

Dear Chipotle Manager,

Chipotle Mexican Grill has been presented with the opportunity to foster real social responsibility in its tomato supply chain by working with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW), an organization of farmworkers that has been internationally recognized for its work defending basic human rights. Instead, Chipotle claims to have suspended purchases of Florida tomatoes while it unilaterally “investigates” already well-documented human rights abuses in Florida’s fields.



The supposed need for an “investigation” of the human rights crisis in Florida’s fields today is mystifying. According to readily available Department of Labor statistics, tomato pickers in Florida face deplorable conditions, including:

- **Sub-poverty wages** - Tomato pickers make, on average, \$10,000/year;
- **No raise in nearly 30 years** - Pickers are paid virtually the same per bucket piece rate (roughly 45 cents per 32 lb. bucket) today as they were in 1980. At today’s rate, workers have to pick nearly 2.5 TONS of tomatoes just to earn minimum wage for a typical 10-hr day;
- **Denial of fundamental labor rights** - Farmworkers in Florida have no right to overtime pay, even when working 60-70 hour weeks, and no right to organize or bargain collectively.

Even worse, numerous **modern-day slavery rings**, in which workers are held against their will and forced to work through violence or threats of violence, continue to operate in the fields. The Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) has assisted the Department of Justice in uncovering, investigating, and successfully prosecuting 5 such cases – involving more than 1,000 workers -- since 1997.

**The three largest fast-food companies in the world have recognized these dehumanizing conditions and moved to address them, giving workers new hope for meaningful reform in the nation's agricultural industry.** In 2005, after a 4-year national consumer boycott, Yum Brands (parent company of Taco Bell, KFC, Pizza Hut and others) reached an historic agreement with the CIW to directly improve wages and working conditions in its tomato suppliers’ operations by paying a penny more per pound for its tomatoes and working with the CIW to implement an enforceable code of conduct to protect farmworkers’ rights. McDonald’s and Burger King followed suit in 2007 and 2008, respectively, reaching agreements with the CIW that met and expanded upon the Yum! Brands accord. All three fast-food leaders have recognized the fact that their high volume purchases of tomatoes give them the leverage they need to demand more humane working conditions in their suppliers’ fields.

Chipotle however, has remained indifferent to the deplorable conditions faced by workers in its tomato supply chain. Nearly two years have passed since Chipotle launched its “investigation” and many questions now beg to be answered. Where are the results of Chipotle’s inquiry into Florida’s farm labor conditions? Where has Chipotle been purchasing tomatoes in the meantime, and how do workers fare in those fields? Is Chipotle actually supplying its East Coast restaurants with tomatoes from Mexico (the only other viable option to Florida tomatoes during nearly half the year), despite the immense increase in the cost and carbon footprint of Chipotle’s food that would result from such a decision? Or is Chipotle still in fact purchasing Florida tomatoes, despite its claims to have suspended purchases from Florida? Are transparency and human rights not a part of Chipotle’s definition of “Integrity”?

Please contact Chipotle Corporate Headquarters in Denver and let them know that you and your customers want them to join with Yum, McDonald’s and Burger King as leaders in true corporate social responsibility by:

- **Paying a penny more per pound for the tomatoes that Chipotle purchases** and ensuring that this increase is passed along to tomato pickers in the form of increased wages; and
- **Working with the CIW to implement an enforceable code of conduct** to ensure fair and safe working conditions for farmworkers in Chipotle’s tomato supply chain.

Thank you.