

UFCW Members Working at Smithfield/John Morrell Raise Living Standards for Meatpacking Workers



UFCW 304A members at Smithfield/John Morrell.

A new contract covering 2,400 Smithfield/John Morrell workers in Sioux Falls, S.D., raises living standards for meatpacking workers and their families. The contract negotiated by union members of UFCW Local 304A provides wage increases of \$1.45 over four years (immediately increasing base-wage rates to \$13.30 per hour); keeps health care affordable with low weekly contributions and increased coverage on prescription drugs; improves the pay rate for several jobs and the progression for new hires; and improves funeral pay.

The Sioux Falls contract is the latest of several major collective bargaining wins for UFCW packing and food processing members. Workers in Sioux Falls took part in a unity bargaining effort with more than 10,000 other workers at twelve other UFCW local unions that are bargaining or have recently settled new contracts with Smithfield.

Workers took coordinated and unified worksite actions over the last year to send a strong message to Smithfield that UFCW members are willing to stick together for contracts that raise working conditions and living standards for meatpacking workers across the industry. This united approach has produced the best contracts in the pork industry. **OP**

UFCW's "Walmart Workers for Change" Campaign Gives Workers the Opportunity to Demand a Voice in the Workplace

Thousands of Walmart associates nationwide, inspired by President Obama's election and the introduction of the Employee Free Choice Act in Congress, are standing up and demanding a voice in the workplace. Their campaign for a union, Walmart Workers for Change, includes Walmart workers across the country who are speaking out for change on the job.

Workers are featured in a video by the campaign that shows the kind of anti-worker tactics world's largest retailer employs. In the video, which can be seen at www.walmartworkersforchange.org, workers detail the company's response to their organizing efforts.

Workers in more than 100 stores in 15 states are taking action, joining together and signing union representation cards, speaking out, and citing a lack of respect from the company, poverty-level wages and sub-par benefits as reasons they need a union voice on the job. And their voices are being heard. Workers' stories are being featured in newspapers and other media nationwide. **OP**

BREAKING NEWS: Senator Specter Switches Parties

Today Senator Arlen Specter (D-PA) announced that he would be running for his U.S. Senate seat in 2010 as a Democrat, not a Republican.

Senator Specter was blunt in his statement, saying that he would not be an automatic rubber stamp or 60th vote for Democrats.

The UFCW is looking forward to working with Senator Specter on issues that are important to our members and to working families across the nation. Senator Specter will have an opportunity to earn the support of workers in Pennsylvania. But as long as he is against the Employee Free Choice Act, it will be hard to earn that support—even as a Democrat. **OP**

Bruno's Workers and Community Members Rally for Good Jobs as Judge Orders Bruno's to Honor Union Contract
 This morning, dozens of community groups and elected officials participated in a rally to support members of UFCW Local 1657 in Birmingham, Ala. Local 1657 represents more than 2,000 members who work for Bruno's, Inc., which filed for bankruptcy in February.

"The employees who built this company from the ground up have earned the right to be partners in Bruno's revival," said Sheila Smoot, Jefferson County Commissioner, District 2. "The citizens of Birmingham look forward to a new Bruno's owner who'll make a long-term commitment to the city and workers."



Stacy Gibson, an employee at Bruno's for more than 20 years, speaking at the rally.

On Monday, a federal bankruptcy judge upheld the contract between Bruno's and Local 1657, which Bruno's had been seeking to void. "We are delighted with Judge Cohen's decision, which will help keep thousands of good jobs in Alabama and Florida," said Elaise Fox, UFCW Local 1657 President. "The court has ensured that Bruno's workers will be essential players in the revitalization of this celebrated company."

Bruno's assets are scheduled to be sold at auction on April 29th. Last week, Local 1657 members took steps to authorize a strike in the event that Judge Cohen voided the contract, but announced today no strike would be called. "Fortunately, such serious measures weren't necessary," said Fox. "UFCW members will stay on the job serving Bruno's customers." **OP**

UFCW Members and Community Activists Rally to Support Fred Meyer Workers
 On Thursday, April 23, 2009, nearly 100 community activists, UFCW Local 555 members, and non-food workers at The Dalles Fred Meyer gathered together in support of non-food workers at the store.

Fred Meyer has refused to settle a fair contract with these workers. In November of 2007, non-food employees overwhelmingly voted to be represented by UFCW Local 555. This struggle at the bargaining table is a perfect illustration of why workers need the Employee Free Choice Act, which would require employers to bargain fairly with employees. To learn more about The Dalles Fred Meyer and the struggles of the non-food workers at the store, please visit www.treatusfair.com. **OP**



UFCW Members Resume Bargaining at GPC in Muscatine

UFCW Local 86D members working at Grain Processing Corporation (GPC) in Muscatine, Iowa headed back to the bargaining table this week to resume negotiations. Over 300 workers at the company have been locked out since August, and they say they want to get back to work—but the company has refused to negotiate a fair contract. Workers are concerned with contract issues like job security and outsourcing. **OP**

UFCW Ohio Locals Speaking with One Voice at the State House

UFCW local unions in Ohio are speaking together with one union, one voice for the first time at the Ohio state house. Locals 880, 75, and 1059, along with the International Chemical Workers Union Council, have joined together to coordinate political programs, hiring a lobbyist to advance issues that matter to working families. This joint effort by UFCW Ohio locals gives them more power to achieve real political action on behalf of workers across their state. **OP**