

# End Farmworker Abuse

## Boycott VUSE

To this day, farmworkers remain excluded from many basic worker protections including protections for joining a union and engaging in collective bargaining to improve working conditions. We need you to stand with farmworkers and boycott VUSE, a Reynolds American e-cigarette, until all tobacco farmworkers in Reynolds's supply chain are guaranteed freedom of association and collective bargaining rights!

### Why Boycott VUSE?

In 2007, the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) took on Reynolds American Inc., one of the largest tobacco corporations in the world, to address the horrendous conditions under which thousands of farmworkers labor in the tobacco fields in the South. Although Reynolds does not directly employ tobacco farmworkers, by contracting with tobacco growers, they establish standards which directly affect the living and working conditions of farm workers both within their supply chain and beyond. British American Tobacco (BAT) recently bought Reynolds for \$49 billion making BAT the biggest tobacco company in the world.

VUSE is a top selling e-cigarette brand made by Reynolds American Inc. VUSE is Reynolds's new star product and is sold at over 100,000 convenience stores across the US, accounting for roughly a third of the US e-cigarette market.

### An Inside Look into Farmworker Conditions

#### Poverty Wages

The price of tobacco has remained stagnant for over two decades. As a result, growers pay their workers poverty wages, and there is rampant wage theft. A North Carolina farmworker earns, on average, less than \$8,000 per year. Many children have to work in the fields to support their families.

#### Dangerous Working Conditions

Farm labor is one of the most dangerous jobs in the US. Tobacco farm workers frequently suffer from acute nicotine poisoning or "green tobacco sickness," as well as heat stroke and pesticide exposure.

#### Lack of Voice in the Workplace

Because farmworkers are excluded from many federal labor laws passed in the 1930s, farmworkers aren't guaranteed freedom of association or the right to collectively bargain. Fear of retaliation and blacklisting leaves farmworkers in a dangerous and precarious situation that discourages them from speaking out against abuse and exploitation. *Until workers have a voice in their workplace, these abuses will continue.*



Farm workers pick the tobacco leaves



Growers sell the leaves to Reynolds for a price set by Reynolds that doesn't take into account the cost of providing safe and dignified working conditions



Reynolds extracts the nicotine, converts it to a liquid and inserts it into VUSE e-cigarettes



Convenience stores sell VUSE e-cigarettes to consumers across the US

## Reynolds Campaign History

**2007**

Nearly 500 people march outside Reynolds American Headquarters to call on the company to take responsibility for human rights abuses in their supply chain. Reynolds denies responsibility. Marches continue annually at each Reynolds shareholder meeting

**2011**

FLOC and Oxfam America release a report highlighting human rights violations in the fields

**2012**

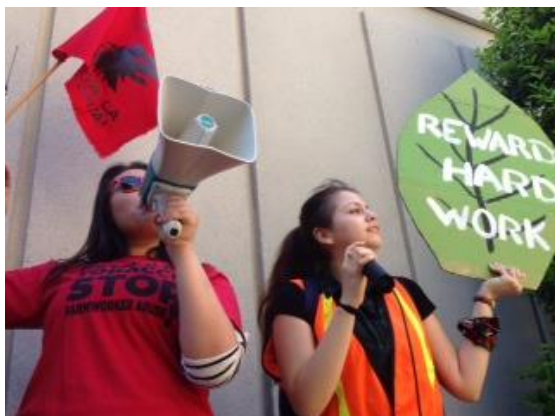
Reynolds agrees to meet with FLOC but engages in bad faith discussions and pushes instead for band-aid solutions

**2012-2015**

Consumers do actions at Kangaroo stores across the US asking the company to pressure Reynolds to sign an agreement with FLOC

**2015-2018**

FLOC brings dozens of examples of wage theft, unfair retaliation, and health and safety violations to Reynolds's attention, but they continue to deny workers a practical mechanism to systematically fix abuses



## Get Involved

1. Sign the Boycott VUSE online petition
2. Ask organizations and churches to formally endorse the boycott
3. Participate in an action at a WAWA, Circle K, Kangaroo, or 7/11 convenience store, demanding that the store stops selling VUSE products until Reynolds signs an agreement with FLOC
4. Leave a one star review on Yelp or Google for convenience stores that refuse to drop VUSE
5. Write a letter to your local newspaper
6. Share the word on social media and tag your posts with #BoycottVUSE and @RAI\_News

## About FLOC

The Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) is an international union of farmworkers fighting for better working and living conditions. Founded in 1967 by Baldemar Velasquez, FLOC has changed the agricultural industry by pioneering multi-party supply chain agreements that involve farmworkers, farmers, and big agribusinesses such as Campbell's Soup, Vlassic Pickles, Heinz Ketchup, and Mt. Olive Pickle Company. Through the negotiation of collective bargaining agreements with a strong grievance mechanism, farmworkers are able to advocate for themselves and improve their working conditions.

## For More Information



[bit.ly/BoycottVUSE](http://bit.ly/BoycottVUSE)

[boycottvuse@floc.com](mailto:boycottvuse@floc.com)

Facebook: Farm Labor Organizing Committee

Twitter: @SupportFLOC / #BoycottVUSE

**Join farmworkers in boycotting VUSE until Reynolds guarantees all tobacco farmworkers in their supply chain freedom of association!**