

“They Treat Cattle Better than Workers.”

HELP LAKESIDE WORKERS
GET A FAIR FIRST CONTRACT





What's going on at Lakeside Packers?

Workers at the Lakeside Packing Plant (members of UFCW Local 401) have been on strike since October 12 to get a first collective agreement. They have been trying for 14 months to negotiate a contract with the plant's owner, Tyson Foods of Arkansas, but Tyson has refused to budge.

The Alberta government intervened in the summer by appointing a Disputes Inquiry Board (DIB) to find a compromise solution. The workers voted to accept the government recommendations, but Tyson again refused.

Working conditions in the plant are among the worst in the industry. Health and safety conditions are awful. Workers are forced to work for free for up to two hours a day, are denied washroom breaks and are not allowed to raise alarm bells if food safety is at risk.

IN SHORT, LAKESIDE WORKERS ARE ASKING FOR BASIC FAIRNESS.

Would you want to negotiate with this company?

Tyson is the largest beef and pork producer in the world. They have a track record of aggressive union-busting tactics. They also have a track record of breaking the law:

- Tyson has been repeatedly found guilty in the U.S. for violations of health and safety and employment standards law. They currently face up to \$600 million in fines for serious violations of worker rights.
- Tyson was found guilty in the U.S. of illegally forcing workers to work without pay.
- Tyson has repeatedly been censured by the Alberta Labour Relations Code for unfair and illegal practices.
- Tyson's CEO broke U.S. law by misreporting \$700,000 worth of perks and benefits, including boats and vacation houses.

An example of Tyson's approach to labour relations:

Senior managers of Lakeside have been charged with dangerous driving, criminal negligence causing bodily harm and criminal harassment after trying to run the union president off the road. The Alberta Labour Relations Board found their actions to be "reckless, putting the lives of [the union president] and other drivers on the road in danger."
(LRB Decision October 20, 2005)



“Not having bathroom breaks - one guy said that he had to wet his pants. I find that's abhorrent if it's true.”

- PREMIER RALPH KLEIN, OCTOBER 17, 2005



Did you know?

The difference between the government recommendations and Tyson's latest offer amounts to 75 cents per worker per month.

The Lakeside Plant made profits of a million dollars a day during the Mad Cow Crisis, while receiving \$33 million in bailouts from taxpayers.

What You Can Do

The union has called repeatedly for the Alberta government to take action to resolve the strike, but the government has refused. Albertans need to pressure the government to intervene in the strike to help the workers get a first agreement.

In fact the government has a number of options to resolve the strike:

- The Premier can personally intervene to help settle the strike, as he did during the Laundry Workers strike in 1995.
- The Cabinet can use an emergency section of the Labour Relations Code to impose working conditions for a set period of time.
- The Legislature can reconvene to pass a law allowing for first contract arbitration.
- The Legislature could pass a law requiring Final Offer Arbitration in this dispute.



“Tyson doesn’t want to negotiate a fair agreement. The government needs to step in to help Lakeside workers get a first contract.”

- AFL PRESIDENT GIL MCGOWAN

Help resolve the Strike:

Call your MLA toll-free at **310-0000**

Call the Premier at **427-2251**,
or email him at **premier@gov.ab.ca**

Call Human Resources Minister
Mike Cardinal at **415-4800**,
hre.minister@gov.ab.ca



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UFCW LOCAL 401

Produced by UFCW Local 401 and The Alberta Federation of Labour.