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## Farm Worker Harvest Time Wage Disputes Reach Seattle

With more than apple 1,000 workers walking out in protest over harvest time wage rollbacks in the last two weeks, and worker discontent reaching the boiling point just as the apple harvest nears its peak, striking farm workers will appeal for support to Seattle's religious, political and activist community on:

- ▶ **Wednesday, August 30**
- ▶ **at 2 p.m.**
- ▶ **Seattle's Pike Place Market entrance**

The workers at twelve orchards in Eastern Washington have withheld their labor to protest the wage rollbacks in the apple harvest from the traditional piece rate to the hourly minimum wage of \$6.50 an hour. The biggest dispute is with Flat Top Orchards in the Tri Cities, owned by Borton, Inc. of Yakima. The dispute has now entered its third week with no prospect for a solution. Marches and protests throughout Eastern Washington for the last several weeks have grown increasingly militant.

"We are concerned about the serious implications this situation may have for the apple industry's major market in Mexico," said Lupe Gamboa, regional manager for the United Farm Workers of America. "If abusive treatment of Mexican workers in Washington continues, the question of apple exports to Mexico will need to be addressed," Gamboa added.

Participating in the Wednesday event will be **Rick Bender**, President of the Washington State Labor Council, Representative **Phyllis Gutierrez Kenney** and **Guadalupe Gamboa**, along with several farm workers who are on strike.

For more information, contact Lupe Gamboa at (509) 839-4903 or (509) 728-1554 (cellphone) or Karen Keiser at (206) 281-8901.