

How to Plan a Delegation to Wendy's

WHY PLAN A STORE DELEGATION TO WENDY'S?

Join the powerful rabbinic call to Wendy's to join the Fair Food Program, the unique initiative led by farmworkers with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers that's quietly transforming human rights within the agricultural industry.

Lead a delegation of congregants to your local Wendy's store, as a means of both strengthening the voice of the Jewish community to Wendy's and providing a way for congregants to participate in a national and local justice issue — where direction is coming from farmworkers themselves and where participating implies a high likelihood of impact. This guide is meant to help plan a delegation to Wendy's and facilitate conversation with congregants.



BACKGROUND

Excerpt from “Committing to Change and Justice at Wendy's,” by Rabbi Rachel Kahn-Troster, Director of North American Programs at T'ruah, published in Huffington Post on May 28, 2014:

“Seven rabbis gathered in a Wendy's restaurant in Southwest Florida and began to pray.

Last week, [T'ruah: the Rabbinic Call for Human Rights](#) hosted our sixth rabbinic delegation to the small town of Immokalee, FL. These rabbis who had flown in from around the country -- from California to New York to Saskatchewan, Canada -- came to stand with the [Coalition of Immokalee Workers](#) as they seek to strengthen and expand the Fair Food Program, their groundbreaking social accountability program ensuring never-seen-before protections for the human rights farmworkers. Lauded by the White House as "one of the most innovative and successful programs" to end modern slavery today, the unique collaboration between farmworkers, growers and food retailers changing the lives of some 100,000 workers has been joined by Walmart, the world's largest retailer, as well as the largest fast food chains in the U.S. -- all of them except Wendy's.



So why not Wendy's? Why not join a proven solution to abuse in your supply chain? That's the question that T'ruah rabbis and others around the country have been asking over the past year. We asked it in person at the Wendy's shareholder meeting in May 2013, with 15 rabbis present at a press conference outside the meeting with the CIW, Kerry Kennedy and other concerned

consumers. We asked it with a private letter to Chairman Nelson Peltz in the fall of 2013, signed by rabbis who had participated in delegations to Immokalee, just like the group this week. When Mr. Peltz hadn't responded by Human Rights Shabbat in early December, we took the letter public, and rabbis led actions in 15 cities across the country. A month later, 150 rabbis nationwide asked the same question again to CEO Emil Brolick. Through all of our attempts, we heard only a resounding silence..." Read more [here](#).



TIMELINE OF WENDY'S CAMPAIGN

- December 2012: T'ruah sends private letter to Wendy's urging them to join the CIW's Fair Food Program and avoid a public campaign. No response.
- January 2013: CIW announces public campaign with Wendy's, asking for a one-month period of store visits and letters without public action, in hopes of a response. No response.
- February 2013: Public actions at Wendy's begin.
- May 2013: Wendy's issues first response to justify non-participation in Fair Food Program. CIW responds.
- May 2013: 15 rabbis with T'ruah join Kerry Kennedy, CIW and other allies outside of Wendy's Annual Shareholder Meeting in NYC.
- November 2013: CIW receives Roosevelt Institute Freedom from Want Award. Past laureates such as Nelson Mandela, the Dalai Lama and Aung San Suu Kyi.
- November 2013: 36 "tomato rabbis," all of whom have participated in a T'ruah delegation to Immokalee, send private letter to Nelson Peltz, Chairman of the Board of Wendy's, requesting to convene a meeting between him and CIW. T'ruah requests response before Human Rights Shabbat. No response.
- December 2013: Tomato rabbis publish the letter Nelson Peltz publicly. In honor of Human Rights Shabbat, rabbis lead delegations and actions at Wendy's in 15 cities across the country.
- January 2014: 150 rabbis send letter to Wendy's CEO Emil Brolick. No response.
- January 2014: CIW announces that Walmart has joined the Fair Food Program. Agreement signifies profound strengthening of rights for workers and first moment where CIW can consider expanding rights now afforded to tomato pickers to crops outside of tomatoes and fields outside of Florida.
- April 2014: Del Monte farms joins Fair Food Program.



- April 2014: On front page of *New York Times*, Fair Food Program called “best workplace-monitoring program... in the U.S.”
- April 2014: Documentary film *Food Chains*, profiling Fair Food Program, premieres at Tribeca Film Festival. Film is produced by Eva Longoria and Eric Schlosser, with narration by Forest Whittaker.
- May 2014: On the occasion of Wendy’s next Annual Shareholder Meeting and 6th T’ruah delegation to Immokalee, tomato rabbis republish letter to Nelson Peltz.
- July 2014: Planned visit to Peltz’s office at Trian Fund Management led by T’ruah Summer Fellows; store delegations and actions to take place at other cities around the country.

HOW TO PLAN A DELEGATION & ACTION

Before the delegation:

- Spend 30 minutes talking about the historical treatment of farmworkers in the fields, the Campaign for Fair Food, how conditions are changing through the Fair Food Program, and why the Jewish community’s participation and allyship is essential.

Preparing Roles

- When the group enters the store, one person can ask to speak to the manager.
- While one person should be prepared to explain why the group is there, various people can have a chance to speak with the manager. Invite participants to role-play and practice what they would like to convey ahead of time to inspire confidence.
- Other important roles include taking photos, recording video, holding signs and passing out flyers to those eating at the store.



Prepare participants for likely response

- A manager may be courteous and agree to pass the letter on to headquarters. If they are sympathetic and willing to listen, this provides a space for other participants to express why they are there; take advantage of that space and encourage as many people to speak as they wish.
- A manager may be willing to speak with the group, while defending Wendy’s refusal to join the Fair Food Program. Be ready for this by reading the talking points later in the guide.
- A manager may not want to speak to the group; you may be rebuffed. Participants can be as insistent as they feel comfortable with. So long as the group is courteous and eventually leaves the store when asked, there is no risk of legal action. If the manager refuses to take your letter, consider writing directly to national headquarters: Wendy’s Corporation, CEO Emil Brolick or Chairman Nelson Peltz, One Dave Thomas Blvd., Dublin, OH 43017.
- Regardless of the manager’s reaction, remember that the goal is to reach the company executives, a goal that can be achieved in a myriad ways, including a sympathetic manager passing a letter up the line or a frustrated manager reporting continued disturbance in their store until Wendy’s joins the FFP. Remember that campaigns can be slow, but every piece counts.

Action

- After speaking with the manager and delivering your letter, take further action! You can do this either by (a) circling up in part of the store to sing, chant and offer reflections out loud, or (b) moving outside the store with signs and flyers for passing cars and pedestrians. Be prepared with songs and chants to keep the energy up for twenty minutes or more before gathering the group together for final reflections and words of inspiration.
- If you're looking for a song to sing, you might try Lo alecha ha-melacha ligmor. Ask Rachel for other ideas.



Reflection

- Before leaving, reflect with participants on their experience. You can ask them how it felt to do an action, what they learned or are taking away from it, next steps they think they might want to take, etc. Allow space for each person who desires to express what's on their mind. You or someone else can provide closing remarks to finish on a strong note.



Report

- Your action has an impact beyond the participants and those present at the store by you sharing what occurred! Be sure to take photos and write a brief report; send them to rkahntroster@truah.org and elena@interfaithact.org.
- Share on social media!
- If you'd like to get the word out further, you can always consider writing an op/ed. Rachel and Elena can work closely with you on this.

TALKING POINTS

1. Of the five largest fast food corporations in the country — McDonald's, Subway, Burger King, Taco Bell (Yum! Brands), and Wendy's — Wendy's is the only one not participating in the Fair Food Program.
2. As Wendy's attempts to modernize its brand, it must realize that it will remain "old fashioned" until it demonstrates respect for human rights and worker participation, integral to the vision of what today's consumers expect and demand.
3. Wendy's is one of the very largest buyers of tomatoes in the restaurant industry, an industry that for decades purchased low cost tomatoes whose harvest relied on the exploitation of workers. Given its market power, Wendy's has not only an opportunity, but an obligation to work with the tomato industry to be part of the solution to Florida's longstanding history of farmworker abuse and poverty: the Fair Food Program.
4. The current CEO of Wendy's is Emil Brolick, who was the president of Taco Bell when it became the first company to sign a Fair Food Agreement in 2005. Surely, if under Mr. Brolick's leadership Taco Bell decided to partner with the CIW, Wendy's can also take this important step and in doing so level the playing field in the fast food industry.
5. Wendy's says it is paying a premium on its tomato purchases. The truth is, whatever premium Wendy's pays is not the Fair Food Premium, it is not being monitored by the third-party [Fair Foods Standards Council](#), and it is not going to address farmworkers' grinding poverty.
6. Wendy's also claims its suppliers already belong to the Fair Food Program. This statement is both unverifiable and meaningless because Wendy's, unlike its competitors in the Fair Food Program, does not have to report their Florida tomato purchases to the Fair Food Standards Council nor suspend their purchases from any participating grower found out of compliance with the Fair Food Code of Conduct — dual linchpins that give the Program its teeth.
7. Wendy's should live up to the values it says it stands for: "Quality is Our Recipe; Do the Right Thing; Treat Others with Respect; Profit Means Growth; and Give Something Back."



LANGUAGE ON FAIR FOOD PROGRAM

- ♣ The Fair Food Program is a historic partnership among farmworkers, the vast majority of Florida tomato growers, and eleven leading food corporations. Together, these partners are building a new tomato industry that advances the human rights and dignity of farmworkers.
- ♣ By committing to the Fair Food Program, the 12 participating corporations, such as McDonald's, Subway and Walmart, demand more humane labor standards from their Florida tomato suppliers; they pay a one penny premium to improve workers' pay and purchase exclusively from growers who meet the higher standards of the Program. Since 2011, over \$14 million has been distributed to tomato pickers through the Fair Food Program's penny premium.

- ♣ On front page of New York Times in April 2014, the Fair Food Program called “best workplace-monitoring program... in the U.S.” The Fair Food Program was also recently heralded [in the Washington Post](#) as “one of the great human rights success stories of our day” and in a White House report by a Presidential Advisory Council concerning global efforts to combat human trafficking as “[one of the most successful and innovative programs](#)” to that end.
- ♣ The Coalition of Immokalee Workers was recently selected as a recipient of the Roosevelt Institute’s prestigious Four Freedoms Medal for 2013, putting it in the company of past recipients such as Nelson Mandela and the Dalai Lama.
- ♣ The documentary film *Food Chains*, which profiles the Fair Food Program, just premiered at Tribeca Film Festival. The film is produced by Eva Longoria and Eric Schlosser, with narration by Forest Whittaker.

HISTORY OF FARMWORKER EXPLOITATION AND POVERTY IN FLORIDA

For decades, Florida's farmworkers faced poverty wages and daily violations of their basic rights in order to harvest the food on our plates:

- 1) **Stagnant, sub-poverty wages:** Florida tomato harvesters are still paid by the piece. The prevailing piece rate today is 50 cents for every 32-lbs of tomatoes a worker picks, a rate that has remained virtually unchanged since 1980. As a result of that stagnation, a worker today must pick nearly 2.5 tons of tomatoes to earn minimum wage in a typical 10-hour workday – twice the amount a worker had to pick to earn minimum wage thirty years ago. Most farmworkers today earn less than \$12,000 a year.
- 2) **Denial of fundamental labor rights:** Florida farmworkers have no right to overtime pay, no benefits and no right to organize in order to improve these conditions.
- 3) **Modern-day slavery:** In the most extreme cases, workers have been forced to labor against their will through the use or threat of physical violence.

All of this is changing, however, with the Fair Food Program. We must strengthen and expand these hard-won gains. *¡Si se puede!*

