

This is how tomatoes make their way from the fields of Florida to Tricon's tacos, burgers, and salad bars...



As a Tricon shareholder, you should know that:

- Florida tomato growers have paid the same piece rate (40-45 cents per 32-lb bucket) for over twenty years. (Florida and US Departments of Labor)
- At 40 cents per 32-lb bucket, you have to pick and haul 2 tons of tomatoes to make \$50 in a day.
- The vast majority of farmworkers do not receive overtime pay, sick leave, health insurance, holiday pay, or any kind of pension, and are denied the right to organize without fear of retaliation.
- According to the latest U.S. Dept. of Labor Report to Congress (1/2001), farmworkers earn a median annual income of \$7,500. The same report strongly condemns conditions in US fields, saying: "Low wages, sub-poverty annual earnings, significant periods of un- and underemployment... all add up to a labor force in significant economic distress."
- Taco Bell is a major buyer of Florida tomatoes... cheap, high-quality tomatoes kept cheap by the same "sub-poverty annual earnings" and "significant economic distress" condemned in the DOL report. Yet Taco Bell continues to insist that, "This is unrelated to our business and we're not going to get involved." (Tricon Senior Vice President Jonathan Blum, Naples Daily News, 5/1/02)

That's why farmworkers from Florida are leading a national **BOYCOTT of TACO BELL**, and that boycott has quickly become the most talked-about cause on college campuses today. Through their "**Boot the Bell**" campaign, students across the country are organizing to remove Taco Bell restaurants from their campuses until Taco Bell agrees to help end "sweatshops in the fields." But there is a solution, one that would be **fair for farmworkers** and could well **boost Tricon's bottom-line...**

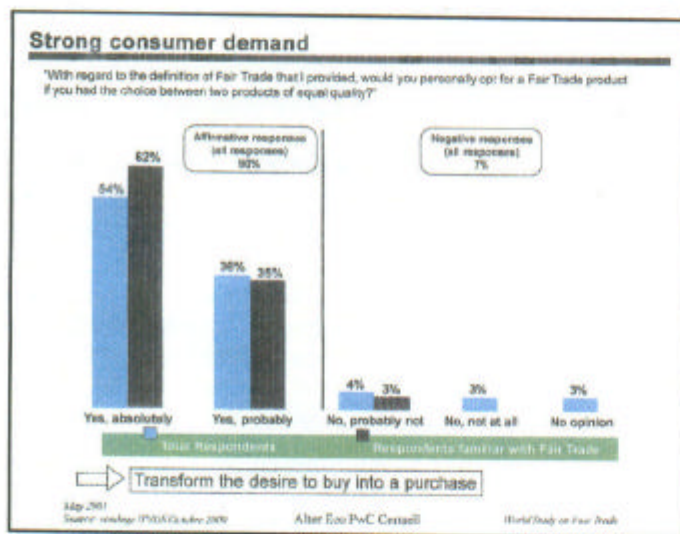
Not just fast... but FAIR food

What is "Fair Food"?: Fair Food is based on a simple, universal concept -- an honest day's pay for an honest day's work. Fair Food is food produced under the guarantee that **certain minimum social criteria are met in its production**, including basic human and labor rights, like the right to a living wage, overtime pay, and the right to organize without fear of retaliation. Examples of Fair Trade goods include fair trade coffee and "sweat-free" apparel.

What's in it for Taco Bell?: Fair Trade **adds value**. According to a Price Waterhouse Coopers study on retail marketing trends from October, 2001, entitled "**Strong Growth Potential for the Fair Trade Market**":

"Consumers want complete information about the products they buy and guarantees that workers who manufacture them *do so under decent conditions*. In a broader sense, this trend indicates that consumers... want to be able to select and consume products responsibly. Consumer criteria for choosing products include food safety and hygiene guarantees for products and environmental and *social added value*." (emphasis added)

That same study reports that **90% of consumers questioned** would "opt for a Fair Trade product if you had the choice between two products of equal quality." (graph)



The report concludes: "The race is on for marketing these products, with all major retailers seeking to take the leading positions on the issue." Staking a legitimate claim as the fast-food industry's Fair Food leader would ensure Taco Bell **brand protection** from attacks for sub-standard labor conditions in its supplier chains while **enhancing its brand image**, especially among its target demographic -- the youth market.

What would it take?

The good news is, there is a “minimal extra cost for Fair Trade Products.” According to the same Price Waterhouse Coopers study:

“The extra cost of Fair Trade remains a marginal 0.1% to 1% surcharge to both manufacturers and retailers, allowing them to strongly enhance their image with their stake holders, which include customers, shareholders, employers, the media, non-commercial partnerships, and institutions.”

Farmworkers from Immokalee, Florida, are asking Taco Bell to be part of the solution to decades of farmworker poverty. This request represents an excellent opportunity for Taco Bell to truly “think outside the bun” and distinguish its brand among fast-food companies. Here’s how:

- Taco Bell would use its influence as a major buyer of tomatoes to require that its Florida tomato suppliers join representatives of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers at the table to negotiate fairer wages and working conditions for farmworkers.
- Taco Bell would contribute to an immediate solution to farmworkers’ sub-poverty wages by paying at least 1 penny more per pound for tomatoes it buys from its Florida tomato suppliers.
- Taco Bell would work with CIW and Florida tomato supplier representatives to define a code of conduct to be required of its suppliers in the future.

As a shareholder in Tricon, you can help move Taco Bell in the right direction. Ask Tricon executives why they have failed to see the justice — and the opportunity — in the workers’ request. It’s better business to be good corporate citizen.



Protest outside Taco Bell, Tampa, Florida 2/01

We believe that Taco Bell holds the key to a fairer future for Florida’s tomato pickers. With a minimum of expense, Taco Bell could help turn Florida’s “Harvest of Shame” into a “Harvest of Dignity, Respect, and a Fair Wage” for thousands of this country’s hardest workers. Taco Bell’s participation in such a solution would certainly redound to its advantage, demonstrating that it cares about its workers, from the top to the bottom of its operations. In this sense, and for very little cost, Taco Bell could stake a claim as a leader in the industry, pioneering the concept of “not just fast, but fair, food.”

Here's what people are saying around the nation about the Taco Bell boycott:

Eric Schlosser, author, Fast Food Nation: "We all eat. But we rarely stop to think about where our food comes from, how it was made -- and who makes it possible. Most of America's fruits and vegetables are still picked by hand. The farm workers who pick them are among the nation's poorest. In the same way that Nike has been held accountable for the mistreatment of the Asian workers who make its sneakers, major companies like Taco Bell must be held accountable for the mistreatment of the American farm workers who pick their fruits and vegetables. Just an extra penny a pound could make the difference between a life of poverty and a living wage."

Simon Billenness, Trillium Asset Management (in the Colorado Daily, 11/29/01): "To many Americans, the term 'sweatshop' may conjure up images of overseas workers in deplorable conditions. What they may not see is that similar working conditions exist in the United States... (The Taco Bell boycott) is a new and significant step in the anti-sweatshop movement. This campaign will be a model for pressing the fast-food companies to clean up their supply chains."

Professor Gary Chaison, Clark University, Worcester, MA (in the Christian Science Monitor, 2/1/01): "The worst thing a company can do is have its name associated with something like exploited labor..." Chaison agrees that college campuses are ripe for such a boycott, with a general anti-corporate sentiment and a hunger for a cause..."If someone says 'how do you feel about eating food picked by exploited farmworkers,' they will like just not eat it."

Cardinal Roger Mahony, Archbishop of Los Angeles, CA (in a Letter to Taco Bell, 9/21/01): "I am writing to you at this time to plead with you to exercise the leadership of the Taco Bell corporation in protecting and enhancing workers' rights in the tomato industry, especially in Florida, where the Taco Bell corporation receives so much of its tomato product... As you probably know, a very slight increase in the cost of those tomato products, if passed on to the workers, would greatly improve their wages, benefits, and working conditions."



Protest outside Taco Bell in Tallahassee, Florida, 3/01

If you'd like to hear from the farmworkers themselves about the boycott, come this evening, 5/16, at 6:00pm, to the Braden Center, 3208 West Broadway, Louisville, KY