

# TEAMSTERS NEWS

International Brotherhood

25 Louisiana Avenue, NW • Washington, DC 20001 • [www.teamster.org](http://www.teamster.org)



of Teamsters

202-624-6911 • fax: 202-624-6918

**For Immediate Release**

**February 18, 2010**

**Contact:**

**Galen Munroe, (202) 624-6911**

**[gmunroe@teamster.org](mailto:gmunroe@teamster.org)**

## **SUSTAINABLE FOOD SUPPLY CHAIN COALITION CALLS ON UNFI CEO TO RESPECT WORKERS' RIGHTS, STOP UNDERMINING ORGANICS**

*CEO Steven Spinner Refuses to Sign Sustainability Pledge at UNFI Southeast Tabletop Show*

(ORLANDO, FL) – Yesterday, the Coalition for a Sustainable Food Supply Chain, an alliance that includes the [International Brotherhood of Teamsters](http://www.teamster.org), organic food advocates and environmental organizations, attended United Natural Foods, Inc.'s (UNFI) Southeast Tabletop Show in Orlando, Fla., an annual conference held by the company for its top retailers. The coalition presented UNFI CEO Steven Spinner with a pledge for a sustainable food supply chain at the conference, which he refused to sign.

UNFI is the nation's largest distributor of organic and natural food and health and beauty products. UNFI supplies goods to Whole Foods.

Teamsters and their allies in the coalition have been asking UNFI and Whole Foods, Inc. to end practices of monopolization, marketing natural over organic foods and violating workers' rights throughout the supply chain, as well as to adopt real sustainability standards.

The pledge for a sustainable food supply chain includes promises to cease marketing conventional food as "natural," to increase the sales of certified organic foods, to adopt fair trade standards that honor the right of workers to freely choose representation and collective bargaining and to promote a sustainable environment that includes the elimination of business practices that accelerate climate change.

"It is unfortunate that Steve Spinner speaks extensively about UNFI's so-called sustainability commitment, but that he has not agreed to sign the pledge. UNFI likes to talk the talk, but they also need to walk the walk," said John Williams, Teamsters Warehouse Division Director.

Teamster members also distributed leaflets to conference attendees that read, "What's Gone Wrong at UNFI? Tell UNFI: Sign the Sustainable Food Chain Pledge Now."

Founded in 1903, the [International Brotherhood of Teamsters](http://www.teamster.org) represents 1.4 million hardworking men and women in the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico.