

Mr. Steve Ells, Founder and CEO  
Chipotle Mexican Grill  
1543 Wazee Street, Suite 200  
Denver, CO 80202-1443

Dear Mr. Ells:

The Alliance for Fair Food (AFF) is a diverse network of faith, human rights, labor, student and community leaders and institutions that works to ensure the fundamental human rights of farmworkers. In particular, the AFF works with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) to promote socially responsible purchasing in the corporate food industry.

As founding members and endorsers of the AFF, it has come to our attention that in response to the CIW's requests to meet and to work together to address human rights abuses of farmworkers in your company's tomato supply chain, Chipotle has, instead, decided to suspend purchases of Florida tomatoes and unilaterally investigate the CIW's "claims."

We are deeply dismayed by Chipotle's decision to reject this opportunity to help improve the lives of farmworkers toiling in degrading and inhumane conditions in your supply chain today.

As you are no doubt aware, farmworker exploitation is endemic in the tomato industry, be it in Florida or anywhere else tomatoes are produced on the scale necessary to supply corporations like Chipotle. This is especially true during the winter months, when Florida is, due to climate conditions, the only state in the U.S. producing tomatoes. During that period, Chipotle's only real alternative is to purchase tomatoes in Mexico, where labor conditions are certainly no better. This means that, while your company may suspend purchases from Florida in an attempt to avoid farmworker exploitation and modern day slavery in that state, it is impossible to suspend purchasing tomatoes picked by workers denied many of their fundamental human rights- including the right to overtime pay, the right to organize, and the right to work free from forced labor. Indeed, no fair alternatives from which Chipotle can purchase currently exist.

What sets Florida apart, however, is the opportunity to address farmworker exploitation with a proven approach, in partnership with a leading farmworker organization. As founding members and endorsers of the Alliance for Fair Food, we expected a company like Chipotle to embrace that opportunity, not run from it.

Suspending tomato purchasing from Florida does not mitigate the problem of sweatshop conditions in Chipotle's tomato supply chain and will not enable Chipotle to keep the public's faith in your claim of selling "Food with Integrity." Nor will it satisfy the growing and committed constituency taking action in support of human rights of farmworkers. On the contrary, it is an abdication of the very notion of corporate responsibility at the heart of your aggressively-marketed mission of "integrity."

The CIW is an internationally recognized, award-winning organization of farmworkers with extensive expertise in investigating and combating the oppressive conditions in the Florida tomato fields. Their



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members work in partnership with the U.S. Department of Justice and the F.B.I. to investigate and prosecute cases of modern-day slavery. The CIW also has experience working in successful partnership with major corporate produce purchasers to materially improve farmworkers' wages and working conditions.

To effectively investigate and address human rights abuses in your tomato supply chain, Chipotle should work with the CIW, whose members are harvesting these tomatoes and have successfully advanced models for eradicating these abuses. By insisting on a unilateral investigation and declining the expertise and experience of the CIW, Chipotle is refusing an opportunity to create true integrity in its supply chain and significantly undermining its credibility as a socially responsible company.

Furthermore, the abuses Chipotle now claims it needs to investigate are already well documented by the U.S. Department of Labor, the U.S. Department of Justice and numerous other organizations, including Oxfam America in their 2004 study "Like Machines in the Fields: Workers Without Rights in American Agriculture." More "study" is, quite simply, an unacceptable response in the face of such blatant abuses.

We have intentionally opted to give your company time and space to examine the issues raised by this campaign, trusting that Chipotle would choose to live up to its commitment to integrity. Instead, with every day that passes, farmworkers in Chipotle's supply chain continue living a nightmare of exploitation.

If Chipotle continues its current path of avoidance, however, the urgent need for reform in the fields requires us to intensify our call and actions for justice. As endorsers of the Alliance for Fair Food, many with national membership bases, we are committed to continuing the Campaign for Fair Food until fair wages and working conditions become a reality for farmworkers. In the same way that we were able to bring about a successful agreement with Taco Bell, we will not rest until there is also justice and true integrity for farmworkers in Chipotle's supply chain.

In closing, let us reiterate: Chipotle's current course will not result in the elimination of exploitative conditions in your company's tomato supply chain. At best, it will only further delay long-needed reforms; at worst, it will result in Chipotle supporting even more exploitative conditions than those found in your Florida suppliers' operations today.

However, it is not too late for Chipotle to turn this situation around. Your company can embrace the opportunity and responsibility to join in genuine partnership with the CIW to make improvements in the lives of farmworkers in its supply chain. We urge you to reconsider and not allow the human beings who labor daily to provide Chipotle's tomatoes to suffer degradation and exploitation one more day.

Sincerely,

Founding Members of the Alliance for Fair Food:

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
RFK Memorial Center for Human Rights  
National Economic and Social Rights Initiative  
Student Farmworker Alliance  
Interfaith Action of Southwest Florida