairs office that is required before and/or after you start an organization. Factor this into your plans if your school requires it and make sure you know the dates these sessions will be held.

If you're having trouble with this, or attend a very conservative school where there is push-back from the administration to set up an SFA Chapter, be sure to get in touch with us so we can talk through the issues and make a plan together for moving forward.

¡Si se puede! ¡Si se puede!

STEP 3 BUILDING YOUR SFA CHAPTER

Congrats, you've set up an official SFA Chapter on your campus! Now what?

You did it! After all the hard work, your SFA Chapter is set to turn up for farmworker justice and rep the Fair Food Nation on campus! Whether your chapter's focus is strengthening your #BootTheBraids campaign to kick Wendy's out or cultivating a strong base of student organizers ready to throw down for action planning, building out your SFA Chapter takes time, energy and flexibility.



It's important to keep a clear and positive mind as your SFA Chapter begins taking off and making big moves. Remember that the journey to victory doesn't happen overnight and you should be prepared to hit some road bumps along the way. Make space to affirm the hard work of your members, learn from mistakes as you go and celebrate the successes!

Staying grounded in the values of SFA can help keep your SFA Chapter focused and shape semester plans. **You got this!**

Keep SFA's Three Pillars in Check

Education

SFA strives to facilitate educational activities for students and farmworkers to come together in an exchange of knowledge and experience, cultivating a critical analysis that reveals the intersections between people on opposite ends of the corporate food industry. There are so many possible event ideas to inform students on campus about SFA and get them involved in the Fair Food movement, including:

- Hosting a teach-in about the Campaign with CIW leaders;
- Co-sponsoring an event with other like-minded organizations;
- Posting on social media about SFA's work;
- Hosting a screening of the award-winning documentary Food Chains;
- Sending educational emails to your members;
- Tabling to raise awareness about SFA on campus; and so much more!

Action

CIW counts on SFA to power its massive Campaign for Fair Food. In turn, we take responsibility for organizing our communities around understanding –and acting on–our role in this movement. There is an entire creative actions guide for ideas on how to design a protest in order to pressure corporations to join the Fair Food Program! Here are just a few ideas to get the wheels turning:

- Organize a picket outside of your local Wendy's and a delegation of student leaders to deliver a letter to Wendy's manager;

- Drop a banner drop from a strategic location on your campus highlighting your message and campaign demands;
- Plan a big march from one location to another on your campus; and,
- Mobilize a bus of students from your campus to the CIW's spring action.

Leadership

SFA focuses heavily on developing the skills and confidence of students and youth around the country so they can have the tools to organize for social justice around a broad array of issues on campus and in their communities. Remember, organizing is all about building relationships and caring for one another while doing this important work. Some leadership opportunities to keep in mind for your members and leaders include:

- Encourage your chapter members to attend the annual SFA Encuentro convening;
- Make a plan with your core organizing team about how to best recruit new members
- Regularly host trainings on organizing skills;
- Plan retreats and team-building activities to create strong friendships among your members; and
- Make sure your SFA chapter is having regular planning meetings and regular general body meetings.



Sample Fall Semester Calendar

Every season is unique when organizing to advance the Campaign for Fair Food. The following sample calendars were designed to inspire your group to draft a plan for the year that keeps momentum going in the campaign, keeps your membership active and involved and ensures your organization succeeds beyond your years within its leadership. Make sure to share your plans with staff to ensure it fits within the broader goals of the Campaign for Fair Food what others in the national network of allies are up to.

Summer

- Meet at least once or twice as an SFA Chapter to sketch a plan
- Check in with your SFA staff contact about plans for the upcoming semester and the broader national strategy of the Campaign for Fair Food
- Announce your back-to-school meetings and events on social media

August

- Send an email to your members about the first upcoming meeting
- Host your first regular planning meeting of the semester (this includes active leadership or could be open to all)
- Begin reaching out to student organizations to establish partnerships
- Host your first general body meeting and announce your schedule of upcoming meetings and events
- Make a plan for some of your members to attend the SFA Encuentro and create a fundraising plan to make it happen
- Check in with your SFA staff contact

September

- Host a fundraising and educational event before the Encuentro
- Attend the Encuentro
- General body meeting with Encuentro report and planning for upcoming action
- Begin doing outreach and planning logistics for your first action of the semester

- Send an email to your members about upcoming actions and events
- Create an ongoing social media campaign to educate students about SFA
- Organize a social event for your membership to get to know each other
- Check in with your SFA staff contact

October

- Regular planning and general body meetings
- Tabling the week ahead of your action
- Action! Organize a march and picket at local Wendy's
- Invite the CIW to speak on campus
- Check in with your SFA staff contact

November

- Action! Organize a follow up action to keep up the pressure
- Plan a fundraising event
- Co-sponsor an event with another (or multiple) student organizations
- Plan a winter trip to visit CIW in Immokalee
- Planning for upcoming semester
- If already announced, begin making plans for CIW's major spring action

December

- Delegation to Immokalee to learn more about SFA and CIW
- Send an email to your membership thanking them for being involved and plans for upcoming semester

Sample Spring Semester Calendar

January

- Check in with your SFA staff contact about plans for the upcoming major action
- Announce your spring meetings and events on social media
- Begin recruiting members to attend the CIW's major action

February

- Send an email to your members about the first upcoming meeting and action plans
- Host regular planning meetings and general body meetings
- Action! Design a creative that is Valentine's Day-themed to recruit more members for SFA and your organizing for the upcoming major action
- Secure commitments from partner student organizations to attend the major action
- Organize class / org presentations to promote your chapter's plans to support the CIW's major action
- Host an art-making event to prepare for the major action
- Check in with your SFA staff contact

March

- Send an email to your membership inviting them to the CIW's major action
- Tabling the week ahead of the CIW's major action
- Action! Attend the CIW's major action
- Host a weekend retreat to reflect on the major action, recharge the group's energy and next steps in the campaign for your campus
- Regular planning and general body meetings
- Check in with your SFA staff contact

April

- Regular planning and general body meetings
- Action: Plan a demonstration in your community to keep up the pressure in the campaign; collaborate with organizations off-campus
- Design a social media campaign to raise awareness about SFA
- Check in with your SFA staff contact



May

- Plan a fundraising event
- Regular planning and general body meetings
- Make a plan for engaging members during the summer
- Send an email to your members to thank them for being involved and announce plans for staying involved in the summer
- Check in with your SFA staff contact

STEP 4 SUSTAINING YOUR SFA CHAPTER

SFA is poppin' on my campus! But how can I make it last?



You really did that! By this point, SFA is a well-known and established group on your campus that is stirring things up for the better. But how to make sure it thrives for years to come, even after you've graduated? Build up your base of leaders!

It's important to think of your SFA Chapter as a vehicle for long-term, sustained organizing in solidarity with

farmworkers. It is too common for student organizations to fizzle away once active leaders have moved on or graduated. That's not cute or strategic in winning rights for farmworkers, so let's try to not have that happen. Here are some tips for ensuring your SFA Chapter lives on through the years:

TIPS!

- Make sure there are always 2-3 students in your SFA Chapter that are in regular communication with staff in Immokalee. Try to switch up who these students are each semester to encourage new leadership. We recommend there being at least one freshman or sophomore that is chosen to be a part of this group
- Set up visits to Immokalee and invite CIW and SFA to campus. Face-to-face time with leaders in Immokalee deepen relationships and foster a commitment to continue fighting for Fair Food among your membership and active leaders.
- Identify key leaders in your group and prioritize building their skills by hosting trainings and involving them in key planning processes
- Make sure you are fundraising and keeping up with your SFA Chapter's budget. Check out SFA's fundraising guide for more ideas. In general, universities and colleges allocate money for student activities so make sure to ask for as much as possible. Some key fundraising moments should be before the SFA Encuentro in September and CIW's major action in the spring
- Build relationships with local organizations outside of campus, since they are likely to be rooted in the community for a longer time frame

If you have questions, contact us at organize@sfalliance.org or call us at 239-657-8311!

Resources and Support

The SFA website is a trove of information and resources that you can use to support your organizing on the ground. SFA Staff can support you in creating specific resources for your campus campaigns, and can offer other support, i.e. graphic design, budget creation, sharing regional contacts, etc. Remember we are all part of a massive, decentralized network of people and institutions that support the work of the CIW. You are not alone in the fight for farmworker justice and should rely on our Fair Food community for support. There are community-based Fair Food Groups across the country, as well as other SFA Chapters that you can ask to be connected with.

The SFA's official leadership body, the Steering Committee, is also a resource that you can draw on. Check out the list of current SC members and don't hesitate to reach out.

You can also find lots of Fair Food resources in this Google folder: bit.ly/fairfoodresources

We're proud to be in this movement with you!

