

# President's Newsletter

Office of the President  
United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO  
La Paz, Keene, California 93531



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## PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

### NAFO Visits UFW Executive Board

Representatives from the National Association of Farmworker Organizations (NAFO) visited us in La Paz last month and shared with us the goals and objectives of their organization.

Brother *Tom Jones*, NAFO's national representative from their Washington D.C. office, told us that NAFO is made up of representatives from different farmworker organizations across the country. NAFO's main goals are advocating and protecting farmworkers rights. They are also interested in developing new farmworker groups around the country.

Brother *Jones* also described some of the cases that NAFO is now involved in. He told us that they are actively working with the Labor Department on issues such as child labor and access rights and that they've been investigating the Farm Labor Contracting Registration Act (FLCRA) and documenting how and where the law has been abused by labor contractors. They've also done work in the area of welfare reform, hunger and malnutrition, and farmworker housing.

NAFO is supported by its member organizations, each of whom pay \$500.00 a year in dues. The organization does not rely on outside funding.

Brother *Jones* also told us that NAFO looks to the UFW to provide positions on issues that affect us as a Union. We passed a Joint Resolution with NAFO in which we pledged to encourage and support each others goals and programs, exchange views and positions on issues of mutual concern, and work in common effort.

## COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

### Prevedelli Ranch Signs with UFW

The UFW recently signed a contract with Prevedelli Ranch in Watsonville. The company employs 12 workers to harvest apples and plums during the 5 month peak season.

The election was held on July 22, 1977, one week after we had filed an unfair labor practice suit against the company for firing 6 workers and evicting a family from their home in the labor camp. All of the workers voted for the Union and we were certified on August 15. The fired and evicted workers were re-instated at their jobs and in their home 3 months later.

The contract was signed on June 12, 1978. It provides for a pay increase from \$2.50 to \$3.35 an hour, and includes the Robert F. Kennedy Medical Plan, the Juan de la Cruz Pension Fund, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Education Fund, and the hiring hall.

The contract expires on December 1, 1978 and will be renegotiated with the rest of the apple industry contracts. Negotiating committee members who worked on getting the contract are *Francisco Escobedo*, president; *Roberto Zepeda*, secretary; and *Miguel Zepeda*, *Santiago Zepeda*, and *Sylvia Escobedo*, vocals. They were assisted by UFW negotiator *Marion Steeg*.

## Grievances

Two grievances involving 18 workers at Ranch 2 in Coachella were recently settled. In both cases the company had failed to provide full employment to the girdling crew to which all 18 workers belonged.

The first grievance arose when the company failed to call two of the crew members back to work, thus causing these workers to lose two days pay. The second grievance arose when the company hired a completely different crew to work for one day without informing the usual crew and without going through the hiring hall. The 16 workers on the crew lost a day's work and pay.

As a remedy, the company has agreed to pay \$1,000 to the 18 workers involved in settlement of the two grievances.

Credit for the settlement goes to the whole crew, who did all the investigating and documenting of the grievance. Assisting the crew were ranch steward *Jesus Jimenez*, camp committee vice-president *Gilberto Alvarez* and field representative *Sister Jean Eilers*.

## Arbitrations

We have had two arbitrations decided in our favor recently at the West Foods Ranch in Ventura. The first grievance concerned the company's failure to follow the discipline and discharge procedure when they fired *Salvador Amador* without advising the steward or the Union. Our contract states that in the case of a firing, the company must inform the steward of their decision to fire a worker before the firing takes place; then they must inform the union of their decision within 24 hours. West Foods did neither when they fired *Salvador Amador*. On June 21, Arbitrator *Reginald Alleyende* ruled that Brother *Amador* be re-instated since he had been improperly discharged by the company.

The second grievance concerned the company's failure to pay the required time and 1/2 wages to an incentive crew. Again, our contract states that incentive crews should be paid time and 1/2 and the arbitrator has ordered the company to pay the workers the full amount owed. Each of the 7 members on the crew got an additional \$17.85 and the crew leader got an additional \$23.77.

Ranch committee members who worked on both grievances were *Juan Medina*, President; *Victor Becerra*, Vocal; *Ricardo Olavarrieta*, Vocal and Steward *Roberto M. Luna*.

## AGRICULTURAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD

### UFW Certified at Egg City; Three Year Battle Won

A three year struggle by farm workers at Julius Goldman's Egg City to win UFW representation ended in victory on July 10 when the Agricultural Labor Relations Board officially announced it had certified the union as exclusive bargaining agent for all agricultural employees of the company.

Egg City, the largest egg ranch in the world, was the scene of a bitterly contested ALRB election on September 9, 1975, shortly after the farm labor law took effect. Final decision on the election depended on 165 challenged ballots, most of them the votes of pro-UFW workers who had struck the company earlier that year. (The Teamsters had held a contract with Egg City since the early 1970's.)

On October 14, 1977, just as the ALRB was preparing to publically count the challenged ballots, board officials announced the box containing the challenged ballots had been stolen from its Oxnard office. It was never recovered.

Earlier this year the board conducted a second election among the workers who cast challenged ballots. The votes from that election gave the UFW a majority of the workers at the Moorpark, Ventura County firm.

## Settlements

### Minnehoma Land and Farming Company (Bakersfield)

A settlement was reached with Minnehoma for unfair labor practice charges that the company harassed its pro-union employees during an election campaign a year ago. The

Union lost the election by one vote: 65-no union, 64-UFW.

During the almond harvest last summer several workers who openly supported the union were constantly cited with work violations by the company. After the elections the company reduced its work force and laid off the union organizers. Others were fired based on the violations. Work violations are rare at Minnehoma with the exception of the period during the election campaign. In addition, the wives and relatives of the organizers, who do the seasonal work each harvest, were not rehired this year.

The company agreed to a settlement of \$11,800 in back pay for 17 people. Five workers who were fired, Brothers *Ramon Galvan, Jose Barrera, Ramon Huerta, Roy Ramos* and *Claudio Salinas*, were offered permanent year round jobs and their records were cleared of work violations. Three other workers can apply at the company as new workers with cleared records. The 12 women who were not rehired will be offered seasonal work this year. The Notice to Employees will be posted and read to the workers. Negotiating the settlement for the UFW was Sister *Debbie Miller*.

## ORGANIZING

### Election Victory at F and P

Workers in the Oxnard area secured another election victory recently at F and P Growers Association in Fillmore. On June 23, the workers there voted UFW - 171; no union - 102 and challenged - 2.

The company employs about 300 citrus workers during their 9 month peak season.

During the period before the election, the company carried out a very strong "no union" campaign. One of their attempts to sabotage the worker's efforts to organize a fair election included holding a huge dinner, complete with steaks and Coors beer, on the night before the election in an effort to convince workers to vote "no union" the following day.

The campaign for the Union was handled by the workers on the organizing committee, and credit for the election victory goes to brothers *Jose Lechuga*, president; *Elias Sandoval*, secretary; and *Salvador Pulido, Manuel Cepeda* and *Ramon Sandoval*, vocals.

## ADMINISTRATION

### Field Offices Get Face Lift

Two field offices have been remodeled by the National Farm Worker Service Center Construction Department, and two more offices are in the process of having work done.

In March the crew, directed by Executive Board Member *Richard Chavez*, remodeled the Coachella field office. They also fixed the ceiling, painted and put in air conditioning. In Oxnard the crew put up dividers in the large one room office to allow for more office space and more privacy.

Currently the crew is working on the offices in San Ysidro and Salinas, putting up partitions and building waiting rooms. Brother *Chavez* was assisted by Brothers *Lupe*

*Murgia, Max Avalos, Mario Vargas* and *Francisco Garcia*.

## RFK MEDICAL PLAN

*Does the Kennedy Plan pay for medical care received as a result of an accident on the job?*

No. If you have to go to a doctor, are hospitalized, or receive any other kind of medical care as a result of an accident that happened while you were working, it is the responsibility of your company's insurance to pay for that medical care where there are Workers' Compensation laws that make a company have such coverage for its employees.

Any illness resulting from your job must likewise be paid by your employer's insurance under its Worker's Compensation coverage rather than by the Kennedy Plan.

Any claim received by the Kennedy Plan where the medical care resulted from an on the job accident or illness will be denied.

## OFFICIAL NOTICES

### Latest Elections

F and P Growers Association/Fillmore/lemons/June 23/UFW-171; no union-102; challenged-2.

### New Certifications

Roberts Farms/Delano/grapes/June 27.  
Neumann Seeds/El Centro/seeds/July 7.  
Egg City/Moorpark/eggs/July 10.

### PERSONNEL

The Mexicali Project has a new director: Sister *Minnie Ybarra*, who took over the project July 1. As director she will be assuring that our members and their families continue to receive quality medical care.

The project coordinates the services of six doctors, a medical lab, a radiologist, a pharmacy, a hospital and a panel of specialists and surgeons for the 1500 families registered in the project. Working closely with Sister *Ybarra* in handling all the project's responsibilities, is the Comité de Servicios Medicos, a four person committee which sets the policies, and the Concilio, a council of representatives from each ranch, which keeps members informed about the project.

Sister *Ybarra* was the past Director of the Campesino Center in San Ysidro. Another staff member of the San Ysidro Campesino Center, Sister *Gloria Soto*, has been named director of the soon-to-open Tijuana Project. The project, still being formulated, will begin providing services to members and their families in late August.



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*Lydia T.*