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Labor chief: Give labels a chance

Fair Trade labels will benefit
apple workers and growers,
AFL-CIO leader says

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WENATCHEE — The AFL-CIO's No. 2 person is sold on a plan by the United Farm Workers of America to put more money into the pockets of apple growers.

The UFW announced earlier this month that it plans to take up the cause of growers by pressuring retailers to sell apples with a "Fair Trade" label for a higher price than apples would fetch without the label.

"It's a race to the bottom as far as workers are concerned."

LINDA CHAVEZ-THOMPSON
AFL-CIO leader,
speaking of
current apple
market conditions

Linda Chavez-Thompson, AFL-CIO executive vice president, said the idea behind the UFW's Fair Trade Apple Campaign is to get more money for growers so they can afford to pay their workers more.

Market conditions that force growers to sell their apples for less than it costs them to produce the fruit is a no-win situation for both growers and the workers who pick the fruit and process it,

Chavez-Thompson said during an editorial board meeting Thursday at The Wenatchee World.

"That sets off a chain reaction when the people who grow the fruit aren't making any money," said Chavez-Thompson, the highest-ranking woman in the labor movement and the first person of color elected to an AFL-CIO executive office. "It's a race to the bottom as far as workers are concerned."

Chavez-Thompson was in Wenatchee to give



World photo/Don Seabrook

Linda Chavez-Thompson addresses the Washington State Labor Council Thursday at the Wenatchee Center.

Please see LABOR, Page A4