



Coalition of Immokalee Workers

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The New York Times

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"This is the best workplace-monitoring program I've seen in the U.S.," said Janice R. Fine, a labor relations professor at Rutgers. "It can certainly be a model for agriculture across the U.S. If anybody is going to lead the way and teach people how it's done, it's them."

"When I first visited Immokalee, I heard appalling stories of abuse and modern slavery," said Susan L. Marquis, dean of the Pardee RAND Graduate School, a public policy institution in Santa Monica, Calif. "But now the tomato fields in Immokalee are probably the best working environment in American agriculture. In the past three years, they've gone from being the worst to the best."

"The CIW model is one of the great human rights success stories of our day."

The Washington Post

September 2, 2012

The **Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW)** is a worker-based human rights organization internationally recognized for its achievements in the fields of social responsibility, human trafficking, and gender-based violence at work. Built on a foundation of farmworker community organizing starting in 1993, and reinforced with the creation of a national consumer network since 2000, CIW's work has steadily grown over more than twenty years to encompass three broad and overlapping spheres:

Fair Food Program

In 2011, CIW launched the Fair Food Program (FFP), a groundbreaking model for Worker-driven Social Responsibility (WSR) based on a unique partnership among farmworkers, Florida tomato growers, and participating retail buyers, including Subway, Whole Foods, and Walmart. Under the FFP:

- CIW conducts worker-to-worker education sessions, held on-the-farm and on-the-clock, on the new labor standards set forth in the program's Fair Food Code of Conduct;
- The Fair Food Standards Council, a third-party monitor created to ensure compliance with the FFP, conducts regular audits and carries out ongoing complaint investigation and resolution; and
- Participating buyers pay a small Fair Food premium which tomato growers pass on to workers as a line-item bonus on their regular paychecks (Between January 2011 and June 2015, more than \$16 million in Fair Food premiums were paid into the Program).

The FFP standards are enforced through market consequences guaranteed by CIW's legally binding Fair Food Agreements, in which participating buyers commit to buy Florida tomatoes only from growers in good standing with the FFP, and to cease purchases from growers who have failed to comply with the code of conduct. The United Nations Working Group on Business and Human Rights has described the FFP model as "smart mix of tools" that "could serve as a model elsewhere in the world."

The Fair Food Program truly represents a win-win-win for workers, growers, and retailers:



Workers clock into work on participating farm in Fair Food Program



Farmworkers receive worker-to-worker education under the Fair Food Program

- Workers receive protection of their human rights in the workplace and increased wages;
- Growers gain an effective risk management system, a more stable workforce and a means to distinguish their product in an increasingly competitive marketplace; and
- Retailers receive a system that protects their brands from the reputational risks of supply chain labor abuses by *eliminating* those abuses, not papering them over, a far more effective means to protect their interests than the traditional model of corporate social responsibility.

Recognition for the Fair Food Program is growing quickly. In 2015, Secretary of State John Kerry presented the CIW with the Presidential Medal for Extraordinary Efforts in Combatting Modern Day Slavery. CIW also received the 2014 Clinton Global Citizen Award for the groundbreaking impact of the Fair Food Program, and the Roosevelt Institute Freedom From Want Medal in 2013.

Anti-Slavery Campaign

CIW's Anti-Slavery Campaign has uncovered, investigated, and assisted in the prosecution of numerous multi-state farm slavery operations across the Southeastern U.S., helping liberate over 1,200 workers held against their will since the early 1990's. CIW also pioneered the worker-centered approach to slavery prosecution, played a key role in the passage of the 2000 Trafficking Victims Protection Act, and co-founded the national Freedom Network USA and the Freedom Network Training Institute, which is regularly attended by local, state and federal law enforcement officials. The CIW is a partner in The Alliance to End Slavery and Trafficking (ATEST), advocating for solutions to prevent and end all forms of human trafficking and modern slavery around the world. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton recognized the CIW in 2010 with the Trafficking in Persons Hero Award, for the CIW's "determination to eliminate forced labor in supply chains."

With the implementation of the Fair Food Program, CIW has achieved the ultimate goal of all anti-slavery efforts, that of prevention. To avoid the market consequences built into the FFP, including strict zero tolerance for forced labor, participating growers actively police their own operations, and the worker-to-worker education program at the heart of the FFP informs and empowers tens of thousands of workers to serve as real-time monitors to identify and expose perpetrators if any slavery operations were to arise.

Campaign for Fair Food

CIW's national Campaign for Fair Food educates consumers on the issue of farm labor exploitation – its causes and solutions – and forges alliances between farmworkers and consumers that enlist the market power of major corporate buyers to help end that exploitation. Since 2001, the campaign has combined creative, on-the-ground actions with cutting edge online organizing to win Fair Food Agreements with fourteen multi-billion dollar food retailers, establishing more humane farm labor standards and fairer wages for farmworkers.

Today CIW's Fair Food Program is about to expand to fields outside of Florida and to crops beyond tomatoes. CIW's Worker-driven Social Responsibility model is being emulated and adapted to fight worker exploitation in settings as diverse as dairy farms in Vermont, tomato fields in Morocco, and apparel sweatshops in Bangladesh. The already stunning success of CIW's model is now poised to serve as the foundation for even greater progress for low-wage workers, suppliers and corporate buyers in the years ahead.