



Forward Latino is a non-profit, non-partisan advocacy and service organization dedicated to assisting Latinos pursuing the American Dream.

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: December 16, 2020

Contact: Ms. Eileen Figueroa
(414)389-7131

FORWARD LATINO AKNOWLEDGES DISMISSAL OF MANAGERS AS FIRST STEP TO IMPROVING WORKPLACE CULTURE AND SAFETY AT TYSON FOODS!

Franklin, WI – Tyson Foods, Inc. announced today that seven managers at its Waterloo, Iowa, Processing Plant have been fired following an independent investigation into allegations supervisors placed bets on who among the workforce would get the Coronavirus COVID-19.

Forward Latino National Vice President and “Project Safe Workplace” lead Joe Henry issued the following statement with the full support of the Board of Directors:

“Although we are thankful that Tyson did the right thing in discharging its managers who committed this hideous act, it was clear to us that racist behavior has existed in the meat processing industry for decades. That is why we joined with a coalition of organizations representing workers and advocates in filing a complaint to the USDA earlier this year alleging that meat processing corporations JBS and Tyson are engaging in systematic racial discrimination prohibited by the Civil Rights Act of 1964.”

Henry added “We contend that JBS and Tyson have adopted policies that reject CDC guidelines to stop the spread of COVID-19 in their facilities – in particular, not allowing for workers to social distance on meat processing lines, subjecting them to greater risk of contracting COVID-19. The majority of meat processing plant floor workers – nearly 70% – are Black or Latino, as opposed to Tyson and JBS’s salaried employees and management, who are predominantly white. Because of JBS and Tyson’s policies, Black and Latino workers are at greater risk of contracting COVID-19. Black and Latino workers are also more likely to suffer more seriously from contracting the illness due to long-standing systemic health and social inequities.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 states that “no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal funding assistance.” JBS and Tyson have received millions of federal dollars in 2020 to support agricultural jobs and the agricultural economy.

Policies that endanger workers are a deliberate choice by companies to put profit over the lives of workers and their communities – and the demographics of their workforce is no secret to them. If JBS and Tyson will not prioritize the safety of their Black and Latino workers, USDA must enforce our basic civil rights laws.



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Workers are essential, but that does not make them sacrificial. In a time in which almost all of us are making sacrifices, it is not too much to ask the handful of food corporations that dominate the market to sacrifice some of their enormous profits to provide basic protections for workers' health and lives. If they do not, our government must step in to protect workers.

Workers have the right to a safe workplace."

About Forward Latino:

Forward Latino is a non-profit, non-partisan advocacy and service organization dedicated to assisting Latinos pursuing the American Dream. Forward Latino fulfills its mission through advocacy, civic engagement, education and service delivery. Forward Latino currently has members in 29 states. Learn more at www.forwardlatino.org.

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