

Dear Publix Manager,

As a Publix customer, I am contacting you to urge Publix to work with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) – an internationally-recognized farmworker organization – to address the sub-poverty wages and abuses faced by the workers who harvest Publix's tomatoes.

The human rights crisis in Florida's fields is urgent. Tomato harvesters are still paid by the piece. The average piece rate today is 50 cents for every 32 lbs. of tomatoes they pick, a rate that has remained virtually unchanged since 1980. As a result of that stagnation, a worker today must pick more than 2.25 TONS of tomatoes to earn minimum wage in a typical 10-hour workday – nearly twice the amount a worker had to pick to earn minimum wage thirty years ago, when the rate was 40 cents per bucket.



Farmworkers' grinding poverty and lack of a voice in the industry leaves them vulnerable to the most exploitative employers, often resulting in appalling abuses, including modern-day slavery. Indeed, there have been **nine farm labor operations – involving well over one thousand workers in total – to be prosecuted for servitude in Florida in the past dozen years.**

Fortunately, Publix has the opportunity to join other retailers in working with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers and be part of improving the wages and working conditions faced by farmworkers. Several Florida tomato growers are implementing the CIW's Fair Food agreements with retail food industry leaders Yum Brands, McDonald's, Burger King, Subway, Whole Foods Market, Bon Appetit Management Company, Compass Group, Aramark and Sodexo. The retailers have agreed to work with the CIW to do the following:

- Pay an additional penny per pound for tomatoes purchased to directly increase the wages of tomato pickers;
- Implement an enforceable code of conduct to ensure safe and fair working conditions for farmworkers, including zero tolerance for modern-day slavery;
- Ensure a voice for farmworkers in monitoring improvements and reporting abuses.

As a Publix customer, I look forward to Publix living up to its reputation as a good neighbor by partnering with the CIW to end the human rights crisis in our backyard.

For more information, please contact the Coalition of Immokalee Workers at 239-657-8311 or [workers@ciw-online.org](mailto:workers@ciw-online.org).

Thank you,