

# Expand the CNH strike to fight for a \$10 raise and COLA! Join the CNH Workers Rank-and-File Committee!

CNH Workers Rank-and-File Committee  
5 May 2022

*To join the CNH Workers Rank-and-File Committee, email [cnhrfc@gmail.com](mailto:cnhrfc@gmail.com), or text (262) 676-2381.*

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Brothers and Sisters,

The strike which began on Monday and the stand we are taking is long overdue. For decades, we have seen our wages frozen or stagnate, our health care costs go up, our workday get longer, our plants get more and more dangerous, the jobs of our brothers and sisters cut, and one right after another stripped away.

One minute we're essential workers, the next we're nobody. We were told our labor is critical enough that we had to work throughout a pandemic. But now, management is refusing to provide us a decent standard of living.

The fact that we are making less than our fathers did is sickening. After the last contract, many of us aren't making much more than \$20 an hour, if that, for physically exhausting work. Meanwhile, in the Midwest the price of meat and eggs is up more than 13 percent from a year ago, fruits and vegetables 11 percent, gas for heating our homes 26 percent, and gas for our cars and trucks up 46 percent!

We're working 10 hours on straight time, and relentless mandatory overtime when the company has parts. We're paying hundreds of dollars a month in health care premiums and co-pays for our families. Someone has to die or get seriously injured for things to get fixed. And we no longer have pensions and health benefits to make retirement secure and something to look forward to.

We can't live the types of lives we deserve and raise our families as long as this continues.

The CNH Workers Rank-and-File Committee is being launched in order to organize a real fight for the needs of all workers at CNH. We call for a rejection of any contract which does not meet these minimum demands:

- A \$10-an-hour base wage increase for all workers, to make up for years of stagnating wages, in addition to all second-tier workers being immediately brought up to top pay
- The restoration of COLA to protect against out-of-control inflation
- Fully paid medical and dental benefits, with no premiums or co-pays
- The return to an eight-hour day, with overtime paid after eight hours and on weekends
- Health care coverage for retirees and their families

Management will claim this is unaffordable. That argument doesn't hold water. The company has made billions in profits just since 2020. CNH has spent hundreds of millions of dollars on dividends and share buybacks for investors in the last year. Pay for the CEO tripled between 2017 and 2021.

Where is the UAW in all this? We know where. For years, the company has told the union bigwigs what they want, and then the UAW lays down the law to us. They have acted as the representatives of management, not the workers.

We've watched one union official after another get sent to prison for accepting bribes or embezzling our dues, including former Vice President Norwood Jewell, who led the negotiations for our 2016 contract, and former UAW President Dennis Williams, who played a major role in selling out our strike in 2004-2005 as director of Region 4.

The concessions they forced on us through lies and other underhanded means have not been reversed. And while the most obvious crooks may be behind bars, their successors and former buddies at “Solidarity House” are just as much in the pocket of the companies.

We watched what happened at the strikes at Volvo and Deere last year. The UAW announced contracts that they claimed had “significant economic gains,” but when workers saw the pathetic raises inside, they thought it was a bad joke and voted them down by 90 percent!

Workers at Volvo and Deere formed their own rank-and-file committees last year, in order to expose the lies and misinformation of both the companies and the UAW and to fight for demands based on the real needs of workers.

A serious fight requires a worked-out strategy. To win this strike, we believe the following is necessary:

- **The UAW information blackout must end.** Union officials have been meeting with the company for weeks. What have they been demanding? Us workers are the only ones being kept in the dark. No more closed door negotiations! Rank-and-file workers should nominate representatives to oversee any future talks between management and the UAW.

- **Raise strike pay to our full income!** The UAW is sitting on a strike fund with over \$800 million, created from our dues, but is only planning to give us an insulting \$275 a week. Meanwhile, UAW executives like President Ray Curry and Vice President Chuck Browning continue to receive their full \$200,000-plus compensation packages.

We refuse to be starved on the picket line! If there is to be a serious strike, we have to have the resources to sustain it.

- **Expand the strike to all CNH facilities!** We have to look reality in the face. So long as our walkout is confined to just two locations, we will not be able to win what we need.

There are 11 other CNH plants in North America employing more than 10,000 workers, the majority of them non-union. There are thousands more in Europe,

Asia, South America and Australia. These workers are not our competitors but our brothers and sisters. They are exploited by the same corporation. We must find ways to reach out to them and appeal to them to join our strike.

There are over 1,000 of us on strike now. But workers all over the world, on every continent, are beginning to take action against the massive rise in the cost of food and other basic necessities. Whatever country they’re in, workers are seeing that big business and the billionaires are bleeding us dry.

Those who worked at the companies which preceded CNH—J.I. Case, International Harvester, New Holland and others—fought a rich history of determined and militant class battles, from the 444-day strike at Case in 1945-47 to the 1979-80 strike at International Harvester. Every gain made by those who came before us was not granted out of the good will of the companies but was wrenched away by the workers. The proud history of these struggles must be reclaimed.

We can win this fight and make sure our families and the next generation have a better life. But it depends on workers seizing the initiative, organizing ourselves independently and mobilizing the necessary reinforcements within the working class. If you agree with our demands, join and help build our committee!



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