

Boycott of Mister Sweet products underway by 23 organisations from 6 provinces

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UPDATE: On 4 September 2024 Premier FMCG applied for an interdict against the strike. The interdict application will be heard on 10 September 2024.

We, the 23 below organisations, from six provinces, declare that we are boycotting Mister Sweet products because of the ongoing of workers at Mister Sweet.

Workers at Mister Sweet are demanding a living wage of R19 500. Workers have been on strike for three weeks.

We are therefore calling for a boycott of all Mister Sweet products.

The lowest paid workers at Mr Sweet are paid in the region of R6000 per month. The Pietermaritzburg Economic Justice and Dignity's Household Affordability Index for August 2024 puts the cost of a basic food basket a month at R5227,14.

With just R6000, workers must struggle to pay for food, transport, healthcare, education, and everything else. The wages that the Mister Sweet bosses pay the workers condemn them to poverty and a struggle to meet their needs.

Workers are demanding R19 500 so that they and their children can lead a dignified life.

When workers wanted to negotiate for a living wage, Mister Sweet didn't listen. Workers are on strike, and are forcing Mister Sweet to listen. We need to support this through a boycott. It is only united working class action that will pressure Mister Sweet to pay workers a living wage.

Mister Sweet management has responded to workers' aspirations with threats, underhanded tactics, stubbornness and arrogance. They have flatly refused to engage with workers' demand for a living wage. Instead, when workers gave notice of their strike, management responded by locking workers out. They want to force workers to accept a paltry 7% increase which they agreed with a minority union. They have said that the longer the strike continues, the less of an increase they are willing to offer workers. They have even threatened workers with disciplinary action and dismissal.

Mister Sweet is owned by Premier FMCG. Premier is one of the biggest food companies in the country. Last year, they made R921 million in profit! This was an increase of 15,8% from the previous year.

These profits depend on the exploitation of workers. All production at Mister Sweet comes from the hands of workers. But Premier pays workers poverty wages so that they can make as much profit as possible.

As different organisations supporting workers, we identify immediately with this. The struggle for a living wage is one that all workers can support. We are fully behind Mister Sweet workers as they move forward against the Premier bosses.

Support the strike! Forward to R19 500! Forward to a living wage! Don't buy Mr Sweet!

Central Karoo Farm Communities Association (Western Cape)

Housing Assembly (Western Cape)

Independent Komani Resident Association (Eastern Cape)

Intlungu Yase Matyotyombeni (Western Cape)

Kwakwatsi Advice Office (Free State)

Maokeng Advice and Research Centre (Free State)

Metsimoholo Community Association (Free State)

Mining Affected Communities United in Action (National)

Potchefstroom Informal Settlement (North West)

Sovereign Agroecology Food Empowerment (Northern Cape)

Support Centre for Land Change (Western Cape and Eastern Cape)

Sundays River Valley Farm Workers Forum (Eastern Cape)

Valley FM (Western Cape)

Witzenburg Justice Coalition (Western Cape)

Workers World Media Productions (National)

Casual Workers Advice Office (Gauteng)

Simunye Workers Forum (Gauteng)

Surplus People Project (Western Cape)

Women On Farms Project (Western Cape)

Unpaid Benefits Campaign (Gauteng)

Thlolong Legal Advice Centre (Free State)

Ikageng Advisory Centre (North West)

Khanya College (Gauteng)

This press statement was released by Casual Workers' Advice, Independent Komani Residents Association, & Unpaid Benefits Campaign, on 06 September 2024.