

An Open Letter to Ben & Jerry's

Jostein Solheim, CEO
Ben & Jerry's Homemade Inc.
30 Community Drive
South Burlington, VT 05403-6828

June 20, 2015

Dear Mr. Solheim,

We, the undersigned, stand in solidarity with Vermont dairy farmworkers in calling on Ben and Jerry's to do its part in creating a more just and dignified work environment on Vermont dairy farms. In the Vermont dairy industry forty percent of dairy workers receive less than the VT minimum wage and twenty percent have their first wages withheld--this is wage theft. Thirty percent have to work seven or more hours without a break to eat, and the same number have had mostly preventable workplace injuries or illnesses. Many workers work 12-14 hour days without a day of rest, and significant numbers live in deplorable housing conditions. This is an unacceptable state of affairs for any supply chain, but it is particularly appalling to see this level of abuse in Ben and Jerry's supply chain given your long standing commitment to social justice and corporate responsibility.



The good news is we already know there is a solution that works and there are some farms that are demonstrating that dignified working conditions are possible. Migrant Justice is calling on you to create a worker-driven social responsibility program -- the Milk with Dignity Program -- fashioned after the globally acclaimed and highly effective Fair Food Program in Immokalee Florida. We echo Migrant Justice's call urging you to take the lead in the dairy industry by participating in this groundbreaking program.

We understand that many dairy farmers are also facing serious economic challenges and are in need of economic relief. The Milk with Dignity Program rewards those farms that have it right by having corporate participants pay more down the supply chain to both the farmer and the farmworker. We anticipate many farms to enthusiastically support this initiative.

The Milk with Dignity program is in line with the mission of social responsibility on which Ben & Jerry's has built its legacy, image, and financial success. Your customer base wants, and is already demanding, products that support dignified livelihoods for both farmworkers and farmers. You have done this before for cows, consumers and the environment in your impressive work to eliminate RGBH from your supply chain. You've done this for chickens with your commitment to cage-free eggs. You can do this for the workers facing inhumane workplace conditions while supplying the cream your company depends on. Indeed, it is your moral obligation to do so.

We urge you to sit at the table with VT dairy farmworkers to build a vibrant and much needed Milk with Dignity Program that respects workers leadership and ensures human rights in your dairy supply chain.

Sincerely,

| First | Last | Organization |
|------------------|------------------------|---|
| Cathy | Albisa | National Economic & Social Rights Initiative |
| Will | Bennington | Rising Tide Vermont |
| Jon | Magee | Agrarian Action Network |
| Angela | Berkfield | ACT for Social Justice |
| Alyssa | Bauer | Agrarian Action Network |
| Eric | Holt-Gimenez | Food First |
| Gerardo | Reyes | Coalition of Immokalee Workers |
| Rabbi Rachel | Kahn-Troster | T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights |
| James | Haslam | VT Worker's Center |
| | | Worker Justice Center of New York |
| Edgar | Franks | Community to Community |
| Rebecca | Fuentes | Workers' Center of Central New York & Comité de Trabajadores de Agricultura de NY Primero de Mayo |
| Antonio | Tovar | Farmworker Association of Florida |
| Nancy | Kellogg | Buffalo Mountain Coop |
| Amy | Smoucha | Jobs With Justice |
| Kerstin Lindgren | Lindgren | Fair World Project |
| Diana | Robinson | Food Chain Workers Alliance |
| Marcelo | Viera | Comite de Vecinos |
| Raúl | Quiñones-Rosado, Ph.D. | c-Integral |
| Debbie | Ingram | Vermont Interfaith Action |
| Sam | Hearn | Nashville Fair Food |
| Rachel | Siegel | Peace & Justice Center |
| Fay | Borgatti | AFTMACIO Local 4098 |
| Chuck | Gregory | Vermont Workers Center |
| Tim | Denson | Athens for Everyone |
| Marc | Estrin | Vermonters for a Just Peace In Palestine/Israel |

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| Lily | Huang | Mass. Jobs with Justice |
| David | Schwartz | Real Food Challenge |
| Rev. Dr. Liz | Theoharis | Poverty Initiative and Kairos Center for Religions, Rights, and Social Justice at Union Theological Seminary |
| Claire | Comiskey | Alliance for Fair Food |
| Mikhiela | Sherrod | Agricultural Missions, Inc. |
| Anuradha | Mittal | Oakland Institute |
| Sam | Grant | Embody Deep Democracy |
| Heather | Day | Community Alliance for Global Justice |
| Marcelo | Viera | Cleghorn Neighborhood Center |
| Nadeen | Bir | Student Action with Farmworkers |
| Adrienne | DerVartanian | Farmworker Justice |
| Joaquin | Abrego | Southwest Workers Union |
| Lisa | Griffith | National Family Farm Coalition |
| Mateo | Nube | Movement Generation |
| Jahi | Chappell | Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy |
| Meredith | Rapkin | Friends of Farmworkers |
| John | Peck | Family Farm Defenders |
| Chris | Coxon | ActionAid USA |