



Certification and Standards Programs of Members of the Food Chain Workers Alliance

Numerous certification programs exist to claim that a particular food product is produced under good standards, such as respecting workers' rights and protecting the environment. These claims can be confusing for consumers and for workers, and their standards may not truly be enforced nor follow social justice principles.

The Food Chain Workers Alliance believes that certification programs can be helpful in raising standards for food workers as well as educating consumers about how their food is produced. We have developed criteria that we believe should form the basis for any legitimate market-based claim of fair or just working conditions, as part of a certification, Corporate Code of Conduct, or other private claim. Our criteria borrow heavily from the International Labor Rights Forum's Roadmap for Ethical Product Certification and Standard Setting Initiatives and the Domestic Fair Trade Association Principles:

- *Right to freedom of association and collective bargaining
- *Fair contracts between workers and their employers
- *Direct involvement of workers and their organizations in developing the standards and program oversight
- *Fully functioning complaints process
- *Living wages and fair pricing
- *Occupational health and safety
- *Child labor protections
- *Capacity building and training for workers
- *Transparency and full disclosure
- *Full supply chain approach

Our full Statement on Certification Programs is available on our website: www.foodchainworkers.org

Many Alliance members are leaders in social justice certification programs, other "high road" standards-setting programs such as agreements between workers' organizations and employers, and/or an organization that evaluates such programs. The programs include most of the above criteria, and some cover all. And all have engaged workers in their process of developing the standards in their program.



Photo courtesy of Restaurant Opportunities Center of Michigan



The **Agricultural Justice Project (AJP)** is a third-party certification program designed to create fairness and equity throughout the food system, including agriculture, food processing and production, and retail. AJP's social justice standards cover fair pricing for producers, labor rights and living wages, and health and safety. Alliance member **el Comité de Apoyo a los Trabajadores Agrícolas (CATA – Farmworkers Support Committee)** is a founding member of the AJP steering committee. AJP accredits and trains certifiers and workers' representatives to inspect farms and other food businesses.

For more information, go to www.agriculturaljusticeproject.org.



The **Coalition of Immokalee Workers**, an Alliance member, has won numerous Codes of Conduct through its **Campaign for Fair Food** with growers groups such as the Florida Tomato Growers Exchange and major corporations such as McDonald's, Whole Foods, and Bon Appetit Management (a food service company) to improve the wages and working conditions of farmworkers in the tomato industry in Florida. The Codes of Conduct include direct, on-going payments to farmworkers to address substandard wages, zero-tolerance for slavery, workers' health and safety committees, and workers' participation in monitoring conditions in the fields.

For more information, go to ciw-online.org/101.html#cff.

The **Domestic Fair Trade Association** (DFTA) is an association of farm and food workers, farmers, retailers, processors, businesses, and NGOs building a movement to transform our food system into one that is more healthy, sustainable, and just. The DFTA is building a movement based on the values and principles of international fair trade, but focused on the real needs of farmworkers, family-scale farmers, and other food businesses and workers in North America. The Alliance is a member of the DFTA. Rather than create a new certification program, the DFTA will serve as a public watchdog of social justice and fair trade market claims through its evaluation and endorsement process, based on the Domestic Fair Trade Principles established by its multi-stakeholder membership.

For more information, go to dftassociation.org.



In 2005 Alliance member the **Restaurant Opportunities Center of New York** organized the **New York City Restaurant Industry (NYCRI) Roundtable**, a regular convening of restaurant owners who take the 'high-road' to profitability. Members of the NYCRI sign onto a Code of Conduct to commit to respect, and to go above and beyond, the legal protections of restaurant workers. Each of the **Restaurant Opportunities Centers United's** affiliates has organized or is in the process of creating a Restaurant Industry Roundtable for their city.

For more information, go to www.rocny.org/what-we-do/high-road.

Alliance member **United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1500** represents 23,000 grocery store employees in the greater New York City area. The union with its members-led bargaining committees have negotiated contracts with supermarket chains to ensure fair wages, health insurance, pension contributions and other benefits for the workers.

For more information, go to www.ufcw1500.org.



For more information about certification programs, you can also check out the following resources:

- International Labor Rights Forum – <http://laborrights.org>, (202) 347-4100
- Free 2 Work – <http://free2work.org/>, a website that helps consumers identify companies which do not have forced or child labor in their production

The members of the Alliance's Certifications and Standards Committee are:

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 United Food & Commercial Workers Local 1500 * Warehouse Workers for Justice*

