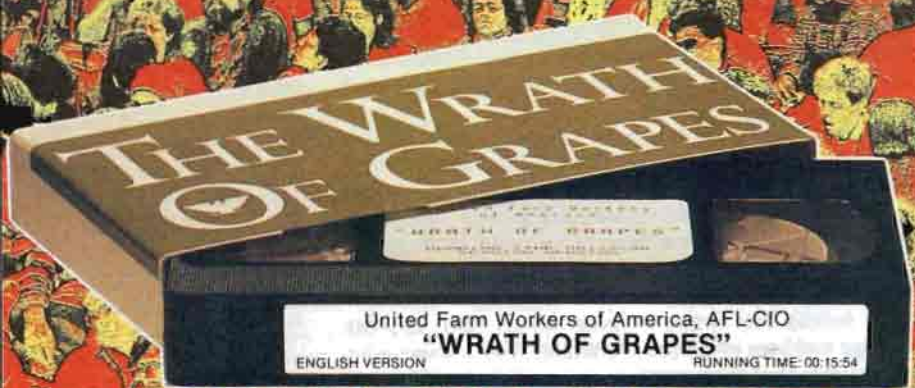


FOOD AND JUSTICE

Published by the United Farm Workers

January 1988



Passing It On



In this month's issue, we have devoted several pages to our boycott video, "The Wrath of Grapes." We are featuring some of the many men and women here and in Canada who have freely given their time and energy to show it to others.

In doing so, we are honoring not only them but also hundreds of others who are showing the video to their families and friends, church groups, classes, union locals, and political and community groups. We learn about their work from our boycott personnel in the major cities and from the many letters we receive at our headquarters each day — letters that tell us how rewarded these people feel when helping spread our boycott message and how profound the impact is on viewers who had no idea that farm workers are again being deprived of their rights or that the pesticide threat to both farm workers and consumers is so devastating.

Our boycott video has turned out to be our most formidable boycott weapon. In fact, in some ways, the many good people who are volunteering to show it to others across the country are for the UFW in the '80s what picketers in front of stores were in the '60s and mid-'70s. They have already shown the video to thousands, and more and more people are asking for copies to show others.

We are feeling the impact of all this activity here at our La Paz headquarters. But we who receive these increased requests and respond to them each day are not the only ones feeling the impact. Grape growers are, too. And when they feel their wallets getting thinner and thinner, they'll suddenly reexperience some more important feelings they haven't used in a long time — compassion for workers who harvest their crops and respect for the health of consumers who buy them. Then the boycott will be over. ♥

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Shown filling some of the nearly 50,000 requests for the boycott video at UFW headquarters in La Paz are (left to right): Tony Fajardo, Emmy Lopez, and Esmeralda Flores.

Making "The Wrath of Grapes"

Even though Lorena Parlee is accustomed to surprises in her life, she never expected to wind up playing a key role in a UFW grape boycott when she heard Cesar Chavez speak at the University of California-Irvine two years ago.

But after only a few minutes of casual conversation with the farm labor leader during a reception after the speech, it was clear that Parlee, a UC-Irvine history professor and Emmy-winning producer-writer of documentary films, and Chavez, professor of farm worker rights with boycott credits a mile long, had connected on a project that would turn out to have a remarkable impact on the grape boycott.

The final result of that initial chat was "The Wrath of Grapes," a short film that vividly documents the cruelty of growers and the suffering of their victims. "It was a story crying out to be seen and heard," Parlee said. "After I heard Cesar talk about what was happening to farm workers and the victims

of pesticides, I couldn't wait to get started."

Painful Process

In early 1986, Parlee, after some preliminary research and writing, enlisted the help of Lenny Bourin, an NBC News cameraman for nine years and a professor of communication and media at San Diego State University. "We hit it off right away," she said, "and actually wound up being co-producers instead of two people with expertise in certain areas."

Parlee said it was one of the most painful productions she has ever been involved in. "Some scenes I still can't get out of my mind — like that big helicopter coming toward us over the field, spewing poisonous spray from scores of jets like some eerie monster from outer space."

Also indelibly etched in her mind, Parlee said, were the touching interviews involving the victims of that monster:

parents of children dying of cancer or born with physical defects. "We visited them several times before we filmed the interviews," she said, "because we wanted them to be sure they didn't feel used or exploited. Even though they wanted to warn others about the horrors of pesticides, it was hard for them. It was for us, too. More than once we had to stop the camera and wait — the parents were crying. Lenny was crying. I was crying. I'll never forget those touching scenes."

Nor will actor Mike Farrell, who did the narration. Farrell, a long-time friend of farm workers who refused any payment for his work, was deeply moved throughout the narration. "I remember how upset he was," Parlee said, "to think that a young farm worker could still be murdered in this country just for voting for the UFW in an election" (21-year-old Rene Lopez, shot to death by a company agent during a "free and fair" election near Fresno in 1983).

"Unheard Of"

Parlee and Hourin finished the film in October 1986, and Chavez immediately began using it during his constant cross-country boycott trips. "I liked it from the beginning," he said, "not just because it was emotionally powerful, but because it gave such a clear picture of why we had to start boycotting grapes again and what our goals are. It did that better than any speech I or anyone else could give to explain the issues."

But even Chavez admits he didn't realize how potent a weapon the film was to become. "At first, I was the only one using it, but once I realized how moved people were at what they saw — sympathetic, yes, but angry, too — I knew we had to get it out as fast and to as many people as possible."

In January last year, after striking a good deal to mass produce video cassettes of the film, UFW boycott staffs began using it widely. Since then, on three occasions, staff members from the UFW headquarters in La Paz have headed

out to major cities for two-to-three-week telephone campaigns to distribute the video free to people who would take it, see it themselves, and then go around showing it to other groups — schools, churches, union locals, community and political organizations.

"I'll never forget those touching scenes."

"The response was incredible," Chavez said. "A whole new network of volunteers is developing. Some people have shown it to as many as 30 other groups. Right now, almost 50,000 copies have been distributed and we still haven't finished our telephone campaign."

David Martinez, boycott director in Canada, agreed. "It's inspiring the way so many people are sacrificing their time to show others the film. They remind me of the leaders of our support committees who helped us so much in the '70s."

Parlee said her colleagues find it hard to believe the UFW's distribution success. "The problem with most documentaries is getting them marketed and seen. TV won't take them if they have anything to do with a 'cause' and it's hard to get them out to organizations, too. So they're amazed when I tell them the farm workers have distributed 50,000 copies so far. To them, that's simply unheard of."

That number promises to become more and more unheard of. UFW boycotters and a growing number of friends of farm workers will keep showing the film until, finally, the wrath of enough people is aroused, enough table grapes go unsold, and profits are reduced enough to force growers to restore the rights of farm workers and refrain from endangering the health of consumers. ♡



Lorena Parlee

About the Producer

In education and experience, plus compassion for others, Lorena Parlee proved to be the ideal person to produce "The Wrath of Grapes" documentary. A native Californian, she earned a B.A. in Spanish at Old Dominion University in Virginia, an M.A. at the Monterey (California) Institute of Foreign Studies, and, in 1981, a doctorate in history at the University of California-San Diego.

Parlee studied and lived in Mexico and Latin America for three years, part of the time doing doctoral research under a Fulbright-Hays fellowship. She is fluent in both Spanish and Portuguese.

She has held teaching positions at UC-San Diego, UC-Santa Barbara, and UC-Irvine, primarily in Mexican and Latin American history. She also developed and taught courses in oral history methodology and interview techniques as applied to film production.

While teaching, Parlee also worked on several documentaries. She was associate producer of "Ballad of an Unsung Hero," the story of Pedro Gonzalez, once a telegraph operator for Pancho Villa and the first Spanish-speaking radio announcer in Los Angeles. It won a best-documentary Emmy in 1983. That same year she was also nominated for an Emmy for outstanding individual achievement by the San Diego Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

Parlee was script and historical consultant for "In the Name of the People," a film on El Salvador, which was an Academy Award nominee for best feature-length documentary in 1984.

Parlee, who accepted only expense payments for her work on "The Wrath of Grapes," is currently working on another documentary called "From the Other Side." It is about five women in the Mexican Revolution (1910-1917) who later migrated to California. ♡

ORDER FREE COPY

United Farm Workers of America, P.O. Box 62, Keene, CA 93570

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Passing It On

To see it is to want to pass it on.

That's the reaction of many people who have seen the UFW boycott video, "The Wrath of Grapes." In addition to vowing not to eat grapes after seeing the video, they are obtaining copies of it and showing it to students, church members, union locals, various other groups.

One such person, Toby Benetti, is profiled below, followed by briefer profiles of others like him who are also trying to distribute the video as widely as possible.

Farm workers are grateful to them and to the many other men and women like them, here and in Canada, who at the cost of much personal sacrifice are passing on the boycott message to thousands of people.



Toby Benetti and son, Arlo

About a year-and-a-half ago, Toby Benetti, Oxford, Michigan, saw the ad for "The Wrath of Grapes" video in *Food and Justice* and sent for a free copy. He and his wife, Linda, were appalled at scenes of abuses against farm workers and of the horrors of pesticide poisoning.

Since then, Benetti has shown the video to several groups, among them the Oxford-Orion Food Co-op, the Dominican Sisters in Oxford, a state assembly of the Church of God in Lansing, and participants of a series of weekend seminars conducted by Citizens for Alternatives to Chemical Contamination. And last Christmas, Benetti sent copies of the video as Christmas presents to his friends who own VCRs.

"No matter what the philosophy of the group is, conservative or liberal, the

reaction to the video is always the same," Benetti said. "People are amazed and angry and are eager to get others to see the video, too."

Benetti grew up near Oxford, a small town 40 miles from Detroit, and obtained a bachelor's degree at Oakland University in Rochester (Michigan). He teaches part-time, is concerned about food-related issues, and works as chief mechanic for Upland Hills Farm, an educational-recreational tour farm near Oxford.

Besides distributing the video and helping with fund-raising, Benetti has often put his mechanical skills to use for the Detroit boycott staff, repairing their cars and reducing high boycott transportation costs. "Farm workers have a great friend in Toby," said Arturo Mendoza, Detroit boycott director.

Benetti casually dismisses praise for his volunteer work by crediting his parents with creating a family atmosphere in which nonviolence and peace and justice values were as natural as breathing. "The farm worker struggle is our struggle, too — that's all there's to it," he says. "We want our children to learn this, too: that we have to take action when one segment of society tramples on the human rights of another — as growers are now doing to farm workers."

Toby and Linda Benetti are passing those high values on to their three children: Arlo, 9; Ria, 5; and Tavid, 3.

It certainly would not be the fault of Frances C. Valencia, Paramount, California, if any member of Local 9400 of the Communication Workers of America in Los Angeles is unaware of the UFW grape boycott. As secretary-treasurer, she is showing "The Wrath of Grapes" to all members as well as to other community groups. She said viewers are stunned by the film and furious that "this rotten stuff is going on in their own backyard and they didn't know it." Valencia says her concern for farm workers is a natural part of her 41 years of active involvement in the labor movement. "It bothers me when any worker doesn't get a fair shake," she said. "I just have to do something about it. That's just the way I am." Valencia is also active in the voter education and registration work of the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement — in the Los Angeles chapter and as a member of both its state and national executive boards.

Fortunately for the UFW grape boycott, the organizing skill of Craig McDonald of Washington, D.C., is matched by a deep compassion for the farm worker cause that goes back to the mid-'70s and his first community organizing work in Michigan. "The farm worker struggle has always been a main concern of mine," he said. Now his concern has even more far-reaching effects. He has worked with Ralph Nader's Public Citizen for eight years and is now director of Congress Watch, which monitors federal legislation and lobbies for the public interest. One of the group's aims is to strengthen federal pesticide laws. McDonald has personally shown "The Wrath of Grapes" 10 or more times to large gatherings of activists and grassroots organizers in Texas, North Carolina, Oklahoma, and Indiana. "Besides that," he said, "We have about 50 or more copies in use throughout the country."

Joe Flores has never forgotten nor is he ashamed that he was once a farm worker. But what he is ashamed of, and gets very angry about, is that farm workers are still treated more like slaves than the highly skilled workers they are. Flores, now with Local 2244 of the United Auto Workers at the joint Japanese-American Chevy Nova plant in Fremont, California, is on the executive board and is chairman of the education and newspaper committees. He has been tireless in showing the boycott video to the 2,200 plant employees and in churches and schools. "It's rewarding to see people get mad when they see what growers are doing to farm workers again and what horrible suffering their pesticides cause." Flores and his wife, Dolores, live in San Jose, where he serves on the board of the East Side Union School District as chairman of the bilingual committee. They are the parents of Angela, 24, and Robert, 21.



Frances C. Valencia



Craig McDonald



Joe Flores



Cindy Guerra

If you consider everything **Cindy Guerra** is involved in, it's a wonder she even had time to see the boycott video herself, much less show it to others. She is a full-time legal assistant for the law firm of Welsh, Rayson, and Associates and is attending classes at a community college to obtain a paralegal degree. She is also the president of the south Chicago Bremen chapter of the National Organization for Women. "We have 5,000 NOW members in 29 chapters through Illinois, and so far 20 chapters have seen the video," she said. Besides that, she has personally shown the video several times and has distributed it to scores of religious, peace and justice, and minority groups. Guerra explains her boycott support by saying, "I just cannot be silent about something terrible like that; we have to raise our voice and let other people know what's happening. Then, with enough people working together, we can put an end to it." Cindy lives in Oak Forest, Illinois.

"Watching 'The Wrath of Grapes' video is as close as you can get to seeing firsthand the misery grower greed and arrogance can cause farm workers, said **Doug Tobin**, director of education for the Ontario region of the Canadian Labour Congress. And he should know. Like 21-year-old Rene Lopez, shot to death in 1983 by a company agent after voting for UFW representation, Tobin also was threatened by an anti-UFW gunman when he and a group of Canadian supporters came to California to help the UFW with elections in 1975. "I'll never forget it — it was scary," he said. Tobin has already shown the video to almost 2,000 union members taking part in 30 weekend institutes throughout eastern Canada. He expects to double or triple that number before finishing his current program of 55 weekend institutes and 12 week-long workshops. Doug and his wife, Sharon, make their home in Toronto and have two children — Rick, 19, and Barb, 17.



Doug Tobin

Franciscan **Sister Rosemarie Kolmer**, director of the Pastoral Care Team at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital in Camden, New Jersey, came up with an innovative way to use "The Wrath of Grapes" in an institution. She sent out a letter to all the employees explaining why Lourdes had endorsed the boycott and invited them to take 15 minutes and see the video the day before Thanksgiving when they came to pick up their checks. Come and see this "shocking story" and "join Lourdes Hospital in a boycott of table grapes," she wrote. Kolmer and her staff ran the video in the cafeteria and lobby continuously from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. so that all shifts had a chance to see it. "We were pleased with the response, to say the least," she said. "Almost 400 of our employees signed pledge cards promising not to buy grapes until the boycott is over." ♡



Sister Rosemarie Kolmer, OSF

Residue Tests: Grapes "Biggest Offender"

(The following article has been reprinted with permission of the *Kansas City Star* © 1987. All rights reserved. Use of this article implies no endorsement of any specific position on the pesticide issue by the *Star*.)

'Star' finds residues in area food samples

At one time Bill Jacobs did research for the Department of Defense. Now the Lenexa scientist is point man for EnzyTec Inc., defending food against pesticide residues.

Jacobs, while working at the Midwest Research Institute, helped develop EnzyTec's quick test for pesticides.

"I can go into your refrigerator and probably find pesticide residues on a lot of the food in it," Jacobs says.

Using the test, *The Star* sampled apples, tomatoes and grapes from nine Kansas City area grocery stores and the Downtown City Market.

The results:

- Nearly one-fourth of the samples contained pesticide residues.
- Another fourth may have had some.
- Slightly more than half tested negative.

But that doesn't necessarily mean they were clean. EnzyTec's tests cannot easily detect systemic poisons, those that become part of the edible plant. And it cannot detect all types of pesticides.

Bill Jacobs
... helped
develop test
for pesticides



The biggest offenders in *The Star's* tests were grapes. Nearly 40 percent tested positive. The strongest positive indicator came from the cleanest looking bunch, neatly wrapped in plastic and Styrofoam.

The findings didn't surprise Jacobs. He recalls an agricultural company that raised corn rootworms for testing the effectiveness of its pesticides.

One day the company ran out of a special worm feed, so employees bought lettuce at a nearby supermarket and fed it to the worms.

"They all died," Jacobs says. Puzzled company officials conducted tests and made a surprising discovery: The lettuce was laced with residues of their pesticide.



After presenting a gift to Chavez, Metz student Fabian Camacho shakes hands with him as Principal Jorge Rodriguez looks on. Applauding in the background are (left to right): Rachel Camacho, Virginia Camacho, and Rebecca Flores Harrington, UFW director in Texas.

A Class Act at the Metz

In promoting table grape boycotts, like everything else, there are exceptions to the rule.

Usually, at every stop in the almost continuous trips Cesar Chavez makes to marshal support for the current table grape boycott, the results are easily measured: the number of people who sign boycott pledge cards, the amount of money donated to support the boycott, and the number of media representatives present to cover a press conference or boycott event.

The rule held up impressively during one of Chavez' several trips last fall: a four-day swing through the central Texas cities of Austin, San Antonio, Houston, Texas City, and San Marcos. In each city, he received enthusiastic responses to the UFW boycott message

as he addressed labor, religious, educational, political, and community groups. "In every way, from the number of people pledging support to coverage by the media, it was tremendous," said Rebecca Flores Harrington, state UFW director in Texas.

The day-long visit to Texas City exemplified the reception Chavez received during the entire Texas trip. Hosted by President Larry Stanley and Vice-President Bob Shinn, he spoke to standing-room-only crowds at the College of the Mainland, where President Lyndon B. Johnson was both a student and professor. He addressed students and faculty in the afternoon and city residents in the evening. Sandwiched between those two speeches was a dinner meeting attended by the college's board

of trustees and area labor leaders.

Exception

The exception to the rule occurred at a stop in East Austin, where not a single pledge card was signed and not a penny raised. But enthusiasm never ran higher nor emotions deeper than they did when hundreds of children greeted Chavez during a visit to the Metz Elementary School.

Welcomed by Principal Jorge Rodriguez, Chavez was amazed as several hundred students first shouted greetings outside the school and then set off on an around-the-school march that would have struck terror in the heart of the most calloused grape grower. They sang and shouted slogans and carried red signs with the black eagle on them and colorful banners lettered with "Boycott Grapes" and "Keep Our Food Safe." Chavez, deeply moved, told the students, "I have never been welcomed like this in my life, and I will never forget it."

Later, at a program in the school

Chavez autographs notebooks for Metz elementary students after class visit. Front row (left to right): Sabrina, Fabian, Juan, Rey, Levit, and Silverio (obscured). Second row: Guadalupe, Pete (obscured), David, and David.



auditorium, the children sang a tribute to Chavez and showed off all they had learned in class about him and the farm worker movement. "He is fighting for farm workers," announced 10-year-old Yvon Gomez as she shyly fingered a blue ribbon in her hair. "He wants things to be fair. And he doesn't want chemicals in our food because they can make children deformed and kill people."

Then it was the overflow audience of students, teachers, and parents who were emotionally moved as Chavez introduced "The Wrath of Grapes" video. "This is a sad film," he told them, "but I think you need to see it so you know how some growers are hurting farm workers and making children just like you suffer so much and even die."

Even though no funds were raised or pledge cards signed, the touching visit with the children at the Metz public school was not completely without measurable results. Chavez beamed when one child proudly announced that all the students were boycotting grapes. ♥

Believe It or Not— by the FDA

Robert Ripley would have been proud of the truth-is-stranger-than-fiction decision announced by the federal Food and Drug Administration last November.

The FDA informed two major Delano grape growers that they could test their own grapes for sulfur dioxide residues . . . with their own laboratory equipment . . . with their own salaried employees . . . on their own property . . . with their own weekly verification of the test results!

The two Delano growers are Marko Zaninovich, Inc. and Pandol and Sons, whose table grapes account for 10% of the grapes grown in the entire San Joaquin Valley. Under their agreement with the FDA, if the two growers inform the FDA that their grapes test below 10 parts per million, they can market them as residue-free and do not need to use warning tags.

Dr. Marion Moses, consultant for the National Farm Workers Health Group and a respected authority on environmental disease, was "outraged" at the FDA's willingness to jeopardize the health of consumers instead of resisting grower pressure. Moses also expressed amazement that the FDA "could be so blind to the obvious danger of turning over regulatory power to the very industry being regulated."

Worse on the Way

Zaninovich and Pandol, meanwhile, hardly knew what to gloat over more — defeating the FDA or nipping in the bud the potential rise of independent commercial laboratories that would likely be

more objective in their residue-testing procedures not only of sulfur dioxide but also of far deadlier pesticides used on table grapes.



Dr. Marion Moses: "... outraged!"

"The ground has been broken," said Tim McCorkle, spokesman for Zaninovich. "We now have a program that can serve as an example for the rest of the industry." James Taylor, an FDA consumer safety officer, admitted that "quite a few" similar grower residue-testing operations will be approved in the near future.

Considering the FDA's current impotence in the face of agribusiness pressure, residue-testing approval will likely be extended to all growers, not just grape growers, for all agricultural, not just sulfur dioxide.

Stay loose, Ripley. ♡



"If you're a Sherlock Holmes, you might find one at the bottom of the display bin."

Grape Tagging Labeled "A Farce"

Bruce Obthick, president of the California Table Grape Commission, and other grape growers were pleased — and feigned surprise — that the sulfite-residue warning tags the Environmental Protection Agency required them to start attaching to 40% of their table grapes on September 1 were causing no adverse reaction among consumers.

The reaction from Von's, a huge California-based supermarket chain, was said to be typical of supermarket reports from around the country. Its produce director, Dick Spezzano, said there were a few questions from consumers but "no real negative feedback." Commenting on the poor grape sales last summer, he said, "Sales are down 30 percent from last month [September] but not because of the tagging."

No Surprise

No one should have been surprised at the results — least of all the growers themselves. Why? They're simply not obeying the EPA requirement. Since all table grapes contain excessive residues of sulfur dioxide if kept in cold storage for as little as three weeks, two of every five

bunches are supposed to have warning tags attached to them.

Jean Caiati, boycott staff member in San Francisco, summed up the findings of UFW boycotters and supporters doing spot checks of supermarkets in major U.S. cities: "It's a farce," she said. "Most of the loose bunches are not tagged. Two out of five? Four out of 10? No way. If you're a Sherlock Holmes, you might find one at the bottom of the display bin." Worse yet, she said, plastic-wrapped grapes all had the wrong side of the tag facing up. "So what you see is 'Grapes, The Natural Snack,' not the warning, 'These Grapes Have Been Treated with Sulfites.' Consumers are being fooled, not warned."

The EPA last summer allowed grape growers to use warning tags if they could not certify that their grapes contained sulfite residues under 10 parts per million. With tags, there is no limit — the residue level could be 10 or 1,000 ppm.

The death toll of sulfite-sensitive victims is now 17. Meanwhile, profit-sensitive grape growers continue playing hide-the-tag with consumers. ♡



Connie Angst of Fremont has her eyes washed out by a paramedic at a Red Cross evacuation center after hundreds of residents were driven from their homes when poisonous Methyl Bromide from a nearby field drifted over the city.

Pesticide Drift Forces Residents to Flee

Two visitors, one silent but sinister, the other noisy but good-willed, invaded the privacy of 1,400 citizens in 600 homes in Fremont, California during the night of October 5-6.

The silent one was Methyl Bromide, an odorless pesticide drifting into their homes from a nearby field, and the noisy one was police pounding on doors, warning residents to flee. Most of them only had time to grab their clothes and children before rushing to motels, homes of friends and relatives, or Red Cross shelters. They were not allowed to return to their homes until late the next day.

The evacuation was ordered after people began complaining of sore eyes, nausea, and headaches caused by the Methyl Bromide (one of the five dangerous chemicals the UFW wants banned from agricultural use), which escaped from a 25-acre gladiola field leased by Neil Canine of Glad-A-Way Gardens. The field had been sprayed earlier in the day and then covered with a huge tarp, but hot weather apparently caused the pesticide to heat up and escape through the covering.

Although a person can tolerate Methyl Bromide up to 5 parts per million without side effects, high con-

centrations can cause hallucinations, respiratory problems, pulmonary edema, and even death. "For awhile, the concentrations were pretty high," said Richard Anderson, a fire department spokesman. "It's like being hit on the face with Mace."

Grower Had Been Warned

Officials of the park district that leased the land to Canine had warned him two months earlier to stop growing gladiolas on the property because the chemicals he was using were considered too toxic. "Methyl Bromide is a category-one chemical and certainly not fit for use near a residential area," said Nancy Brownfield, a district pest-management specialist. "We were also concerned that fumigants and insecticides might escape into ground-water supplies."

Canine was not impressed with the district's criticisms. "They should stick to park business," he said. "They're getting into chemical regulation business and they're not supposed to."

A week after the incident, Canine sent gladiola bouquets and letters of apology to residents who had to be evacuated.

A week after that, angry residents sent Canine notice of a \$150-million class-action suit. ♡

Your Letters

Dear Farm Workers:

I am behind you 100 per cent. I am going to check the stores and get people here to boycott grapes. I won't give up on this until you have won your rights, especially protection from pesticides. And that's a promise.

Barb Ahlgrim
Brainerd, MN

Dear UFW:

I am 14 years old and during the 1966-67 school year I was editor of our junior high school paper. I wrote an editorial on your cause and asked students not to eat or buy grapes. I think it worked because later at the school banquet grapes were served, and almost no one ate them.

Good luck with the boycott!

Robert Lichten
Oak Park, IL

Dear Cesar:

I am writing this to you and all the readers of *Food and Justice* to say that I support the grape boycott and your fight against pesticides.

About 10 years ago, my daughter was diagnosed with thyroid cancer. She used to complain about frequent sore throats and low-grade fevers. At first I thought she just wanted attention. How wrong I was!

I took her to numerous doctors who treated her for a sore throat. Then I took her to cancer specialists. They said that the type of cancer she had was so rare in

children that I must have had x-rays while pregnant or have lived in Mexico. But I never had x-rays while pregnant and never lived in Mexico.

I did, however, work in the fields in the Delano area while I was pregnant, and I remember that numerous times crop dusters would come and spray pesticides on fields next to where we were working. We would all turn our heads and cover our faces with our hands or handkerchiefs to keep from inhaling the pesticides. Our eyes would burn and we'd all be mad, but what could we do?

My daughter had thyroid cancer surgery in 1977 when she was 10. She will be on costly medication for the rest of her life. Without it, she can't survive.

I hope all your readers will support your boycott. I don't want anyone to go through what we workers and my daughter did.

Gloria Serda Rodriguez
Bakersfield, CA

Dear Cesar:

You will be happy to know that one of our local food stores, the North Buffalo Food Co-op, will no longer be carrying California grapes. I want to thank you for not giving up your fight over the years against the insane farming practices of agribusiness. I'm sure it must often get frustrating and tiring. Bless you.

Maureen Scheiner
Buffalo, NY

WORK OPPORTUNITIES WITH UFW. There are openings for data-entry operators (must be able to type a minimum of 40 words per minute) and print shop workers at UFW headquarters in California. Volunteers receive room and board and modest stipend. For more information, contact Chris Hartmire or Paul Chavez at La Paz, P.O. Box 62, Keene, CA 93531. Telephone: (805) 822-5571.



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