



Associated Students of Western Washington University

Board of Directors

A Resolution Regarding the Boycott of Driscoll's and Sakuma Brothers Berries by WWU Dining Services

May 2016

WHEREAS, Farmworkers at the Sakuma Brothers farm in Burlington, WA have been underpaid and subjected to an unreasonable piece-rate system, experienced racism and a system of racial heircharizaion by farm management, been the victim of continued wage theft and denial of legally mandated breaks by their employer, and been provided with dilapidated worker housing; and,

WHEREAS, Farmworkers at the Sakuma Brothers farm in Burlington, WA have formed a Union, Familias Unidas Por La Justicia (Familias Unidas), to represent their interests and fight for humane working conditions; and,

WHEREAS, Instead of negotiating a fair, union contract to address workers concerns, Sakuma Brothers farm has: attempted to abuse the H2-A guest worker program to replace workers who stand up for their rights, illegally deployed private security guards to intimidate workers in their homes, and illegally attempted to retaliate against workers by firing them and evicting them from their housing ; and,

WHEREAS, Farmworkers in the San Quintin valley of Baja Mexico have been pressured to work 7 day work weeks and 12 hour shifts for as little as \$7 a day, subjected to frequent exposure to agrochemicals, and been sexually harassed and assaulted by supervisors ; and,

WHEREAS, The situation of the Farmworkers in the San Quintin valley has been compared by the Mexican national human rights commission to "modern day slavery"; and,

WHEREAS, On March 17, 2015 farmworkers in the San Quintin Valley went on strike to ask for a pay raise to \$13 a day, an end to sexual abuse, and generally humane working conditions; and,

WHEREAS, Striking farmworkers in the San Quintin Valley were met with harsh violence and repression from the police for pursuing their human rights, including raids on their homes; and,

WHEREAS, Farmworkers in San Quintin have formed an independent Union, la Alianza de San Quintin, to represent their interests and fight for humane working conditions; and,

WHEREAS, Driscoll's is the distributor of berries from San Quintin and Sakuma Brothers; and,

WHEREAS, Through their representatives in Familias Unidas and la Alianza de San Quintin, workers in Burlington, WA and San Quintin, MX have called for a boycott of Driscoll's and Sakuma Brothers Berries, including those used in Häagen-Dazs ice cream, until fair, union contracts are signed in Burlington and San Quintin; and,

WHEREAS, Although Western Washington University's Dining Services (Aramark) claims that it does not source berries from Driscoll's or Sakuma Brothers, testimony of Western Washington University Dining Services employees contradict this claim; and,

WHEREAS, When asked, Western Washington University's Dining Services has refused to commit to honor the boycott and avoid Driscoll's and Sakuma berries, taking a political stand against farmworkers fighting for their human rights; and,

WHEREAS, Aramark has already taken a series of stands on food standards such as adopting animal welfare and purchasing commitments, and boasts that it has “taken important steps to make sure our purchases are made in a responsible and ethical way” ; and,

WHEREAS, The current working conditions for farmworkers in Burlington and San Quintin are inhumane, and it is unethical and irresponsible for Western Washington University Dining Services to purchase such berries; and,

WHEREAS, Aramark’s partnership with Western Washington University is based of a supposed responsivity to university and student values; and,

WHEREAS, Western Washington University’s stated vision is to be a societal problem solver; and,

WHEREAS, Boycotts have a long history of successfully improving labor conditions and solving societal issues, and,

BE IT RESOLVED, The Associated Students support the farmworkers in Burlington, WA and San Quintin, MX in their struggle for humane working conditions, fair pay, and respect for their basic human rights; and,

BE IT RESOLVED, The Associated Students support the boycott of Driscoll’s and Sakuma Brothers berries as called by farmworkers through Familias Unidas and la Alianza de San Quintin until such time that the farmworkers decide it is no longer necessary; and,

BE IT RESOLVED, no Associated Students Funds shall be used to purchase Driscoll and Sakuma Berries; and,

BE IT RESOLVED, The Associated Students demands that Western Washington University Dining Services sign a written commitment to honor the Driscoll’s and Sakuma Brothers Berry Boycott as called by Familias Unidas and la Alianza de San Quintín. Failure to do so could jeopardize Aramark’s future relationship with the Associated Students and the University.

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