

Resolution of the National Farm Worker Ministry

Endorsing the Boycott of Sakuma Brothers Berries

- WHEREAS, The National Farm Worker Ministry is a faith-based organization committed to justice for and empowerment of farm workers; and
- WHEREAS, farmworkers are not afforded the protections of many federal and state employment laws such as the National Labor Relations Act; and
- WHEREAS, farmworkers at Sakuma Brothers Farms in Burlington, Washington, have experienced hostile work environments, discrimination, poor housing conditions, and wage theft; and
- WHEREAS, Familias Unidas por la Justicia, an independent farm worker union (recognized by the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO) based in Burlington, Washington, was formed in the summer of 2013 in response to racial harassment, wage theft, and other unjust labor practices faced by farm workers at the Sakuma Brothers Farms, Inc.; and
- WHEREAS, Sakuma Brothers Farms demonstrated intent to undermine farm worker efforts to negotiate a union contract by applying in 2014 for 438 H2A guest worker visas in an attempt to deny employment to workers who had participated in strikes the previous year, many of whom had worked for the company for decades, and even though 460 Familias Unidas por la Justicia workers were ready and willing to return to work for the 2014 season. The U.S. Department of Labor did not approve Sakuma's H2A application; and
- WHEREAS, because Sakuma Brothers Farms fails to provide farm workers a fair wage, decent living facilities, and paid rest breaks, Familias Unidas por la Justicia called a boycott of Sakuma Brothers berries to continue until a union contract is signed between farm workers and Sakuma Brothers Farms.
- THEREFORE, be it resolved that the National Farm Worker Ministry Board, gathered in Bellingham, Washington, July 11, 2015, endorses the Familias Unidas por La Justicia boycott of Sakuma Brothers berries as well as the boycotts of Driscoll's Berries and of Haagen Dazs ice cream with strawberries as a means of using our economic power to support the farm workers who are struggling for justice.
- THEREFORE, be it further resolved that the National Farm Worker Ministry commits to inform our thirty organizations about the conditions of the farm workers at Sakuma Brothers Farms and to urge our constituents to publicize and support the boycott of Sakuma Brothers berries.
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Farm Worker Ministry will communicate its endorsement of the boycott to the officials of Sakuma Brothers Farms and request each member organization to also communicate with Sakuma regarding their support for this resolution.

Susan Alan

7/11/2015

Susan Alan
Interim Executive Director

Sylvia Campbell

7/11/2015

Sylvia Campbell
Board President

Date