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For Immediate Release

Florida Farmworkers and Allies from Around the Country Announce National Day of Action, Demanding that Chipotle's 'Food With Integrity' Include Farmworkers, Calling on the Restaurant Chain to Commit to the Fair Food Program

Immokalee, FL (July 25th, 2012): This Wednesday, July 25th, conscientious consumers and fair food advocates in 25 cities around the nation will call on Chipotle Mexican Grill in a [National Day of Action](#), demanding that the restaurant chain live up to its marketing image as a socially responsible corporation and join the [Fair Food Program](#), an innovative program pioneered by the [Coalition of Immokalee Workers](#), an organization of Florida farmworkers.

The [Fair Food Program](#) is a unique partnership among farmworkers, tomato growers, and ten leading food retailers – including major fast food corporations Subway, McDonald's and Burger King – that advances both the human rights of farmworkers and the long-term interests of the Florida tomato industry. It is the first large scale program for real, lasting social accountability in the domestic produce industry. The program improves the wages and working conditions of Florida farmworkers by committing major buyers of tomatoes to pay a premium of a “penny per pound” of tomatoes to be passed through to farmworkers by the growers for whom they work, and to target their purchases to growers willing to implement the Fair Food Code of Conduct developed together by farmworkers, growers and buyers.

Chipotle has built its more than 1250 stores and nearly \$3 billion revenue on an image of serving “Food with Integrity,” ensuring consumers that the ingredients served at their restaurants “are grown, made and shipped without exploiting people.” Yet, for six years, the fast food giant has refused to participate in the Fair Food Program, and instead claims to be pursuing its own plan – without any participation by farmworkers or any transparency in the process.

“As farmworkers – the human beings actually confronting the poverty wages and labor abuses every day in the fields – we have no role in Chipotle's plan,” explained Gerardo Reyes of the CIW. “Under their plan, Chipotle says it will review its own code of conduct and decide if any changes are needed, Chipotle will check its own payments for accuracy under its penny per pound plan, and Chipotle will verify its own compliance with the changes it is proposing. That's just not credible. Transparency, verification, and participation are essential elements of the agreements we have reached with other fast-food leaders, and they are essential elements in any defensible definition of social responsibility.”

Calling on Chipotle to include farmworkers in its definition of “Food With Integrity,” consumers and activists from New York to Oakland and [more than twenty five other cities](#) will participate in different actions at Chipotle locations around the country for the National Day of Action, including picketing outside of local Chipotle stores, distributing flyers, and holding delegations to deliver letters to managers.

Background: Florida farmworkers have long faced [brutal conditions](#) in the fields, including sub-poverty wages, widespread labor rights violations, and even modern-day slavery. Today, however, change is underway, thanks to the efforts of farmworkers, fair food activists, Florida tomato growers, and ten food industry leaders who have joined in support of the CIW's Fair Food principles, including a penny-per-pound piece rate wage increase, a strict code of conduct, a cooperative complaint resolution system, a participatory health and safety program, and a worker-to-worker education process. In November 2010, the CIW and the Florida Tomato Growers Exchange (FTGE) [signed an agreement](#) to extend these principles to over 90 per cent of Florida's tomato fields. And though implementation of that agreement is still a work in progress, many real, concrete changes have already taken root on some of the state's largest farms.

Chipotle however, is refusing to do its part, and if they have their way, the unprecedented farm labor transformation promised by the CIW's landmark agreement with the FTGE would be significantly diminished. That's because the solution to farm labor exploitation and abuse contained in the Fair Food principles is contingent upon the participation of all the major purchasers of Florida tomatoes. Each buyer must contribute its fair share – its penny-per-pound – for the pay raise to reach its full potential. Each buyer must commit to direct its purchases to those growers complying with the code of conduct – and away from those who don't – in order to sustainably improve working conditions in the fields. “Everybody in the system has to be invested for it to work,” [said Reggie Brown of the FTGE](#).

About the Coalition of Immokalee Workers:

The [CIW](http://www.ciw-online.org) (www.ciw-online.org) is a community-based farmworker organization headquartered in Immokalee, Florida, with over 4,000 members. The CIW seeks modern working conditions for farmworkers and promotes their fair treatment in accordance with national and international human rights standards. The CIW's Campaign for Fair Food has won unprecedented support for fundamental farm labor reforms from retail food industry leaders. The Campaign for Fair Food taps the unique powers of all the elements of our country's food industry:

- **of consumers**, to demand the highest ethical standards for food production;
- **of food retailers**, to use their tremendous buying power both to demand higher labor standards of their suppliers and help raise farmworkers out of poverty through a price that supports sustainable production;
- **of growers**, to continuously improve their operations and meet consumer demand, keeping pace with an evolving marketplace, and,
- **of farmworkers**, to help expose and fix the worst abuses and apply their unique knowledge toward modernizing, and humanizing, our farm labor system.

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