

JustSouth Monthly

JSRI Perspectives on FAITH DOING JUSTICE

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Number 58

April 2016

Fair Food Program

Coalition of Immokalee Workers Calls for Boycott of Wendy's

by Mary Baudouin

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JSRI Upcoming Events

April 22

Fr. Kammer will speak at Fordham University's Catholic Social Thought conference.

April 24-26

JSRI staff will give a workshop on Jesuit Justice for Jesuit Novices.

April 28

Fr. Kammer will chair the Ignatian Solidary Network board meeting.

JSRI Recent Activities

April 19

Fr. Kammer spoke to the Jesuit Schools Network in San Antonio about Social Analysis.

April 15-16

The JSRI Advisory Board met.

April 15

Dr. Weishar spoke with members of the Evangelical Immigration Table on anti-immigrant legislation being considered in Louisiana.

April 10

Dr. Weishar spoke at Our Lady of Fatima Church in Biloxi, MS, inviting parishioners to a Catholic Teach-In on Migration on April 26.

April 5

Ms. Donovan attended a statewide leaders meeting for Together Louisiana coalition.

April 4-8

Ms. Baudouin and Fr. Kammer attended the Jesuit Conference on *Crossing Borders, Finding New Ways* in Santo Domingo.

April 4

Ms. Donovan discussed *Not All Tax Credits Are Created Equal* with Louisiana Senate Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Committee.

March 30

A [letter to the editor](#) from Fr. Kammer was published in the *New Orleans Advocate*.

March 29

Ms. Donovan presented at the *2016 Health Summit: Creating an Agenda for a Healthy Louisiana*.

In 2003, the Jesuits of the New Orleans Province were approached by the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW), a Florida-based farmworkers rights organization, to promote in our province ministries a nationwide boycott of Taco Bell restaurants. The goal of the boycott was to increase the amount that Taco Bell paid farmers for tomatoes by one penny per pound, which in turn could increase the rate pay for field laborers. This boycott, which was endorsed by more than 50 high schools and 300 college campuses, including Loyola University New Orleans, succeeded in cutting contracts or preventing new contracts with Taco Bell. In March 2005, Taco Bell signed a historic agreement to "work with CIW to improve working and pay conditions for farmworkers in the Florida tomato fields."

A year later, the New Orleans Province co-filed with other shareholders a resolution with the McDonald's Corporation calling for the company to address wages and working conditions for farmworkers who pick most of the tomatoes served in McDonald's restaurants in the U.S. As a result of this resolution and many other public actions, McDonald's agreed to meet the CIW's demand that the company pay an additional penny per pound for the Florida tomatoes it purchased.



In the subsequent years the CIW has continued their campaign to pressure farmers and retail food companies to ensure humane wages and working conditions for farmworkers, primarily through their Fair Food Program, a human rights project that has been designed and enforced by the workers themselves. A Fair Food Standards Council has been established to provide third-party monitoring of both buyers and growers. Some of the buyers participating in the Fair Food Program are familiar – and big – names, including: Walmart, Trader Joe's, Subway, Burger King, Whole Foods, Sodexo, Aramark, and of course Taco Bell and McDonald's. The [Fair Food Program](#) has been called "the best workplace-monitoring program" in the US in the *New York Times*, and "one of the great human rights success stories of our day" in the *Washington Post*.

For the past three years, the CIW and their supporters have been demanding that the Wendy's restaurant chain join with the participating buyers, some of whom are major competitors, in the Fair Food Program. Instead Wendy's has decided to source their tomatoes from Mexico, where farm laborers endure even greater hardships. CIW is reporting that Wendy's "made the choice to bypass its responsibility to pay and treat Florida farm laborers fairly and to operate in a country shown to employ farmworkers that are working without pay, without the ability to leave company-owned camps, and without access to basic amenities such as fresh running water and bathrooms." As the only one of the five major US fast food corporations to refuse to join the Fair Food Program, CIW charges that Wendy's is "deriving a very real cost advantage over its competitors."

In March 2016, in response to Wendy's ongoing lack of response, the CIW called for a nationwide boycott of the chain. And so, if you must drive through for a meal, consider choosing another fast food outlet!

TAKE ACTION!

To endorse the boycott, get social media tools, or download a sample letter that can be sent to local Wendy's managers, please visit:

<http://www.allianceforfairfood.org/take-action/#>

A platform for institutions to support the Wendy's boycott is coming soon.

Want to learn more about how you can advocate for other issues in the Gulf South? [Join the JSRI Advocacy Network](#)

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Published by the Jesuit Social Research Institute

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