

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING SMITHFIELD FOODS WORKERS' RIGHTS
Resolution No. 124/2007-08

WHEREAS, the Town of Carrboro is committed to the right of all workers to have dignity in their lives, safe conditions at work, a living wage, and health benefits, and supports responsible employers who follow the law and treat their workers fairly; and

WHEREAS, the factory farming industry is known for its poor treatment of workers, disregard of workers' rights, environmental pollution, dubious product quality, and horrendous treatment of animals; and

WHEREAS, Smithfield Foods is the largest pork producer and processor in the world and the largest turkey processor and fifth largest beef processor in the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, the largest of Smithfield's facilities is in Tar Heel, North Carolina, where approximately 5,500 workers slaughter and process 32,000 hogs a day; and

WHEREAS, Smithfield Foods has created an environment of intimidation, racial tension, fear and sometimes, violence, for workers who desperately want a voice on the job. The company in Tar Heel, N.C., has been found liable by the National Labor Relations Board of physically assaulting workers, threatening bodily harm, and causing the false arrest of workers for exercising their legal rights; and

WHEREAS, the right to form trade unions has been recognized as a human right under the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights, yet it has been repeatedly ignored by Smithfield Foods. From the first attempt to organize in 1993 through today, Smithfield has met workers' attempts to organize with tactics that include racism, violence, and intimidation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN OF THE TOWN OF CARRBORO:

Section 1. The Town of Carrboro supports the workers at the Smithfield processing plant in Tar Heel, North Carolina in their struggle for dignity, fair wages and safe working conditions, and their right to organize into a union.

Section 2. The Town of Carrboro encourages markets within the town to consider suspending their purchases of any Smithfield products until such time as these critical issues are resolved, and

Section 3. Members of the Carrboro Board of Aldermen will refrain from purchasing or consuming Smithfield Foods' products until such time as these critical issues are resolved.

Section 4. The Town Clerk is hereby requested to forward a copy of this resolution to Chairman Joseph Luter and CEO Larry Pope, Smithfield Foods, Inc. and the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union on behalf of the Board of Aldermen.

Section 5. This resolution shall become effective upon adoption.