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Food and Drug Council Responds to Tesco's Arrival in California and Southwest

Labor Leaders From 26 Affiliates Meet to Confront
British Supermarket Chain's 'Fresh & Easy' Stores;
Hundreds of Union Members Hand Out Leaflets to Public

Las Vegas (Dec. 18, 2007) — More than 125 affiliates of the Food and Drug Council met here to prepare a united response to the arrival of British supermarket company Tesco in California and the Southwest.

Labor leaders from California and Nevada attended the convention and, at a local rally, joined hundreds of local union members in distributing leaflets explaining to the public why FDC affiliates do not recommend shopping at Tesco's new Fresh & Easy stores.

Tesco says it hopes to capture one-sixth of the American retail food market with its new Fresh & Easy chain of small "neighborhood" style stores. The markets are opening in Arizona, Nevada and Southern California.

"Tesco's operations in the United Kingdom are staffed by union employees," said Ellen Anreder, director of the Food and Drug Council. "But now they have decided to make their American operation non-union."

"We need to be on our guard after reading headlines about Tesco's Wal-Mart-like business tactics in other parts of the world," Anreder said. "We are firmly committed to protecting the rights and dignity of all working people in the United States."

The Food and Drug Council coordinates the efforts of its affiliates, which are the largest unions in the retail food and drug industries in California and Nevada, to educate the public about the benefits of working and buying union.

The Council's affiliates include the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, the United Food and Commercial Workers, the International Union of Operating Engineers and the International Longshore and Warehouse Union. The affiliates represent approximately 200,000 union members throughout California.

Contact

Ellen Anreder
Director, Food and Drug Council
(818) 591-7480

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