

February, 2010

Mr. Joseph Neubauer, Chairman and CEO  
Aramark  
1101 Market St.  
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Dear Mr. Neubauer,

As allies of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW), an internationally-recognized, award-winning farmworker organization based in Immokalee, Florida, we write today to yet again urge Aramark to help end forced labor, poverty wages and other human rights abuses faced by farmworkers harvesting tomatoes for the U.S. food industry.

As you surely know, there is a well-documented human rights crisis in Florida's fields, and conditions facing farmworkers who harvest your company's tomatoes are as urgent as they are appalling. In December 2008, two farm labor employers in Immokalee were sentenced to twelve years apiece in federal prison for enslaving nearly a dozen tomato harvesters. Workers were held against their will, beaten, chained, locked in box trucks at night, and forced to work harvesting tomatoes. U.S. Attorney Doug Molloy called it one of Florida's "biggest, ugliest slavery cases ever." This is the seventh such farm labor operation – involving well over one thousand workers in total – to be prosecuted for servitude in Florida in the past decade. (The CIW assisted the FBI and U.S. Department of Justice in successfully investigating and prosecuting six of those cases.)

Fortunately, Aramark has a new opportunity to support social responsibility in the Florida tomato industry. **On September 25, the CIW, Compass Group North America, and East Coast Growers and Packers announced sweeping changes to improve tomato harvesters' wages and working conditions.** Compass joins Bon Appetit Management Company, Yum Brands, McDonald's, Burger King, Subway, and Whole Foods Market in working directly with the CIW to address the human rights crisis in Florida's fields.

Today three Florida tomato growers – including East Coast, the state's third largest producer – are implementing the CIW's Fair Food agreements. The news of farmworkers, growers, and retail food corporations cooperating to produce a fairer tomato prompted U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders, a longtime observer of the campaign, to note, "Today marks the **beginning of the end of the harvest of shame that has existed for far too long in Florida's tomato fields.**" What's more, recently the CIW and Verite – a non-governmental organization that promotes and monitors fair labor practices across the globe – **announced a program for the implementation and monitoring of these Fair Food accords,** including the ongoing, independent verification that farmworkers are receiving the "penny-per-pound" raise.

Yet much remains to be done. In recent weeks we have become increasingly concerned over Aramark's misrepresentations, claiming to be "working with the CIW," when in fact we know no such commitment or working partnership yet exists. We are further dismayed by Aramark's admission that it is working closely with the Florida Tomato Growers Exchange. At the time of the latest known slavery operation, **the president and vice president of the FTGE were executive representatives of 6Ls and Pacific, the very same two growers in whose fields workers in that brutal case were forced to work.** If FTGE leadership cannot police their own fields, how in the world are they to be trusted as partners in any self-respecting corporation's definition of social responsibility?

Rest assured, we will only be satisfied when Aramark shows a real commitment – backed by a binding agreement – to work with the CIW to implement a code of conduct that enshrines worker participation. Until then, we will continue to educate our peers and take action on our campuses, where Bon Appetit and Chartwell's have distinguished themselves as responsible alternatives to Aramark.

It is imperative that Aramark seize the opportunity to be part of the solution to Florida's longstanding shame of farmworker exploitation. At the table is a proven model, the expertise of the CIW, and a tremendous opportunity to join other major food service providers and food retailers in advancing the principles of Fair Food. We urge you to meet as soon as possible with the CIW to discuss how Aramark can become a leader in socially responsible purchasing practices that ensure the human rights of farmworkers in your tomato supply chain.

Sincerely,