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October 18, 2011

Mr. Dan Bane  
Chairman & CEO  
Trader Joe's  
PO Box 5049  
Monrovia, CA 91016

Dear Mr. Bane,

I write to urge Trader Joe's to sign a Fair Food agreement with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW).

Farmworkers have long faced low wages and abuses in the fields. The good news is that there is a solution underway for Florida tomato pickers and Trader Joe's has the opportunity to be part of that solution by joining in the CIW's Fair Food program. Nine major food companies are already working with the CIW and the Florida tomato industry to implement the Fair Food program. This program includes a code of conduct with zero tolerance for forced labor and sexual harassment as well as basic rights for farmworkers, such as access to water, shade, and the ability to report abuses without fear of retaliation. Furthermore, the Fair Food program improves farmworkers' wages through a premium paid by retailers, similar to Fair Trade coffee. Trader Joe's participation in the Fair Food program is vital to ensure human rights and fair wages for the farmworkers who pick your tomatoes.

Catholic teaching centers on the dignity of the human person and calls us to act to defend the inherent dignity of our brothers and sisters. The CIW's Fair Food program is an important initiative in advancing respect for the dignity of the men and women who harvest our tomatoes. I urge Trader Joe's to recognize the dignity and humanity of farmworkers by working together with the CIW to implement the Fair Food program without delay.

Sincerely,

Most Reverend Gabino Zavala, D.D., J.C.L.  
Bishop, San Gabriel Pastoral Region