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Contact:

Jake Rater, Just Harvest USA
jake@justharvestusa.org
(239) 357-1473

Leading Food Advocates To Visit Farmworker Community, Calling on Supermarket Publix and Fast-Food Chain Wendy's to Respect Farmworkers Rights and Dignity

Immokalee, FL – On Wednesday, February 6th, a dozen prominent authors, sustainable food advocates, and small farmers will participate in a day-long delegation to Immokalee, Florida to witness firsthand the Coalition of Immokalee Workers' innovative Fair Food Program. The Program – a unique collaboration between Florida's tomato growers, major retailers, and farmworkers – is setting the standard for social accountability in the domestic produce industry by ensuring respect for farmworkers' rights and dignity. However, the delegation will serve to highlight the staunch refusal of Florida's largest corporation, Publix supermarkets, and national fast-food chain Wendy's to put their weight behind supporting this historic partnership.

WHO: **Raj Patel**, Author, *Stuffed and Starved*; **Nina Fallenbaum**, Food and Agriculture Editor, Hyphen Magazine; **Abigail Augusta Rogosheske**, Healthy Eating Minnesota Network; **Rebecca Wiggins-Reinhard**, Farm Fresh Director, La Semilla Food Center; **Jose Duarte**, Chef, Taranta Restaurant; **Greg Baker**, Chef, Tampa Refinery; **Navina Khanna**, Co-founder, Live Real; **Andy Fisher**, Co-Founder, Community Food Security Coalition; **Ben Burkett**, President, National Family Farm Coalition

WHAT: Sustainable food advocates to tour Immokalee farmworker community, visit Fair Food Program participating grower, and hold a delegation at Naples Publix and Wendy's locations.

WHERE: **Publix Supermarket**, 15265 Collier Blvd, Naples, FL;
Wendy's, 10941 Airport Pulling Rd, Naples, FL

WHEN: Wednesday, February 6th, 2013 Publix Supermarket delegation 3:00 P.M.;
Wednesday, February 6th, 2013 Wendy's delegation 3:30 P.M.

WHY: Florida farmworkers have long faced brutal conditions in the fields, including sub-poverty wages, widespread labor rights violations, and even modern-day slavery. Today, however, change is underway through an historic partnership among farmworkers, over 90% of Florida tomato growers, and eleven other leading food corporations. Together, these partners are building a new tomato industry that advances the human rights and dignity of farmworkers while enhancing the sustainability of the industry. By committing to the Fair Food Program, the 11 participating corporations agree to purchase their Florida tomatoes exclusively from growers who meet more humane labor standards, as well as to pay a penny-per-pound premium to help lift workers out of abject poverty.

Both Publix and Wendy's however, are refusing to do their part, and if they have their way, the potential for unprecedented farm labor transformation promised by the CIW's landmark agreements would be significantly diminished. That's because the solution to farm labor exploitation and abuse contained in the Fair Food principles depends on the participation of all the major purchasers of Florida tomatoes.

The delegation is hosted by Just Harvest USA, a national organization that aims to build a more just and sustainable food system with a focus on establishing fair wages, humane working conditions, and fundamental rights for farmworkers. They achieve this through broad public education about the conditions in which our food is produced and mobilizing support for farmworker-led and grassroots campaigns.