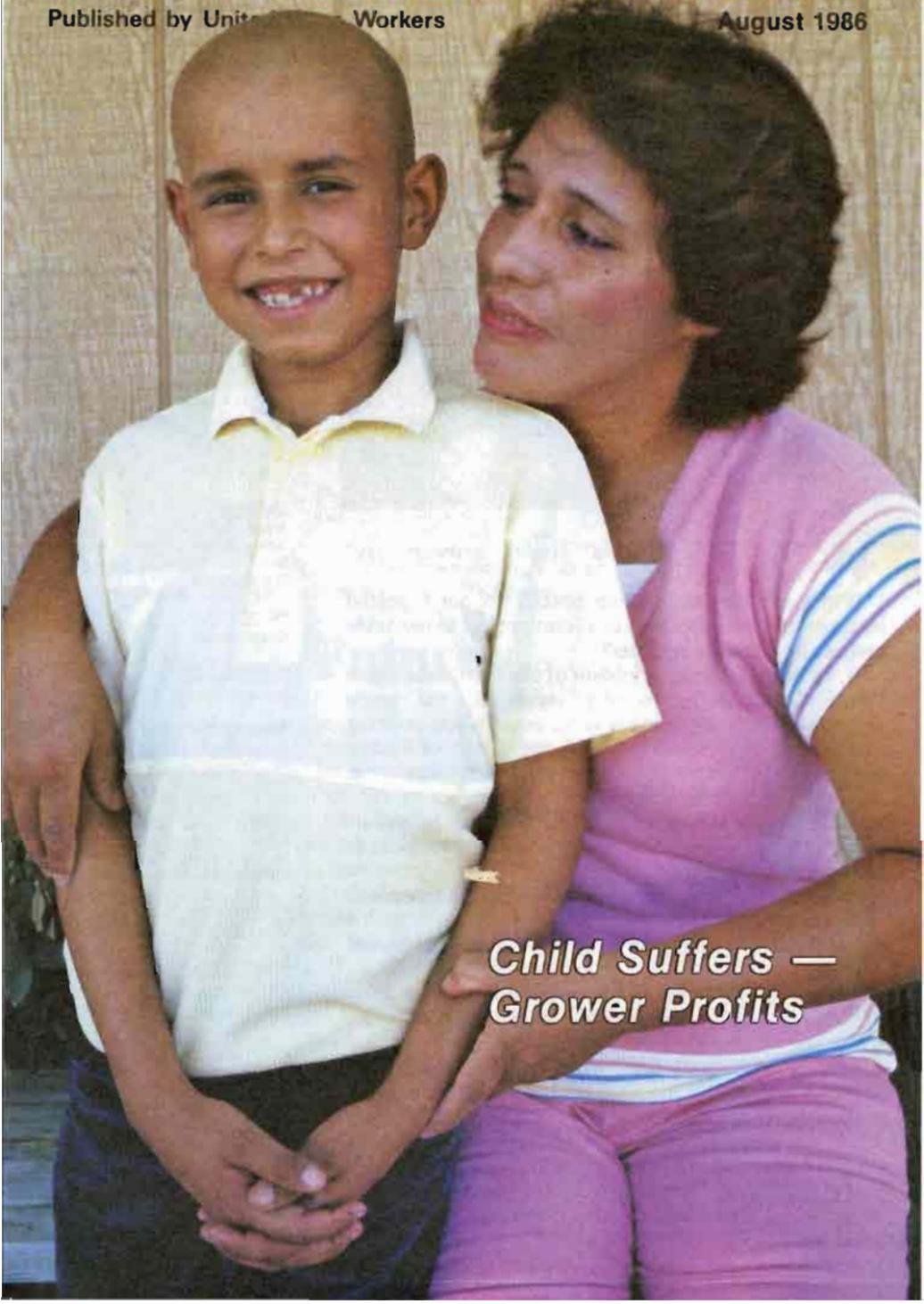


# FOOD AND JUSTICE

Published by United Farm Workers

August 1986



**Child Suffers —  
Grower Profits**



What are California grape growers trying to hide?

Why have they reacted so bitterly to our repeated requests that they take part in a joint project to test table grapes for pesticide residues?

If, as Bruce Obbink, president of the California Table Grape Commission, recently suggested, the grape growers are already doing a good enough job policing themselves, why would they fear the results of such a test? Are they more concerned with their reputation than the lives of consumers?

The proposal we are suggesting should not be threatening to grape growers if they have nothing to hide. It only asks:

- that table grapes be tested by an independent laboratory,
- that the test be a random sampling at the supermarket level,
- that the results of the test be made public, and
- that the growers share expenses of the testing project with us.

Because consumers have loyally helped us in past boycotts, we are as concerned about the pesticide threat to them as we are to farm workers. We doubt if growers share the same concern for consumers. If they did, wouldn't they welcome the opportunity to prove it?

If grape growers continue to ignore our proposal, we intend to go ahead without them. We have nothing to hide.

Volume 3, Number 7

Food and Justice

August 1986

Magazine of the United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO  
La Paz, Keene, CA 93570



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Salvador DeAnda has cancer and has been undergoing chemotherapy treatments. His mother, Alicia, blames Captan for her son's illness.

## A Child's Future

Antonio DeAnda used to take his son, Salvador, with him when he worked in the table grape fields at M. Caratan ranches in Delano, CA. While Salvador watched his father irrigate the land, Antonio would tell his son about the value of education.

Antonio encouraged his son to do well in school so that, one day, Salvador would have a better life.

"My husband would tell Salvador not to miss school," Alicia DeAnda, Salvador's mother, said. "He was trying to show Salvador that working in the field is very hard."

Alicia said that while these lessons were occurring, pesticides were being sprayed nearby. The DeAndas know that pesticides are harmful, but they have never been told how dangerous some pesticides are. Salvador DeAnda,

9, now has cancer. He is suffering from non-Hodgkins lymphoma.

Alicia maintains that she, her husband, and Salvador have been exposed to Captan at Caratan ranches. Captan is a widely used fungicide known to cause cancer, birth defects and changes in genetic material.

"When my husband was irrigating, they sprayed a lot of that stuff — that Captan," Alicia said. "We knew it was Captan because we heard the foremen and other people say that's what it was."

The DeAndas have three children; Salvador is the oldest. Alicia worked in the Caratan fields until her eighth month of each pregnancy. She worked for Caratan for nine years but had to quit in February to take care of her ailing son. Antonio has worked for Caratan for

twelve years.

Alicia said that when they discovered Salvador had cancer, they were told by their doctor to take their son to specialists at UCLA. "My husband told a foreman that he had to take Salvador to UCLA because he has cancer," Alicia said. "The foreman fired my husband."

Days later Alicia talked to Caratan. She told the grower about her son's illness. Caratan, with all the kindness he could muster, gave Antonio his job back. He did not offer to compensate Antonio for the wages he lost.

Antonio losing wages and almost his job is not the only injustice the DeAndas have suffered at Caratan's hands. Consider this story of brutality.

Alicia said that Antonio had a rash on his foot which kept recurring. Antonio believed the rash was caused by the rubber boots he wore as an irrigator. Antonio wanted to switch jobs to one that did not require boots.

When the DeAndas told Caratan about the rash, the grower responded this way. Alicia said, "Caratan told us, 'Here's some Captan. That's really good.'" Alicia explained that Caratan

advised Antonio to rub the dangerous pesticide on his rash to "dry it up." Caratan capped this absurd advice by telling the DeAndas that he himself used Captan. "He said that he used to use it [Captan] on his face for his pimples," Alicia said.

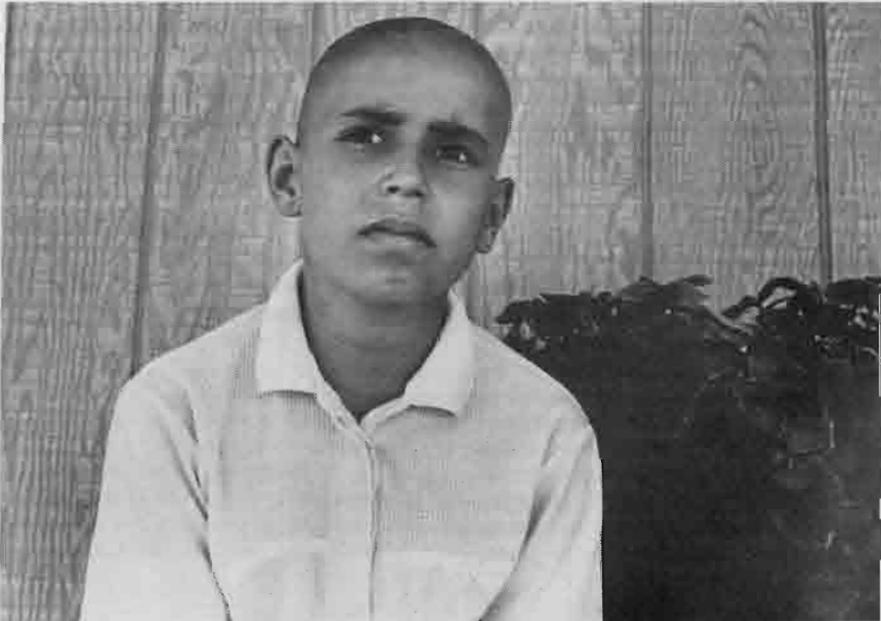
Alicia blames Captan for her son's illness. She related her feelings when the doctor told her her son has cancer. "It was a shock to us when we found out," she said. "No one in our family has cancer. I asked, 'Why him?'"

Because of his illness, Salvador has not attended school since February. His parents wanted so much for him to have a promising future. Now they are fighting just to keep him alive.

The DeAndas are frightened. "The other day Salvador came to me," Alicia said. "He told me that he dreamed the cancer spread throughout his body and he died. Sometimes he asks us to let him die."

As for Caratan, he just keeps on docking Antonio's wages when he has to take Salvador to the hospital for cancer treatments. 🐦

*Salvador says that the other children no longer play with him. He says they are afraid they will catch his cancer.*



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*Last year Governor Deukmejian (right) signed legislation paving the way for growers to be reimbursed for watermelon losses — but nothing for farm workers or consumers.*

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## Growers Poison Watermelon Crop . . . Taxpayers Foot Reimbursement Bill

Nearly 1,200 people in the western part of the U.S. and Canada became ill during the long July 4 weekend last year after some California growers' watermelons were found to be contaminated by Union Carbide's aldicarb (Temik), the most acutely toxic pesticide registered in the U.S. and illegal for use on watermelons.

Now, a year later, hundreds of thousands of taxpayers in California are even sicker. They will have to foot a \$6.2 million bill to reimburse growers and retailers for their losses when a measure expected to be approved soon by the California legislature becomes law. Two legislators called the bill "an outrageous giveaway."

Clare Berryhill, who is himself a grower while at the same time serving as the director of the California Department of Food and Agriculture and who last year threatened to "nail to the cross" three guilty Kern County growers — Gary Icardo, Jimmy Icardo, and Tim

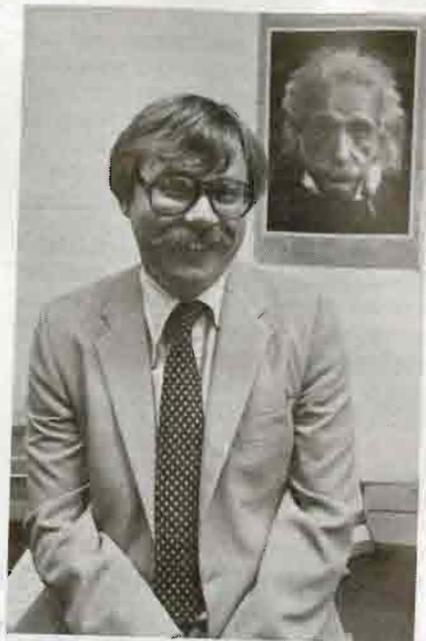
Yaksitch — was content to seek civil instead of criminal charges against them.

But many other growers asking for reimbursement were just as guilty as the other three. Dr. Kenneth W. Kizer, director of the California Department of Health Services, warned that the use of aldicarb appeared to be uncontrolled. Sales of aldicarb were far higher than the legally required "use" reports growers must file after applying the pesticide.

As usual, there seemed to be little concern for the farm workers or the people who were poisoned. Asked Assemblyman Lloyd Connelly (D-Sacramento): "Why shouldn't we at least provide compensation for the farm workers who lost their jobs or for the people who suffered medical costs as a result of eating the watermelons?"

*(Ed. note: If you know anyone who was poisoned by watermelons last year, we would like to hear from you.) 🐦*

## Labor Official Becomes First Solidarity Member



HARRY SPRING

Harry VandenBosche Spring recently became the first individual to join the United Farm Workers' Solidarity program. His weekly donations make him an associate member of the union.

When Spring was 13 years old, he gave up his bed for a night so that Cesar Chavez would have a place to sleep. Chavez was speaking in Spring's Florida hometown.

"My dad was with the National Council of Churches' migrant ministry when he asked Cesar to stay at our house for the night," Spring said. "I gladly gave up my bed — it was a big kick and a great honor."

That act of generosity was in 1967. In 1974, Spring, a political science student at the University of South Florida, met Chavez once again when the union leader came to speak to a UFW support group.

"I learned then," Spring said, "that consistency of belief brings honor and respect." He praised Chavez for his belief that powerless people have to organize in order to be forceful in a non-violent way.

Spring, who is now 32 years old, married and a father of two boys, moved to Missouri where he became the secretary-treasurer of the Greater Kansas City, Missouri Labor Council. Spring's labor organization recently hosted Chavez in support of the "Wrath of Grapes" boycott.

Spring will continue supporting farm workers as a Solidarity member and he will receive union recognition, publications and boycott information.

"The UFW is an organization I've admired and respected almost all my life," Spring said. "I've learned many things from the farm worker struggle and it's the least I can do in return."

## UFW Now Boycotting ALL Table Grapes!

Since the United Farm Workers announced the beginning of a new boycott of California table grapes in mid-1984, a small percentage — approximately 3% — was not being boycotted. But now ALL California table grapes are the object of the boycott.

That situation developed recently when the David Freedman Company, a large corporate table grape grower employing more than 1200 workers in the Coachella Valley, joined the ranks of all other California table grape growers by refusing to take seriously the threat of pesticide poisoning to its own workers picking grapes in the vineyards as well as to consumers buying table grapes covered with pesticide residues.

Ben Maddock, general manager of the

UFW Grape and Tree Fruit Division, said Freedman could no longer stand up to pressure from other growers who know Freedman is as reckless with pesticides as they are and yet was able to carry the UFW eagle on its grape cartons. "Steinberg [Lionel, president of Freedman] tried to make preposterous contract proposals we couldn't accept look like the issue, but that didn't fool us — we know he caved in to the pressure," he said.

Freedman will no longer be able to display the UFW eagle on its grapes. "It's a full-scale battle now," Maddock said, "and no matter how long it takes, we'll win it with our best nonviolent weapon — the boycott."

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*Billy Steinberg, negotiator for Freedman, made ridiculous contract proposals and caved in to grower pressure.*

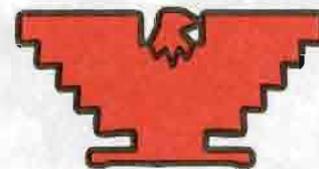
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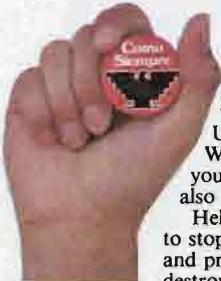


**Spend a year  
with the  
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Workers  
and we'll change  
your life.**

**While you help  
change the  
World.**



# Give us a year of your life. We'll give you a more fulfilling life.



Spend a year as a full-time volunteer with the United Farm Workers, and while you're helping us, we'll also be helping you.

Help us in our efforts to stop pesticide abuse and prevent toxics from destroying our national

food supply . . . and we'll be helping you gain invaluable job and life experiences.

Travel throughout the United States and Canada and meet interesting people in all walks of life . . . while helping to prevent the exploitation of farm workers.

Develop professional and job skills that will be beneficial to your future career . . . while working with us to prevent child abuse and sexual harassment.

Whether you're a student seeking job experience for your resume, an experienced professional looking to develop and expand your work experience, or retired and wanting the opportunity to share your skills while enriching your life . . . the United Farm Workers offers you the opportunity to gain a great deal while giving a great deal.

### We'll give you a little and a lot.

Every volunteer (including Cesar Chavez) receives: room and board, a small weekly allowance, and when you leave us, a readjustment allowance to

help start the life we've helped you prepare for.

Although we can't give you much money, we give you a lot in other ways . . . in friendships that will enrich you . . . experiences and memories that will hold you in good stead for your entire life.

### What we're looking for.

- 2 years of college preferred, high-school diploma mandatory.
- 18 years or older, mature and able to communicate with others.
- English mandatory, Spanish helpful.
- Good health.
- All people of all religions, races, ethnic backgrounds welcome.
- Commitment to social justice for the common good.
- Single people and couples.
- The ability to be adaptable and self-motivated.



Your assignment will depend on your skills and abilities. You could be working in a rural community in

California, Arizona, Texas or Florida. Or your assignment might take you to one of the following cities: New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, San Francisco, Philadelphia, Detroit, Boston, Houston, Toronto, Montreal, Miami, Baltimore, or other North American cities.

Many of our people have served in several cities as well as farm communities.

### Opportunities

We need people with many different types of talents, skills and backgrounds. In particular: attorneys; doctors; nurses; teachers; engineers; lab and X-ray technicians; mechanics; computer operators and programmers; clerical personnel; labor organizers; marketing professionals; public relations specialists; financial management people; book-keepers; agronomists and communications technicians.

We will contribute to your training wherever possible.

If you have one of the skills listed, please talk to us. If you have skills we haven't listed, talk to us anyway . . . we could need you.



**RICHIE ROSS** started as a volunteer with the UFW at the age of 19. Three years later he left the Union to enter the job market. Today he is Chief of Staff to California State Assembly Speaker Willie Brown.

**JULIE M. MONDACA** spent summer vacations as a volunteer for the UFW while she was a student at Harvard. She is now Hispanic Consumer Markets Manager for the Western Area of Coca-Cola.

I am interested in learning more about being a volunteer with the United Farm Workers. Please send me a complete information kit. I think we can possibly help each other.

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CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE NUMBER ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

AGE \_\_\_\_\_ PROFESSION \_\_\_\_\_ STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_



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# “Together We Can Build a Better Life”

In the approximately 25 years that the Union has been in existence we have accomplished a great deal. Thanks to the efforts of thousands of friends like you, many farm workers have been liberated from what was virtual slavery.

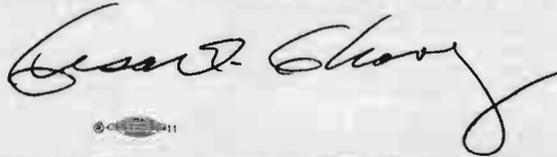
Children are going to school who never had a hope for an education. Farm workers are receiving medical attention who never before had a place to turn for help.

But as much as we've accomplished, it still seems like a small drop in the ocean of what still must be accomplished.

There are still many thousands of farm workers who are being exploited. And the problem of pesticide abuse becomes even more serious . . . the longer these poisons are used irresponsibly, the more serious is the danger to every man, woman and child from the very food we must eat to survive.

Spend a year with us and join the many who have gone before you in helping to make our world a better place.

In return, I think we have much to offer to help make your life a better one.



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## Another Cancer Case Strikes McFarland

The number of children diagnosed with cancer in McFarland, CA since 1981 has risen to 12. The town of 6200 people is considered a “cancer cluster,” because there is 400% the expected rate of cancer in McFarland. Many of the community’s residents blame the town’s water. They believe that the water has been contaminated by pesticides and nitrates used by growers whose fields surround the town. (See May 1986 issue.)

Carlos Sanchez is the twelfth cancer victim. Although Sanchez is 20 now, he has had cancerous tumors for five years.

Sanchez has Hodgkin’s disease. This disease is a progressive, and sometimes fatal, form of cancer.

Since Sanchez was diagnosed he has had three tumors, his spleen, part of his liver, and some other glands surgically removed.

Sanchez said that he knows there is a higher than normal rate of cancer in McFarland. He also knows that many of the cancer victims’ parents blame the town’s water.

Who is responsible for contaminating the water and for cleaning it up is a controversy in the town. The mayor of McFarland, Carl Boston, has no doubts about his responsibilities. He said that he doesn’t know “what should be done.” Boston added, “You can’t do anything if you don’t know what the problem is.”

Boston is unaware of more than just the town’s problems. When interviewed, he did not even know that some of the wells in McFarland have nitrate concentration rates higher than the state standards. Boston believes that the fact that McFarland has a cancer rate 400% higher than that experts expect “might be coincidental.”

A local newspaper article stated that four of the six McFarland wells have high nitrate concentrations. Nitrates have been linked to cancer and primarily affect children.

The mayor said that while he knows that infants should not drink the water, he believes that the water is not “harmful.” When the facts from the newspaper were pointed out to Boston, he seemed puzzled. He said, “I don’t recall reading the article.” Maybe a subscription to the local newspaper would keep Boston up to date on his town’s problems.

The president of the board of directors of the McFarland water company, Fred Haas, was equally evasive.

Haas said he knows the following facts. Nitrates have been linked to cancer. Some of McFarland’s wells have high nitrate concentrations. Pregnant women and infants are advised against drinking the town’s water.

Despite all he knows, Haas made the following request to a UFW reporter: “Please don’t try to tie these [the cancer cluster and the nitrates in the water] together.”

Haas was asked about the source of the contamination. He said, “My own personal theory is that it [the contamination] comes from an excessive use of nitrogens on our crops.”

Haas is unsure about what can be done in the future. He claims that even if growers stopped using nitrates today, it may take “50 years” to remove them completely from the water.

Carlos Sanchez is also unsure about the future. But Sanchez has more at stake than the town’s mayor or the water company official. Sanchez’ life is at stake.

“I’m just hoping for the best,” Sanchez said. 

*Carlos Sanchez (opposite page) is the latest McFarland cancer victim.*



Francisco Cuevas with his son, Francisco, who was sprayed with Monitor-4, said, "First they poisoned us and then they treated us like animals."

## More Farm Workers Poisoned Grower Attempts Cover-up

Another horror story in the never-ending series of farm worker pesticide poisonings unfolded for Francisco and Rosalinda Cuevas and their 31-person crew as they began a day of hoeing cotton early on July 2 at Harris Farms in Coalinga, California.

Foreman Sergio Reyna had failed to tell them that the field had just been sprayed with the dangerous pesticide, Monitor-4. Within minutes, the crew displayed severe poisoning symptoms: headaches, eye irritation, vomiting, dizziness, skin rashes, and memory loss.

Seven women fainted but instead of being taken to the hospital in Coalinga, they were driven to a Fresno clinic, 50 miles away, where a company doctor gave them two Tylenols, told them to shower, and okayed them for work the next day. "But it wasn't till days later,"

said Albert Adame, the UFW representative who investigated the poisonings, "that the doctor warned the women not to get pregnant for a year!"

The rest of the crew, also ill, were taken to a park for a couple hours and then sent home with orders to report to work the next day.

The next day Harris officials threatened to fire the workers and evict them from company housing if they told anyone about the poisoning. But the Cuevases and several other workers were not scared off. "First they poisoned us and then treated us like animals," Francisco said. "I'll lose my job before I keep quiet about what they did to us."

UFW personnel have already secured legal aid to assist the poisoned Harris Farms workers. 🐦

## Vineyard and Pilot Cited for Violations

Napa Valley Vineyards of Napa, CA and Stephen Wilder, a crop duster, were cited for pesticide application violations on June 10, 1986. The citations came during a Napa County Agriculture Department investigation into a poisoning incident which occurred in May at the vineyards. (See June 1986 *Food and Justice*.)

Readers may recall that Wilder, a helicopter pilot, repeatedly sprayed six women workers from the company. The workers believe that Wilder sprayed them deliberately.

The county agriculture department cited Napa Valley Vineyards for failing to protect its workers from the pesticide poisoning and failing to take the workers to a doctor after the spraying.

The same agency cited Wilder for "application of pesticide when there was a hazard of contamination" to workers.

This citation came after Wilder submitted a letter to the company in which he admitted seeing the women before he

sprayed them. In his letter, Wilder maintains that he "motioned" the workers to leave. He does not mention why he sprayed some of the women six times.

The report from the investigating agency found evidence that Wilder knew the workers were there "and yet continued his application."

Also in the report is an incident involving a Napa Valley supervisor, Scott Wharton. The women went immediately to Wharton after being sprayed and reported the incident. Wharton told the investigating officer that he read the pesticide label, and it advised workers to thoroughly wash out their eyes, skin and clothing if exposed. Wharton told the investigating officer that he "guessed they [the women] had some eye drops and washed up."

And so the management of Napa Valley Vineyards once again showed its concern for worker safety.

The county's investigation is still continuing. 🐦



Crop duster, Stephen Wilder, was cited for pesticide violations by the Napa County agricultural department.



Federico Sayre is a Los Angeles attorney representing LoBue workers.

## Workers Still Suffering, Uniroyal Recalls Pesticide

In a recent issue of *Food and Justice* (June 1986) we reported that hundreds of citrus workers, many from LoBue Brothers in Lindsay, CA were poisoned in May by the pesticide, Omite CR.

Readers may recall that workers exposed to Omite CR (manufactured by Uniroyal) suffered from chemical burns. LoBue Bros. personnel and a Uniroyal-hired doctor predicted a full recovery for the workers.

In the past few weeks there have been some new developments.

First, not all the workers are recovering. In fact, some are still suffering. Some say they are losing their vision.

Federico Sayre, a Los Angeles attorney who represents almost 100 victims from LoBue, said that of the 50 workers who have been medically examined "33 complained of eye problems."

Also, according to Sayre, "Some people continue to have persistent burns."

The second development occurred

when Uniroyal recalled Omite CR from the market in California. The company began collecting the pesticide in June.

Thirdly, Uniroyal has agreed to take liability for the poisoned workers and is taking legal responsibility for damages.

The last development concerns the "CR" in Omite CR. Uniroyal lawyers recently revealed that CR stands for "California Recipe." This untested and dangerous pesticide was allowed to be used by unprotected workers and ended up on fruit sent to consumers. Sayre said, "The CR portion is, we think, the culprit."

The UFW believes Uniroyal and LoBue are the culprits. Uniroyal should not only take legal responsibility but also moral responsibility for the hundreds of workers their chemical poisoned.

LoBue should take responsibility, too. They shipped and packed the produce treated with Omite CR to unsuspecting consumers. ♀

## Gaps in Test Data Endanger Consumers and Farm Workers

The United Farm Workers has made cancer-causing pesticide residue on food a major issue in the current boycott of California table grapes.

While growers claim the amount of pesticide left on produce is harmless and within legal limits, Cesar Chavez, public health scientists, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and consumer groups believe that no level of residue is safe and that the Environmental Protection Agency has used fraudulent or inadequate data to set safety standards.

Take Captan, for instance. Captan is a fungicide widely used in California vineyards and believed to cause cancer and birth defects. Captan is the residue most often found on California grapes. The EPA originally set the tolerance for this pesticide using fraudulent test data from Industrial Bio-Test Laboratories of Norwood, Illinois.

The story and controversy surrounding IBT began to unravel in 1977. The

company had performed more than 22,000 safety tests for drug and chemical manufacturers in the United States. The Food and Drug Administration began investigating IBT and found that at least 90 percent of some 900 tests initially examined proved invalid or fabricated.

IBT had tested one-third of the active ingredients in all pesticides used in the United States. Captan was among 200 chemicals the EPA deemed safe based on IBT reports. After nine years, the EPA recently reevaluated Captan and determined it should not be used on any food product. Unfortunately, the EPA issued a tolerance level anyway because economic interests outweighed health risks.

Government scientists suspect it will take at least 30 years before the damage done by IBT can be corrected. Meanwhile, consumers and farm workers serve as guinea pigs for manufacturers and government agencies. ♀

*Consumers deserve residue-free produce.*



## Table Grape Official Insults Chavez and Consumers

**B**ruce Obbink, president of the California Table Grape Commission, has never been known for weighing his words before he speaks, being accurate when he speaks, or worrying about the damage he's done after he speaks.

But some of Obbink's incredible comments — as he followed farm labor leader Cesar Chavez around the country trying to deflect the effects of the table grape boycott — represented a new low in both his attacks on Chavez and his insults to people sincerely concerned about the threat of pesticides on table grapes and other produce.

Within past months, Obbink has called Chavez an "S.O.B. (*California Journal*)" and a "politically motivated conniver" lusty to become the "czar" of all farm workers (*Desert Rancher*).

But his most irresponsible remark was an insult to both consumers as well as

Chavez and farm workers: "The pesticide issue is probably the most scurrilous attack the UFW could come up with — reminiscent of tactics of the Third Reich Minister Joseph Goebbels, who believed that preying on the fears of the people is the most effective propaganda tool" (*Desert Rancher*).

Would the 300,000 farm workers reported by the World Resources Institute to be poisoned by agricultural pesticides each year say Chavez was just preying on their fears?

Would the 1,200 people who became sick a year ago from Union Carbide's pesticide aldicarb in watermelons say Chavez was just preying on their fears?

If grape consumers were aware of residues of the pesticide Captan found on table grapes tested in Ohio, would they say Chavez was just preying on their fears? 



*Bruce Obbink, president of the Table Grape Commission, in a rare moment — with his mouth closed.*

## Addenda

### Pandol Stages Deceptive Show

In the July *Food and Justice*, we reported that the grower, Jack Pandol, endangers his workers who handle pesticides because he does not give them protective equipment.

In the second week of July, when several of the sprayers arrived to work, they were met by company supervisors. The sprayers were given new overalls, caps, gloves, boots, goggles and breathing masks. When the sprayers were dressed in their new gear, a company official videotaped them working.

Perhaps Pandol was anticipating the exposé which appeared in this magazine last month. The protective clothing and equipment were taken away immediately after the filming. The workers remain unprotected. 

### Grower Quote Of The Month

This comes from Stewart Truelsen of the American Farm Bureau Federation and appeared in the farm bureau magazine, *Ag Alert*, 7/9/86. Truelsen wrote, "My first thought is why are pesticides always labeled 'deadly' by the press. Pesticides do the same job for plants that medicines do for humans." 

### UFW Sends Staff Out On Boycott

The leadership of the United Farm Workers of America has stepped up its table grape boycott campaign.

In a recent staff meeting, UFW Presi-

dent Cesar Chavez announced that many members of the union's staff will be leaving California. The staff will be working in cities across the U.S. and Canada, informing consumers of the three boycott demands — the banning of five dangerous pesticides; free and fair union elections; and good faith bargaining from growers. 

### UFW Convention To Be Held This Month

On August 30, the UFW will hold its eighth convention in Bakersfield, CA. The theme of this year's convention is "The Wrath of Grapes." Union members from across the nation are expected to attend the convention. 

### Just When You Thought It Was Safe To Eat Watermelons

Last month California agricultural inspectors discovered a watermelon field contaminated with the pesticide, Orthene. Use of Orthene on watermelons is illegal, and the field was plowed under.

An agricultural commissioner said the pesticide had been applied to beans but "drifted" to the watermelon field. Considering that less than 15% of sprayed pesticides reach their target, we can only wonder what other toxic chemicals have ended up on other watermelons because they have gone undetected by state officials. 



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