



TIME LINE—NATIONAL FARM WORKER MINISTRY SUPPORT OF FLOC'S REYNOLDS AMERICAN CAMPAIGN



Highlights 2007 - 2017

2007 The Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) Launches Campaign

- October, NFWM staff helped organized a 400 people march in downtown Winston Salem ,including national faith leaders.
- NFWM began making numerous presentations and hosting delegations to labor camps.

2008

- July, NFWM secured 190 signatures of national and North Carolina religious leaders on a letter to Susan Ivey, Reynolds CEO and the RAI directors, urging them to work with FLOC.
- November, NFWM gathered 3000 of the 6000 postcards presented to RAI and NFWM-NC staff co-coordinated a 20 person event at RAI headquarters to present them.
- NFWM helped organize hand delivery of postcards to each RAI board member around the country.
- NFWM-NC staff initiated a relationship between the Beloved Community Center in Greensboro, NC and FLOC toward building black-brown unity in NC. This activity resulted in a delegation of 6 Triad-area African-American clergy, some of whose ancestors worked in the tobacco fields, led by Rev. Nelson Johnson having a series of meetings with RAI executives in the hopes of bringing RAI to the table to talk with FLOC/farm workers. RAI repeatedly refused that request and the ministers ceased meeting with RAI.

2009

- Shareholder meeting strategy develops; NFWM & board members purchase RAI stock. RAI's May SHM meeting becomes the major annual action of the campaign. NFWM-NC staff do significant organizing for it; NFWM always had presence inside; a YAYA delegation from FL has traveled each year to participate.
- NFWM secured a letter from the United Reformed Church in England to British American Tobacco, 42% shareholder in RAI, urging BAT to use its influence with RAI to meet with FLOC.
- NFWM & FLOC co-produced an "Alternative Shareholder Report" which was distributed to the RAI Board of Directors and attendees at the SHM.

2010

- Campaign strategy begins focusing on impacting RAI Board of Directors, including a number activities where board members held other business-related positions. For instance, we organized and/or participated in actions to get RAI Board member Betsy Atkins to choose between sitting on the board of Chico's, a chain with strong standards for ethical sourcing, or on RAI's board. We promoted fax actions, sent delegations to 15 Chico's stores, and NFWM-FL staff held two meetings with Chico's executives. In June 2010, Atkins resigned from the Reynolds Board, stating, "she was resigning her position on the board due to an increase in the workload from the boards on which she serves."
- NFWM-NC continuing labor camp delegations and recruiting volunteer drivers for FLOC member meetings.

2011

- Chase Bank, a major lender to RAI, developed as a focus. NFWM organized 27 bannering & leafleting actions around the country, including the emergence of NFWM-YAYA's "Three Fat Bankers."
- Oxfam America & FLOC release their report, "A state of fear: Human rights abuses in North Carolina's tobacco industry"; we pass it out at the RAI SHM.
- At the May SHM, CEO Delen announces that RAI will engage with FLOC via a multi-stakeholder approach.

2012

- September, Religious Leaders for Tobacco Justice, a group co-organized by NFWM, send letter to CEO Delen and the RAI Board of Directors, urging Delen to work directly with FLOC to establish a process for freedom of association and a collective bargaining agreement; follow up calls were made.
- Rev. Raymond Singh, Reformed Church UK, delivers a statement on behalf of NFWM at the BAT AGM and does so each year afterward.

National Farm Worker Ministry Timeline Continued

2013: Campaign strategies now include other major tobacco companies.

- The Convenience Store strategy starts to heat up; RAI products are mostly sold at convenience stores. Over the next 3 years, store actions are held in various places; many in central FL organized by NFWM-YAYA at Kangaroo, WAWA and 7-Eleven.
- NFWM-YAYAs from Florida travel to NC to attend and volunteer at FLOC's Convention.

2014

- March, NFWM organizes "Putting Our Faith into Action: Supporting Farm Workers in NC" in Raleigh.
- April, Sharon Stanley-Rea organizes two Disciples of Christ pastors in NYC to attend the Phillip Morris Intl shareholder meeting and ask questions. Both again attended in 2015.
- May, Alliance of Baptists' Annual Gathering unanimously passes resolution supporting FLOC
- June, two YAYAs (Bianca Soloman & Nataly Azcurra) join the AFL-CIO Summer Organizing Internship with FLOC to organize workers at NC labor camps.
- July, Religious Leaders letter to RAI CEO and Board of Directors calling again for RAI to work with FLOC to guarantee freedom of association on RAI contract farms; nearly 500 signatories.
- July, NFWM assists FLOC with the community forum at Pullen Memorial with two Members of the British Parliament completing a fact finding tour of tobacco farm worker labor conditions. 200 people attended.
- August, NFWM holds its semi-annual board meeting in Raleigh; visits labor camps. Carolyn Jaramillo distributes a report on her visit of labor camps to the Loretto Community and includes a call to Loretto's to send a letter to the RAI CEO. They do.
- November, NFWM organizes a delegation of twelve NC faith representatives to meet with John "Tripp" Wilson and Ronald Wright from RAI at Umstead UCC in Raleigh.

2015

- April, NFWM receives a call from RAI, unhappily asking, "who are these Sisters of Loretto?"
- Rev. Singh again delivers a statement from NFWM at the BAT AGM.
- As NFWM & YAYA have done annually since 2008, we participate in RAI's SHM actions.
- NFWM outreaches for volunteers to drive FLOC members to their membership meetings.

2016

- Assist FLOC with sending a letter to six of the Produce Associations to which NC State Sen. Brent Jackson belongs informing them of the blacklisting situation.
- NFWM mobilized the leadership of 11 member organizations to send a letter to the CEOs of RAI and BAT to put pressure on RAI.
- July, NFWM and TFF met with two middle-managers of Alliance One International re its Agricultural Labor Practices program.
- Organized a labor camp visit for Rev. Paula Dempsey & Brooks Wicker of the Alliance of Baptists.
- In July, NFWM and TFF met with Alliance One managers re its Agricultural Labor Practices program.
- British American Tobacco (42% shareholder in RAI) buys Reynolds outright for \$54.5 billion.

2017

- Helped Triangle Friends of Farmworkers (TFF) outreach for volunteer drivers for FLOC workers meeting.
- NFWM sent a letter to Philip Morris International's VP Jon Huenemann calling for them to work with FLOC.
- Mobilized a NFWM sign-on letter from NC people of faith to Alliance One Leaf getting 50 signatures.
- Provided support for worker grievance problems, such as with NC State Senator Brent Jackson and the blacklisting of workers on his farm; and also at Hudson Farms.
- NFWM filed conflict of interest complaints with the NC Legislature's Ethics Committee against two legislators who pushed through egregious anti-FLOC amendments in S615 (ultimately dismissed); spoke at the press conference; and did several media follow-up interviews related to that.
- Held September NFWM Board meeting in conjunction with FLOC's Quadrennial Convention in Toledo, OH, at which FLOC members voted to escalate the tobacco campaign and call for a boycott of Reynolds American VUSE e-cigarette.