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August 18, 2009

Mr. Ed Crenshaw, CEO

Publix Super Markets

Corporate Office

PO Box 407

Lakeland, Florida 33802-0407

Dear Mr. Crenshaw:

I want to first say that I am a loyal Publix customer. Since moving to Florida I have found Publix to be a good place to shop and meet my household's grocery needs. I know that your company strives for excellence and would like to maintain its reputation for providing good service, high quality products for your customers. The purpose of my letter is to encourage you to live up to your reputation and help put an end to a human rights crisis that exists right here in our state. The crisis of which I speak is in the growing fields of our state.

Tomato pickers earn 40-50 cents for every 32 lb. bucket of tomatoes – a rate that has not changed in any significant way since 1978. As I am sure you know a worker would have to pick nearly 2.5 tons of tomatoes just to earn minimum wage for a 10 hour day. The exploitation and lack of rights endured by farm workers gives rise to modern-day slavery rings – seven of which have been prosecuted in Florida agriculture the past dozen years.

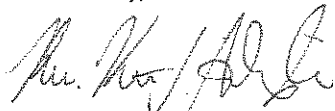
There is a clear path toward ensuring fair wages and conditions for those who pick the tomatoes that Publix sells in its stores. Yum Brands, McDonald's, Burger King, Subway, Bon Appetit and Whole Foods are all working with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers to directly improve the wages and conditions in their tomato supply chains. Surely Publix would like to be counted among these companies as a responsible neighbor to those who help to provide the produce that helps Publix be a profitable organization.

I was surprised and disappointed to learn that to date your response to this request is to state that you "respectfully decline the opportunity to participate in this program". I do not understand the motives or reasons for this response. I would be more than happy to sit down with you to discuss this matter more extensively so that together we can work to address the human rights issues in your tomato supply chain.

I would urge Publix to work with the CIW to: Pay an additional penny per pound as so many other companies are now doing; implement an enforceable code of conduct to ensure safe and fair working conditions for farm workers; ensure a voice for farm workers in monitoring improvements and reporting human rights abuses.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rev. Kent J. Siladi". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "K" and "S".

Rev. Kent J. Siladi

Conference Minister

Florida Conference, United Church of Christ

407-835-7501