

Coalition of Immokalee Workers
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Dear members of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers,

More than a dozen years ago, Oxfam America first awarded the Coalition of Immokalee Workers a modest grant which helped seed your groundbreaking work in defense of the rights of farmworkers in Florida. Oxfam America has been a proud partner of the Coalition ever since. We've watched your progress from the early days of educating farmworkers about their rights to today's Fair Food Campaign which has productively engaged food companies to fairly treat farmworkers in their supply chain. The initial results of this new Campaign are impressive as workers assert their rights, gain new forms of redressing their grievances and receive fair compensation.

Over the years, Oxfam staff has visited with CIW in Immokalee, Florida many times and we are very familiar with your work and your engagement with the farmworker community. We are convinced of the commitment and integrity of Coalition staff and members. We are particularly impressed by your work in preparing farmworkers to be active leaders in their communities. We have seen dozens of young farmworkers, women and men, overcome the challenges of language ability, family separation, of extremely demanding work coupled with low pay to become forceful advocates and leaders within the Coalition.

We commend you for your progress, your integrity and your commitment to the cause of people who so badly need your support. Your work is much valued.

Therefore it is with great disappointment we have learned of the recent legal actions initiated by Florida Legal Services against the very food companies that have committed to higher standards in the treatment of farmworkers and who have partnered with the Coalition. It is hard for us to understand these actions as anything other than misguided, erroneous and ultimately damaging to the cause of farmworker justice. Farmworkers would be better served if Florida Legal Services aimed their efforts and resources at those actors creating unjust and illegal conditions instead of those who are working to redress these injustices.

As we began this relationship nearly ten years ago, neither you nor we expected that the path of justice for farmworkers would be an easy one. One can expect differences of opinion and different approaches which can often lead to creative solutions. It is regrettable that differences in this case have led to such an extreme action.

You can count on our support.

My best,



Minor Sinclair
Director, US Regional Office