

April 15, 2007

Dear Ms. Paula Deen:

We are writing you as workers and former workers at the Smithfield plant in Tar Heel, North Carolina. Tar Heel is Smithfield's biggest plant and the biggest pork plant in the world. We are writing for of all of the workers at the plant who have been trying to make things better there for years.

Workers have suffered terrible injuries at Smithfield. Some of us have had our fingers cut off; some of us have serious repetitive stress injuries, knife wounds, broken bones, and severe infections. Many of us have paid a painful price for working at Smithfield. Sometimes we are fired if we get badly injured and then we are faced with high, ongoing medical bills and the inability to support our families. The health care we receive at Smithfield for our injuries is usually geared to getting us right back on the line and is not focused on helping us get better for the long term. Many workers are unfairly denied workers compensation for injuries on the job. We have been trying to get Smithfield to treat us better for over 12 years. Some of us were fired because of that.

We believe that you are a woman of conscience. We know that you have a reputation of caring about regular working people and families like ours. We were surprised when we found out that you were helping sell Smithfield products but we believe it's only because you don't know the truth about what's going on there.

We would like to meet with you to tell you what it is like to work in the Tar Heel plant. And we hope that you will look into this yourself. You can study the legal decisions about Smithfield which found that the company beat, harassed, threatened, used racial insults against, frightened, and fired us illegally. You can also read Human Rights Watch which has prepared two reports about the dangerous working conditions at Smithfield in Tar Heel. But most of all you can learn about this by talking with us.

We have faith that once you know the truth you will not promote a product that is made through the pain and suffering of our families. We hope that in good conscience you will not lend your name to Smithfield.

We want Smithfield to treat us right so that the company can be successful and that we can have healthy, happy families. Please support us.

Sincerely,

Julia McMillon
Willie Tate *Larry McDonald* *Tommy J. White*
Leis Burns *Ronnie A. Simmon* *Genora B. Bandy*
Kristi Lusk *C. J. Bailey* *Maria Johnson*