

Farm Union Agrees to Contracts With 7 Table-Grape Growers

FRESNO, Calif., May 8 (AP)—The United Farm Workers announced today that it had reached contract agreements with seven table-grape growers at Delano, Calif., where Cesar Chavez began his long battle to represent field hands 33 years ago.

The contracts are with growers where a majority of workers voted for U.F.W. representation during the first weeks of California's historic secret-ballot union elections for agricultural workers in 1975. They include an agreement with M. Caratan, where the union won its first major victory in elections that were aimed at ending years of union-farmer strife.

Besides M. Caratan, the union reached agreements with Tex-Cal Land Management Inc., Nick Canata, Nick Bozanich, Jack Radovich, Jake Cesare and Sam Barbic.

The seven contracts will be signed in about a week, Marc Grossman, a farm workers' spokesman, said. The agreements call for a base wage of \$3.50 an hour, effective last Friday, compared with the previous base of \$3.15 to \$3.25 an hour at those ranches, he said. The pacts will cover about 2,000 workers during fall harvest.

'First Big Success'

"This marks the first big success in the U.F.W.'s drive to recover grape contracts lost in 1973 when most Delano grape growers signed with the teamsters after their U.F.W. agreements expired," Mr. Grossman said.

"The same Delano vineyards were originally struck by the U.F.W. at the beginning of the 1965 Delano grape strike," he added.

That 1965 strike and a later boycott of table grapes brought Mr. Chavez into national prominence.

The farm workers and Delano grape growers signed a contract in 1970, but the growers refused to renew it three years later, charging that Mr. Chavez had mismanaged the union hiring hall that supplied workers.

Delano's 29 table grape growers signed

with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters in 1973, spurring renewed picketing that led to 3,500 arrests of farm workers' supporters and the shooting death of one picket.

End of the Boycott

Mr. Chavez then suspended the strike but renewed the boycott, which he ended earlier this year on the ground that the state's Agricultural Labor Relations Act was working.

That act was adopted in 1975 by the Legislature under pressure from Gov. Edmund G. Brown Jr. to guarantee secret-ballot farm union elections.

In the first four months of voting in 1975, the state conducted 400 elections. The farm workers won most of the individual ranch elections and almost a majority of the overall vote, but the teamsters led in total victories at Delano grape vineyards.

However, the teamsters withdrew from farm labor organizing earlier last year.