

New England Workers Celebrate New Contract with Stop & Shop



Stop & Shop workers celebrate their successful bargaining campaign.

On Sunday, nearly 40,000 Stop & Shop supermarket workers represented by Locals 328, 371, 919, 1459, and 1445 in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut voted overwhelmingly to ratify new contracts with Ahold, Stop & Shop's Dutch-owned parent company.

The three-year agreement includes both immediate bonus pay and scheduled hourly raises over the next three years. The contract also improves access to affordable health care for part-time workers and strengthens retirement security for all 40,000 workers.

After voting to authorize a strike if no agreement could be reached, Stop & Shop workers received a groundswell of support from communities around the Northeast that spoke out to keep middle-class jobs in their neighborhoods. This support, along with the hard work of UFCW locals and their members, ensured the strong contract. **OP**

Morningstar Foods Workers Vote "Union Yes" to Join UFCW 88T

On February 25th, over 50 Morningstar Foods workers in Decatur, Ala. voted overwhelmingly to join UFCW Textile and Garment Council Local 88T. The workers at the Dean Foods subsidiary joined the UFCW after a joint organizing effort between the local and Textile and Garment Council organizers. **OP**

Historic Contract at JBS Packerland Boosts Local 1473 Membership

UFCW Local 1473 in Milwaukee, Wis. ratified a new contract with JBS at the Packerland cut and kill beef plant this week. The five-year agreement covers 1200 workers and includes a union security clause – a first for Packerland – which will bring the local over 600 new members in the next 60 days.

"We are proud that with the new contract, the 1200 workers at Packerland can finally speak with one united voice," said Local 1473 president John Eiden. "We couldn't be more excited to welcome our new members into the UFCW family."

The contract keeps health care costs stable and preserves pension contributions. It also includes a wage increase of at least 1.55 per hour over the life of the contract. Workers will see a wage increase of 50 cents or more this year. **OP**

Unity Agenda, Bargaining to Organize Bring New Members to Local 790C

The International Chemical Workers Council of UFCW Local 790C signed an addition to their contract with Delta Oil Mill of Jonestown, Miss. on January 18th, making UFCW the exclusive bargaining agent of workers at Delta's newly opened facility in Greenwood, Miss.

"Through the cooperation of Local 790C President Ron Young and ICWUC, we were able to bring these 30 new members into a contract with their UFCW brothers and sisters," said ICWUC President Frank Cyphers. "Our commitment to the Unity Agenda runs through the ICWUC and every local. The Unity Agenda works, and this is just one example of what we can achieve when we bargain to organize."

Local 790C expects the new facility to be staffed and fully operational by early April 2010. **OP**

UFCW Local 770 Joins with Fresh & Easy Workers to Feed the Hungry



Glassell Park Fresh & Easy workers help UFCW members unload a truckload of Smithfield hams at the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank.

“Feeding the Hungry,” the UFCW and Smithfield Foods joint program to donate around 20 million servings of protein to food banks, is continuing its cross-country tour. The latest stop was the Los Angeles Central Food Bank, where members of UFCW Local 770 were joined by representatives from the Von’s grocery chain. It was also a unique opportunity for some non-member grocery workers. Workers from the Tesco Fresh & Easy store in Glassell Park who are organizing with the UFCW took part in the event as well.

“It was amazing to see the UFCW working side by side with these companies,” said Angel Salas, a worker at the Glassell Park Fresh & Easy. “It’s clear that the united members of the UFCW are a respected voice by these employers, and that this partnership is giving back to the communities. One day, we hope to have that kind of relationship with Fresh & Easy, where we are respected as partners.” **OP**

Local 1546 Signs Four-Year Agreement with Rochelle Foods

Over 500 workers represented by UFCW Local 1546 at the Hormel-owned Rochelle Foods processing plant in Rochelle, Ill. ratified a four-year contract this week. The new agreement includes increased vacation benefits and a wage increase of \$1.50 over four years. **OP**

Local 653 Reaches Agreement with Major Grocery Firms



Local 653 President Raymond Sawicky discusses negotiations with the bargaining team.

UFCW Local 653, based in Plymouth, Minn., recently reached a three-year contract with major grocery employers in the Twin Cities area. The agreement covers about 20 employers, including Supervalu, Lund Food Holdings, and Fresh Seasons Market, and represents a victory for the more than 11,000 members of Local 653 who held the line on health care costs.

“This agreement allows us to maintain competitive wages, keeps our pension plan solvent, and lets our employers remain competitive against a growing number of non-union operators,” said Local 653 President Raymond Sawicky. “But most important in this tough environment is that we didn’t see an increase in health care costs for our members.”

The contract also includes a wage freeze and measures to preserve the solvency of pension plans and modernize work rules to allow employees to fill multiple roles. **OP**

Missouri Workers Ratify New Contract

Nearly 300 members of UFCW Local 2 in Springfield, Mo. have ratified a new three-year contract with Reckitt Benckiser. The new contract covers workers who produce French’s mustard and barbeque sauce, and includes a 2.5 percent yearly wage increase, with an additional \$1.50 per hour for team leaders. The contract maintains affordable health care, with no increases in co-pays, improves pension benefits, adding \$5 per year of service over the term for a total of \$48 per year of service, and eliminates the cap on pension benefits. **OP**