

**Kerry Kennedy, Pres. of RFK Center for Human Rights, and Larry Cox, Former ED of Amnesty International USA, to Join FL Farmworkers Outside Wendy's Annual Shareholder Meeting in Calling for Wendy's to Join Fair Food Program**  
Wednesday, May 22, 2013 05:32:00 PM (GMT)

*Representatives from T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will also help deliver 90,000 petition signatures decrying Wendy's refusal to back White-House-recognized program for humane working conditions and increased pay for tomato pickers in its supply chain*

This Thursday, May 23, at 9 AM, as Wendy's executives convene their annual stockholders meeting in Manhattan's Sofitel Hotel (45 W 44th St), Kerry Kennedy and other leading human rights voices will join the [Coalition of Immokalee Workers \(CIW\)](#) -- an award-winning farmworker organization -- for a press conference outside. Those assembled will denounce the company's refusal to join the Fair Food Program (FFP), a groundbreaking, corporate social responsibility program for Florida tomato pickers.



Farmworkers and allies march in New York City on 5/28/2013 to call on Wendy's to join Fair Food Program for human rights in their supply chain (Photo: Business Wire)

Wendy's is the only of the nation's five largest fast-food chains to reject the FFP, which has won the praise of the [White House](#) and the [United Nations](#) for its unprecedented success in addressing decades-old farm labor abuses.

On Saturday, 300 New Yorkers marched through lower Manhattan to two Wendy's restaurants calling on the fast-food giant to join the Program.

Following Thursday's press conference, a farmworker and supporters will attend

the meeting to raise the issue directly with Wendy's executives as proxies obtained from the [Responsible Endowments Coalition](#), a leader in the field of responsible investment within U.S. higher education.

The Fair Food Program is an historic partnership among farmworkers, Florida tomato growers, and eleven leading food corporations. By committing to the FFP, participating corporations demand more humane labor standards from their Florida tomato suppliers and purchase exclusively from those who meet these higher standards, among them required time clocks, health and safety protections, and a zero-tolerance policy for slavery and sexual harassment. Participating corporations also pay a "penny-per-pound" premium, which is passed down through the supply chain and paid out to workers by their employers. Since 2011, buyers have paid \$10 million into the FFP.

The FFP was heralded [in the Washington Post](#) as "one of the great human rights success stories of our day" and in a White House report concerning efforts to combat human trafficking as "[one of the most successful and innovative programs](#)" to that end.

"Wendy's calls itself 'a cut above' its competition," stated Oscar Oztzy of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, "yet, Wendy's is a cut below the rest of its key competitors when it comes to human rights, as the

nation's only major fast-food chain not participating in the Fair Food Program. They may take pride in their old-fashioned burgers, but it is definitely time for Wendy's to end their old-fashioned approach to the human rights of the farmworkers who harvest the tomatoes inside those burgers."

Wendy's CEO, Emil Brolick, served as president of Taco Bell in 2005 when that company joined the FFP. At the time, Mr. Brolick announced in [a joint press release](#) with CIW: *"We recognize that Florida tomato workers do not enjoy the same rights and conditions as employees in other industries, and there is a need for reform. We have indicated that any solution must be industry-wide, as our company simply does not have the clout alone to solve the issues raised by the CIW, but we are willing to play a leadership role within our industry to be part of the solution,"* adding, *"We hope others in the restaurant industry and supermarket retail trade will follow our leadership."*

**About the Coalition of Immokalee Workers:** The [CIW](#) is a community-based farmworker organization headquartered in Immokalee, Florida, with over 4,000 members. The CIW seeks modern working conditions for farmworkers and promotes their fair treatment in accordance with national and international human rights standards. The CIW's Campaign for Fair Food has won unprecedented support for fundamental farm labor reforms from retail food industry leaders, with the goal of enlisting the market power of those companies to bring about more humane labor standards in their tomato suppliers' operations.

Photos/Multimedia Gallery Available: <http://www.businesswire.com/multimedia/home/20130522006391/en/>

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