

NEWS & VIEWS

The National Farm Worker Ministry

Spring 2019



NFWM Board meets in San Jose, CA — hears from Equitable Food Initiative and United Farm Workers and takes to the streets.



NFWM Board and supporters join dozens of Premiere Raspberry workers for a demonstration in front of Well-Pict's office in Watsonville, CA. Kimberly Emery, BVM Associate, waves a sign that says it all.



Peter O'Driscoll, Executive Director Equitable Food Initiative, listens intently along with NFWM Board members to Bárbara talk about her experience working on an EFI certified Andrew & Williamson Farm.



Many thanks to Rev. John Freeseemann (center back), Holy Redeemer Lutheran Church, for hosting the NFWM Board meeting. John was a former board rep. for California Church IMPACT.



Cruz Zamudio has worked 40+ years at Monterrey Mushroom. He spoke enthusiastically about the benefits of working under a UFW contract.



Sam Trickey, long-time NFWM Board member and past President.

UFW's New Farm Worker Center



NFWM board members in the union hall/exhibition space under a "tree" naming the many donors who made the building possible.

The NFWM Board group was treated to a tour of the UFW's new building in Salinas. Bonita Rivera led us through the office space where workers can meet with UFW staff in private and comfortable settings. The UFW Foundation also has office space for some of its staff. The large union hall can fit hundreds of people and the building boasts state-of-the-art technology. NFWM applauds the UFW for the fundraising and hard work that went in to making the Central Coast Worker Center possible. And we thank the UFW for graciously hosting the board meeting farm worker engagement day.

FLOC's Boycott of Reynolds American VUSE-Actions Growing

The Farm Labor Organizing Committee is gaining more endorsements for its boycott of VUSE e-cigarettes from faith, labor and community organizations. Thank you to Church Women United of North Carolina, Triangle Friends of Farmworkers (TFF), New York Center Labor Council for Latin American Advancement and Student Action with Farmworkers, just to name a few, for joining NFWM in endorsing. And convenience store pickets are growing too; the newest at Eastern Michigan University.

Creativity in actions is also on the upswing. Taking his cue from NFWM's YAYA chapter in Orlando, agitator extraordinaire Dave Austin of TFF created his own picket puppet for boycott actions in North Carolina.



Dave Austin is in there!

For more information on the campaign visit nfwm.org. Download and send a letter to Reynolds, sign FLOC's petition to the convenience store chains or contact Susan Alan at salan@nfwm.org for help organizing a store picket in your locale.

Premiere Raspberry Workers Deserve a Contract



United Farm Worker Regional Director Lauro Barajas (above left) summarized for NFWM Board members the campaign with Premiere Raspberries, which are marketed under the brand Well-Pict.

Workers protesting conditions at Premiere held a one day walk out in the summer of 2017 and, getting no satisfaction from the company, went to the UFW and asked for representation. Premiere workers then voted for the UFW in a state-supervised secret-ballot election, but the company refused to negotiate.

So then the workers asked for a neutral state mediator to draw up a contract; and Premiere refused to participate in the law-mandated process. In August of 2018, the Agricultural Labor Relations Board ordered the grower to implement that union contract for the approximately 550 workers; again Premiere refused and is challenging the union certification in court.

We heard from workers that they are often not paid properly for the boxes they pick and are made to buy their own equipment. Several told us that those who have been a part of organizing other workers have had their crews assigned to the less productive fields where it is more difficult to make a good daily pay rate.



Rox Monterastelli,
Loretto representative to
NFWM board

NFWM had requested a meeting with Well-Pict/Premiere but was denied one. And so we joined workers to demonstrate outside of Well-Pict offices in Watsonville.

Following the meeting, the Loretto Community began an action to send letters to Well-Pict/Premiere from their communities around the U.S. Thank you Loretto!

Coalition of Immokalee Workers 4 for Fair Food Tour



This spring, CIW, farm workers and allies participated in a tour with stops in Atlanta, GA and at four universities in their 4 for Fair Food tour. The tour is an effort to bring awareness about the boycott against

Wendy's and to get four universities to "boot the braids" off their campuses. We celebrate with CIW that of the four, the University of Michigan announced that Wendy's would not return to their campus. Si Se Puede!

NFWM assisted CIW in organizing, especially in North Carolina where our office is located but we also worked with our national network to provide presence at other tour stop locations, to invite reflection and action from supporters across the nation on March 7th and to secure organizational sign-ons for a faith leader letter in support of the tour that you can read on our website.

The Fair Food Program represents a worker-driven

socially responsible model of food certification which greatly benefits farm workers by giving them a penny a pound more for the tomatoes they pick as well as a grievance mechanism to prevent exploitation and training by CIW members for both workers and management, particularly addressing sexual violence and harassment.

Even though the tour is over, please continue to support the Wendy's boycott wherever you live. If you haven't already, deliver a store manager's letter to your local Wendy's letting them know you are boycotting them and why and asking them to share that letter with their corporate office. A copy of this letter can be found on our website or by contacting NFWM. Wendy's is the last of the largest fast food chains in the US to not sign the Fair Food Agreement. Let them hear your voice by asking them to join the Fair Food Program today!



Photo by Martha Beach
NFWM's Julie Taylor at the UNC march.

Equitable Food Initiative (EFI) Scaling Up and Making a Difference!

EFI offers the only certification process for large-scale fresh produce operations that combines standards for labor, pesticides and food safety. EFI's approach creates an on-farm mechanism (the Leadership Team) and an incentive (improved working conditions assured by the Standard) through which farm workers work with management to identify and address threats to food safety and social accountability on a continuous basis.

In 2012, the NFWM Board visited an Andrew and Williamson farm near Moss Landing, CA when it was a pilot project for the EFI; Sierra Farms went on to gain EFI certification in 2014. We were excited to visit again this February; and came away impressed.

Six worker members of Sierra's Leadership Team, which the workers call "continuous improvement teams," talked to us about how EFI is changing their lives. Workers are encouraged to bring work/life issues forward; all are discussed and all are addressed in a transparent and pro-active way. For instance, breast-feeding mothers found it difficult to return to work and so Andrew & Williamson found a way to set up nursing tents near the fields.

Jackie Vazquez, Director of Farm Operations, told us that the work of the Leadership Teams is improving the business side by better utilizing the knowledge and skills of farm workers and significantly

increasing worker retention from season to season.

Peter O'Driscoll, EFI Executive Director, highlighted progress being made. EFI has grown to 29 certified locations with 35,000-plus farm workers on farms with EFI-trained Leadership Teams. Farm workers have earned more than \$6 million in bonuses from premiums paid by participating retailers. Peter shared some of the results of a Berkeley Food Institute study, which concluded that growers and workers reported many benefits associated with participation in EFI, including high levels of satisfaction with the Leadership Team model. In fact, growers indicated that they would maintain the model even if it were not an EFI requirement.

The word we heard most repeated that day, from workers and management alike, was 'respect.' You can help seed and harvest more respect in the agriculture system by purchasing EFI label produce at Costco and Whole Foods. And if your store doesn't carry EFI, leave a note for the manager that you are looking for *Responsibly Grown/Farmworker Assured!* Visit nfwm.org or equitablefood.org for more information.



Photo by Alexandria Jones/NFWM
Jackie Vazquez

YAYA Updates: BUG Conference, YAYA Appreciation Dinner & Thank You, Dominique Aulisio!

Last fall, members of the Orlando YAYA chapter organized participatory budgeting and collective fundraising to attend the **Black Farmers and Urban Gardeners Conference** with Farmworker Association of Florida and Hope CommUnity Center, and to continue work in support of black farm workers. A delegation of six people created a workshop proposal on the history and current reality of Lake Apopka farm workers to share with the audience of Black farmers, activists and academics at the



BUG conference. They exceeded their fundraising goal through requests to community members, bake sales, and support from NFWM board members and raised \$3,950.04.

Ms. Linda Lee presented the Lake Apopka Memorial Quilt and a riveting account of the injustice and tragedy faced by Lake Apopka farm workers, with collaboration from the rest of the delegation including Robyn Thomas of Hope CommUnity Center, who is also from Apopka and is the daughter of a farm worker.

A video of the presentation is on NFWM's website. The group is now holding monthly meetings to continue support of Black farm workers in the Apopka area including collection of oral histories and food justice work based in the FWAf community garden.



Dominique Aulisio (center wearing YAYA T-shirt) with Orlando chapter YAYA members and Dolores Huerta at the University of Central Florida in November 2018.

In February, we bid a fond farewell to Dominique Aulisio, YAYA Coordinator since March 2017. In a relatively short time Dominique rebuilt the core membership of the Orlando chapter and supported them in rewriting their constitution, electing new officers and in developing their leadership and organizing skills. Dominique supported YAYA members in creating a more sustainable culture for members and volunteers by developing more manageable officer roles and implementing a membership agreement and harassment/discrimination policy.

Under her leadership, YAYAs have accomplished an impressive list of substantive actions in support of farm worker and immigrant communities: Dreamer actions in D.C. & Florida, developing and conducting legislative trainings for farm workers with Farmworker Association of Florida, monthly pickets for FLOC's VUSE boycott, Wendy's demonstrations supporting CIW's boycott, coalition efforts with the Orlando Trust Act Coalition, the Florida Immigrant Coalition, and central Florida Jobs with Justice, as well as NFWM farm worker partners. They gave dozens of presentations and workshops and tabled even more times. And more!

Where Dominique really shined was encouraging and supporting YAYA members in developing program around those issues about which they felt most passion, such as support for the Black farm worker community around Apopka. With Dominique at the helm, YAYAs fulfilled their commitment "to create a solidarity movement that reflects the world we wish to see."

Thank you, Dominique!

In September, Dominique organized a **YAYA Appreciation Dinner**. Fifty people gathered including representatives from several community organizations to honor YAYA members and volunteers for their work for the farm worker movement and their collaborations in defense of immigrant and labor rights over the 2018-19 academic year. The Farmworker Association of Florida, Hope CommUnity Center, QLatinx, and Organize Florida offered key support to make this event a reality and the First Unitarian Church donated the use of their space. A great time was had by all!



In appreciation of Dominique too!

Thank You Mary Martens, BVM



We said farewell to Mary Martens, BVM as board representative from the Sisters of Charity, BVM. Mary came on the board in 2011 replacing Carol Cook. Mary was elected to the Executive Committee and served on the Education/Planning team. Mary provided orientation to all new board members and created many of the prayers and litanies used at board meetings. In April, she will be replaced by BVM Associate

Kimberly Emery. Kimberly is Assistant Dean for Pro Bono at the University of Virginia School of Law. We were pleased to have her join us for this last Board meeting.

Start planning your HOJ season/event for Fall 2019!

Harvest of Justice is your opportunity to raise consciousness, commitments and contributions for farm worker justice! NFWM will again have various resources to help you: weekly stories, facts and actions, event materials and more. This year's theme is Gender-based Violence: Standing Against Fear in the Fields. HOJ starts on Labor Day, September 2 and lasts until World Food Day, October 16. Make your plans now to sponsor an event at your own local church or in your community.



2005/ Sonoma: Kathie behind Bert Perry

Kathie Franger's Journey with NFWM

Each time we plan a board meeting, we invite local supporters to join us. We are always delighted and honored when they accept our invitation. Imagine then how we feel about Kathie Franger – a supporter who over a nine-year span joined us five times! At the least, we feature Kathie in this newsletter, and celebrate her turning 90 last year.



2006/La Paz: Susan Alan & Kathie listening to Dolores Huerta

Of her second meeting, Kathie said, "Visiting La Paz was a defining moment in my life, and I'm so grateful for NFWM giving me the opportunity to visit there, which I otherwise would not ever have done."



2014/Bakersfield Immigration Demonstration

Kathie's daughter Laura says, "Mom's powerful social-justice values have always been demonstrated to friends and family in her typically understated, quiet manner. Quite a role model for her three daughters and four granddaughters!"

Thank you Kathie for being NFWM's role model too!

Kathie has been a generous financial supporter since before our records go back to in 1991. Her involvement goes back to the 1960's and the UFW's grape boycott. In the early 2000's, NFWM's former Executive Director Virginia Nesmith visited with Kathie at her home in Mountain View, CA. So the next time we sent her a board meeting invitation – to our human billboarding demonstration with the UFW in Sonoma County – Kathie came. She tells us it was her first demonstration and she was a bit shy, so she hung out in the background. See the top right photo!



2008/UFW Convention Fresno: holding sign



2012/Santa Clara, Kathie (in hat) at prayer circle at Giumarra



2014/La Paz: Kathie (front, third from left) & NFWM Board

National Farm Worker Ministry

P.O. Box 10645
112 Cox Ave, Suite 208
Raleigh, NC 27605

Return Service Requested



Leave a Lasting Impact

National office:
112 Cox Ave, Ste 208
PO Box 10645 Raleigh, NC
27605
Phone: 919-807-8707
nfwm@nfwm.org
www.nfwm.org

Susan Alan
Alexandria Jonas
Cathy McGaughey
Julie Taylor

Make a gift in your will or living trust to National Farm Worker Ministry.

You have the power to help farm workers create change well beyond your lifetime. By including a gift to National Farm Worker Ministry in your will or in your estate plan, you help ensure that we can continue to give support and solidarity to farm workers. It is one of the easiest and most flexible ways to make a gift. Talk to your attorney or financial advisor about how to do it.

A charitable bequest is a way to do more than you thought possible.