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EEOC v. Rivera Vineyards, Inc. d/b/a Blas Rivera Vineyards, et al.

Judge Robert J. Timlin

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EEOC v. Rivera Vineyards, Inc. d/b/a Blas Rivera Vineyards, et al.

Keywords

EEOC, Rivera Vineyards, Inc., Blas Rivera Vineyards, EDCV 03-01117 RT (SGL), Consent Decree, Disparate Treatment, Retailiation, Sexual Harassment, Assignment, Termination, Agriculture, Sex, Female, Employment Law, Title VII

Anna Y. Park, SBN 164242 1 Cherry Marie Rojas, SBN 141482 FILED 2 Sue J. Noh, SBN 192134 CLERK US DISTRICT COURT Elizabeth Esparza-Cervantes, SBN 205412 3 **EOUAL EMPLOYMENT** JUN 1 4 2005 4 OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORN 255 East Temple Street, 4th Floor EASTERN DIVISION Los Angeles, CA 90012 Telephone: (213) 894-1068 Facsimile: (213) 894-1301 LABO. É egal @EEOC.gov Attorneys for Plaintiff, **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT Priority** Send OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION Enter Shawn E Caine 12 1125 Camino Del Mar, Suite D 13 Del Mar, CA 92014 14 Telephone: (858) 350-1660 Facsimile: (858) 350-1661 15 16 Attorneys for Defendant, Rivera Vineyards, Inc., et al. 17 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT 18 CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA 19 20 **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT** Case No.: EDCV 03-01117 RT 21 OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION, (SGL) 22 Plaintiff, [PRÓPOSED] CONSENT 23 DECREE 24 v. 25 Hon. Robert J. Timlin RIVERA VINEYARDS, INC. d/b/a 26 BLAS RIVERA VINEYARDS, et al, DOCKETED ON CM 27 Defendants. 28 JUN 15 2005

I. INTRODUCTION

On September 05, 2003, Plaintiff U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC" or "Commission") filed a federal lawsuit against Rivera Vineyards, et al., ("Defendants"), entitled EEOC v. Rivera Vineyards, Inc. d/b/a Blas Rivera Vineyards; Linda Vineyards, Inc.; BR Company; and Oasis Distributing; and Does 1-10 Inclusively, Case Number EDCV 03-01117 RT (SGL), to correct unlawful employment practices. Specifically, the EEOC alleged that Defendants subjected Virginia Mejia, Rosario Taylor, and other similarly situated women to sexual harassment. The EEOC also alleged that Defendants unlawfully subjected Ms. Mejia, Ms. Taylor, and other similar situated individuals to retaliation for engaging in a protected activity of opposing the sexual harassment by subjecting them to termination and/or for failing to recall them to work. The EEOC further alleged that the Defendant subjected women to sex discrimination by segregating and prohibiting women from working certain positions, such as pruning, girdling, irrigation, and other positions. The Defendants deny all of the accusations.

The EEOC and the Defendants hereby stipulate and agree to entry of this Consent Decree ("Decree") to resolve the Commission's Complaint under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 U.S.C. Section 2000e et seq. ("Title VII"), and Title I of the Civil Rights Act of 1991, 42 U.S.C. Section 1981a on behalf of the aggrieved claimants identified above.

II. PURPOSES OF THIS DECREE

A. In the interest of resolving this matter, and as a result of having engaged in comprehensive settlement negotiations, the EEOC, Rivera Vineyards, Inc., Linda Vineyards, Inc., BR Company and Oasis Distributing, (hereinafter collectively referred to as "the Parties") have agreed that this action should be finally resolved by entry of this Decree. This Decree shall be binding on and enforceable against

all the parties, including Defendants and its officers, directors, agents, successors, and assigns.

B. The Parties have entered into this Decree for the following purposes:

- 1. To provide appropriate monetary and injunctive relief;
- 2. To ensure that Defendants' employment practices comply with federal law;
- 3. To ensure a work environment free from hostility due to their sex (female);
- 4. To ensure training for Defendants' managers and employees with respect to their obligations under Title VII;
- 5. To ensure that Defendants maintain a non segregated work force to allow women the equal employment opportunities required under Title VII;
- 6: To ensure that employees are protected from retaliation for engaging in a protected activity; and
- 7. To provide an appropriate and effective mechanism for handling harassment, discrimination, and retaliation complaints in the workplace.

III. JURISDICTION

The Court has jurisdiction over the parties and the subject matter of this lawsuit, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. Sections 451, 1331, 1337, 1343, 1367 and 42 U.S.C. 2000e-5. The Court shall retain jurisdiction of this action during the duration of this Decree for the purposes of entering all orders, judgments and decrees that may be necessary to implement the terms and conditions specified herein.

The Plaintiff in this action is the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

The Defendants who are bound to the jurisdiction of this Court and to the terms and obligations of this Decree are as follows: Rivera Vineyards (a sole proprietorship); Oasis Distributing (a sole proprietorship); BR Company (a sole proprietorship); Indian Wells Vineyards, Inc.; Rivera Vineyard Inc., Linda

Vineyards Inc.; BR Inc.; Mr. Blas Rivera as an individual and in his capacity as Trustee of the Rivera Family Trust; its predecessors, successors, officers, directors, agents, and assigns.

IV. FINDINGS

Having examined the terms and provisions of this Decree and based on the pleadings, record and stipulation of the Parties, the Court finds the following:

- A. The Court has jurisdiction over the Parties and the subject matter of this action. The Complaint asserts claims that, if proven, would authorize the Court to grant the relief set forth in this Decree.
- B. The terms and provisions of this Decree are adequate, fair, reasonable, equitable and just. The rights of the Defendants, the Commission and those for whom the Commission seeks relief are protected adequately by this Decree.
- C. This Decree conforms with the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and Title VII and is not in derogation of the rights and privileges of any person. The entry of this Decree will further the objectives of Title VII and will be in the best interest of the Parties.

V. RESOLUTION OF CLAIMS

A. The Parties agree that this Decree resolves all claims and causes of action arising out of EEOC Charge Nos. 340-2002-00015 and 340-2002-00019, the complaint filed on September 5, 2003, and the First Amended Complaint filed on or about February 25, 2004 in the United States District Court, Central District of California entitled EEOC v. Rivera Vineyards, Inc. d/b/a Blas Rivera Vineyards; Linda Vineyards, Inc.; BR Company; and Oasis Distributing; and Does 1-10 Inclusively, with Case Number EDCV 03-01117 RT (SGL). The Decree constitutes a complete resolution of all claims under Title VII that were made or could have been made by the EEOC in this action and by those for whom the Commission sought relief.

- C. Nothing in this Decree shall be construed to limit or to reduce Defendants' obligation to comply fully with Title VII or any other federal employment statute.
- D. This Decree in no way affects the EEOC's right to bring, process, investigate, or litigate other charges that may be in existence or may later arise against Defendants in accordance with standard EEOC procedures provided that the facts upon which any such action would be based occurred on or after March 24, 2005.

VI. DURATION AND EFFECTIVE DATE OF DECREE

- A. The provisions and agreements contained herein are effective immediately upon the date which this Decree is entered by the Court ("Effective Date").
- B. This Decree shall remain in effect until the Defendants fully pay the monies owed under this Decree or three (3) years from the Effective Date, whichever is later. The term of the Decree shall be no less than three (3) years from the Effective Date.

VII. MONETARY RELIEF

A. Terms

In settlement of this lawsuit, Defendants shall pay a total of one million fifty-thousand dollars (\$1,050,000.00) ("Monetary Obligation") to resolve this action. Defendants shall be jointly and severally liable for the full amount of all such payments. The Defendants shall make payments according to the following schedule: (1) \$100,000.00 due 60 days after the Effective Date; (2) \$75,000.00 due six (6) months after the Effective Date; (3) \$75,000.00 due twelve (12) months after the ///

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Effective Date. Thereafter, Defendants shall pay \$100,000.00 annually on the second through ninth anniversary (annually) of the Effective Date, without interest.

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- 1. Defendants shall accelerate payment of the remaining balance, at any point during the duration of this Decree upon Defendants' sale of any of its agricultural real property, at the rate of \$750.00 per acre but in no event more than the full remaining balance of the Monetary Obligation. Upon any sale of Defendants' agricultural real property and receipt by Plaintiff of a sum equal to Seven Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$750.00) for each acre sold (but in no event exceeding the remaining balance of the Monetary Obligation), Plaintiff shall provide a partial reconveyance of the deed of trust with respect to the properties sold.
- In addition, upon Defendants' refinance of any existing debt against 2. their agricultural real property, Plaintiff shall provide Defendants a subordination of the Deed of Trust provided the new, refinanced loan does not exceed the existing loan balance (as of the Effective Date), of the debt it replaces. If any new loan amount secured by Defendants' agricultural real property would be greater than the existing loan balance, (as of the Effective Date) of the debt it replaces ("New Loan"), then, except as provided below, upon recordation of the New Loan, the EEOC shall be paid the net differential up to but not exceeding the remaining balance of the Monetary Obligation. Upon receipt by Plaintiff of any loan proceeds from a New Loan, as described above, Plaintiff shall provide Defendants a partial reconveyance of the Deed of Trust with respect to all of the property which is the subject of the refinance. If the proceeds of a New Loan are used exclusively for crop production purposes ("Crop Loan"), then in that event, if necessary, the EEOC shall subordinate the lien of the Deed of Trust to said Crop Loan provided that the Crop Loan is secured by a crop mortgage, personally guaranteed by Blas Rivera; and that the Crop Loan does not exceed Three Million Dollars (\$3,000,000.00) and that Plaintiff receives twenty-five percent (25%) of

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the Crop Loan, net of loan costs (but not exceeding the remaining balance of the Monetary Obligation) as a condition of the subordination.

3. Further, upon the full payment by Defendants to Plaintiff of the Monetary Obligation Plaintiff shall provide Defendants an unconditional request for full reconveyance and deed of full reconveyance of the Deed of Trust and the release of the personal guarantee of Blas Rivera, all forms and content for any of the matters described in Section VII.A.1, 2 and 3 shall be provided by Defendants to Plaintiff.

B. Personal Liability of Blas Rivera

Blas Rivera shall be personally liable for monies owed under this Decree in the amount of \$1,050,000.00. Mr. Blas Rivera shall also be liable as a Trustee of the Rivera Family Trust. Accordingly Mr. Rivera as an individual and as a Trustee of Rivera Family Trust agrees to be bound by the terms and obligations of this Decree as set forth herein and the jurisdiction of this Court (known hereafter as being subsumed herein along with the other "Defendants").

C. Collateral

As security for Defendants' obligations under this Decree, Defendants shall record a memorandum of this Decree in the County of Riverside and Imperial County in the State of California within ten (10) days of the Effective Date creating a lien against all real and personal property owned by the Defendants, including Blas Rivera. A copy of the recorded Memorandum shall be sent to Anna Park, Regional Attorney, United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 255 East Temple Street, 4th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90012 within five (5) days of recording.

As further security for Defendants' obligations under this Decree,
Defendants shall execute a deed of within ten (10) days of the Effective Date,
creating a lien against all agricultural real and personal property owned by the
Defendants as of the Effective Date. A copy of the recorded deed of trust shall be

sent to Anna Park, Regional Attorney for the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 255 East Temple Street, 4th Floor, Los Angels, CA 90012 within five (5) days of recording.

The collateral shall also include all inventories, goods, equipment, trade fixtures, contract rights, accounts, chattel paper, instruments, good will, general intangibles and right to payment of every kind now owned or hereafter acquired by the Defendants and/or any other company and/or partnership in which Blas Rivera or Defendants hold any and all interest either individually or jointly. Defendants shall be jointly and severally liable for the Monetary Obligation.

Should Defendants fail to record the Memorandum of this Decree and the Deed of Trust within forty-five (45) days of entry of this Decree, they will be deemed in default and the total amount of \$1,050,000 shall be owed and due immediately, including interest at the rate of 10% per annum from and after the date of default.

VIII. CLASS FUND

- A. Defendants shall deposit all sums which become due hereunder in a Class Fund. Within thirty (30) days after a payment, Defendants shall provide the EEOC written verification of the first payment described above and of each and every subsequent payment. Defendants shall have the sole responsibility for all costs and fees connected with establishing and maintaining the class fund. The Class Fund will administer and effect distribution of sums specified herein to eligible claimants, all as set forth in this Decree, in accordance with the written specifications of the EEOC.
- B. The EEOC shall have the sole discretion to identify eligible claimants and the sole discretion to allocate the monetary amounts for each eligible claimant that may be covered by this Decree. Claimants shall execute a general release by and between the Defendants. EEOC shall not be a party to the separate release. The EEOC retains the sole discretion to issue a Right-to-Sue notice in this case. For all

eligible claimants, EEOC agrees that a Right-to-Sue Notice will not be issued in this case under Title VII.

- C. The EEOC shall determine and submit a written list of eligible claimants to the Defendants along with the last known address of the claimant. Within ten (10) days of receiving the list of eligible claimants, Defendants shall make payments, to the extent of monies in the Class Fund, to each eligible claimant identified by the EEOC by check transmitted via certified mail, return receipt requested. All amounts distributed from the Class Fund shall be evidenced by IRS Form 1099 to each recipient.
- D. Within ten (10) business days of the issuance of each check, Defendants shall submit a copy of each check and related correspondence to Anna, Park, Regional Attorney, United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 255 East Temple Street, 4th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90012.
- E. Defendants shall prepare and distribute 1099 tax reporting forms to each of the eligible claimants pursuant to IRS rules and regulations. Defendants shall be solely responsible for any costs associated with the issuance and distribution of the 1099 tax reporting forms to each of claimants.
- F. In the event that a payment is returned, because the address is not current, the Defendants shall conduct data base research for the claimant's current address and/or attempt to find the claimant's current address at Defendants' own cost. Defendants shall immediately notify the EEOC if a payment is returned and its subsequent efforts to find a current address. Any subsequent correspondence shall be sent to the Regional Attorney as outlined above in VIII (D) above. Once Defendants notify EEOC of a returned payment, upon payment of said unclaimed funds as described herein below, Defendants shall be released from any and all further liability for the same under this Decree and the sum(s) in question shall be credited to Defendants monetary obligations hereunder.

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G. Surplus in Class Fund

In the event that any portion of the Class Fund has not been distributed at the expiration of this Decree, the surplus shall be paid to CRLA for providing services to farm workers, specifically farm worker women about sexual harassment. The EEOC shall provide the Defendants the address for CRLA the event of a Surplus in the Class Fund.

IX. REINSTATEMENT

- A. Defendants agree to rehire the claimants who were offered reinstatement on or about April of 2001 in the event defendants resume farming operations. Resuming farming in operation is defined as employing 300 employees for 30 (thirty) consecutive calendar days. Defendants shall notify the EEOC within five (5) days of: (1) the resumption of farming operations as defined above; (2) when the claimants are rehired; and (3) who among the claimants was rehired. The use of sub-contractors or contractors shall not exempt the Defendants' obligations under this provision (IX) of the Decree. In the event a claimant is not rehired even though he or she was offered reinstatement on or about April of 2001, the Defendants shall notify the EEOC in writing of the reasons for not hiring the claimant.
- B. Additionally, claimants who participate herein but were not offered reinstatement on or about April of 2001 shall not be precluded from being considered for future employment.

X. INJUNCTIVE RELIEF

A. Non-Discrimination

1. Sexual Harassment

Defendants, their officers, agents, management (including all supervisory employees), successors, assigns, and all those in concert or participation with them, or any of them, hereby agree: (a) not to engage in sexual harassment or sex based harassment; (b) to prevent and correct any harassment or other discrimination on

the basis of sex; (c) to ensure that employees who complain about or resist discrimination on the basis of sex are not subjected to any tangible employment actions; (d) to hold managers and supervisors accountable for sex harassment; (e) to ensure immediate, corrective, and preventative measures are taken when a valid complaint is raised; and (f) to create effective policies and procedures are in place to ensure a workplace free of hostility due to sex.

2. Job Segregation Due to Sex Discrimination

Defendants agree to hire women into all positions, including but not limited to, pruning, girdling, irrigation, and other positions that were found to be segregated based upon sex (female) by the EEOC. Defendants, their officers, agents, management (including all supervisory employees), successors, assigns, and all those in concert or participation with them, or any of them, further hereby agree: (a) not to engage in, implement or permit any action, policy or practice that discriminates against employees due to their sex (female); (b) to ensure a workplace free of segregation due to sex (female); and (c) to promote equal employment opportunity regardless of gender in all positions; and (d) to hold managers and/or supervisors accountable for violating Title VII.

3. Retaliation

Defendants, their officers, agents, management (including all supervisory employees), successors, assigns, and all those in active concert or participation with them, or any of them, hereby agree not to engage in, implement or permit any action, policy or practice with the purpose of retaliating against any current or former employee of Defendants, or either of them, because he or she has in the past, or during the term of this Decree: (a) opposed any practice made unlawful under Title VII; (b) filed a charge of discrimination alleging such practice; (c) testified or participated in any manner in any investigation (including without limitation, any internal investigation undertaken by Defendants), proceeding in connection with this case and/or relating to any claim of a Title VII violation; (d)

was identified as a possible witness or claimant in this action; (e) asserted any rights under this Decree; or (f) sought and/or received any relief in accordance with this Decree.

Defendants shall ensure to the best of their ability and in good faith that any contractors or subcontractors employed by Defendants ensure a workplace free from discrimination, harassment, and retaliation as set forth above.

B. Retention of Equal Employment Opportunity Consultant

Within thirty (30) days after the Effective Date, Defendants shall retain a Consultant with demonstrated experience in the area of employment discrimination and sexual harassment issues, to monitor Defendants' compliance with Title VII and the provisions of this Decree. The Consultant shall be subject to the Commission's approval, which shall not be unreasonably withheld. If the Commission does not approve Defendants' proposed Consultant, the Commission shall provide a list of at least three suggested candidates acceptable to the Commission. Defendants shall bear all costs associated with the selection and retention of the Consultant and the performance of his/her/its duties. The Consultant's responsibilities shall include:

- 1. Establishing written policies/procedures for Defendants to handle complaints of discrimination, harassment and retaliation comply with its obligations, under this Decree;
- 2. Establishing written policies/procedures for Defendants' antiharassment policy and reporting procedure effectively carry out its obligations under this Decree;
- 3. Establishing written policies/procedures so that managerial and staff/hourly employees are trained on their rights and responsibilities under Title VII, including but not limited to the responsibilities to provide a workplace free of harassment, segregation, and retaliation;

4. Establishing written policies/procedures so that all employees are trained on policies and procedures relating to sex discrimination, sexual harassment, and retaliation;

- 5. Establishing written policies/procedures for Defendants' investigation of all complaints of sexual discrimination/ harassment and retaliation to ensure compliance with Title VII;
- 6. Establishing written policies/procedures so that Defendants properly communicates with complainants regarding the complaint procedure, status of the complaint investigation, results of the investigation, and any remedial action taken;
- 7. Establishing written policies/procedures so that Defendants' reports required by this Decree are accurately compiled and timely submitted;
- 8. Establishing written policies/procedures so that Defendants' disciplinary policies hold employees and managers accountable for failing to take appropriate action or for engaging in conduct prohibited under this Decree;
- 9. Establishing written policies/procedures so that Defendants creates a centralized system of tracking discrimination, harassment, and retaliation complaints;
- 10. Establishing written policies/procedures so that all women are provided equal employment opportunity in all positions;
- 11. Establishing written policies/procedures so that individuals who are to be rehired are rehired and not subject to retaliation;
- 12. Establishing written policies/procedures for complaints raised through the 24 hour hotline;
- 13. Establishing written policies/procedures for compliance with the terms of this Decree; and
- 14. Preparing an annual report on Defendants' progress and its compliance under this Decree.

C. Revision and Distribution of Anti-Harassment, Anti-Discrimination, and Anti-Retaliation Policies and Procedures

Within sixty (60) days of the Effective Date, Defendants shall revise and/or modify its anti-harassment, anti-discrimination, and anti-retaliation policies. The policy shall include:

1. A clear explanation of prohibited conduct;

- 2. Assurance that employees who make complaints of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation, or provide information related to such complaints will be protected against retaliation;
- 3. A clearly described complaint process that provides accessible and confidential avenues of complaint with contact information including name (if applicable), address, and telephone number of persons both internal and external to the Defendants (i.e., Commission and Consultant) to whom employees may report discrimination and retaliation, including a written statement that the employee may report the discriminatory behavior to designated persons outside their chain of management;
- 4. Assurance that the employer will protect the confidentiality of harassment, discrimination, and retaliation complaints to the extent possible;
- 5. A complaint process that provides a prompt, thorough, and impartial investigation;
- 6. A procedure for communicating with the complainant in writing regarding the status of the complaint/investigation, results of the investigation, and any remedial action taken;
- 7. Assurance that Defendants will take immediate and appropriate corrective, and preventative actions when it determines that harassment, discrimination, or retaliation occurred;
- 8. A description of the possible consequences, up to and including termination that will be imposed upon violation of the policies;

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10. A statement that Defendants' sex harassment, sex discrimination and retaliation policies apply to all persons, including but not limited to the Defendants' owners, shareholders, directors, officers, other management officials, supervisors, vendors, suppliers, third parties, and customers.

EEOC shall comment on the policies and procedures within thirty (30) days of receipt. The parties shall meet and confer about the proposed changes. If the parties are not able to resolve their differences, the parties shall follow Section XIII set forth below, Should the policy not require any revision no later than ten (10) business days after the forty-five (45) day period, the policy shall be distributed to all employees in either English or Spanish, depending on the language preference of each employee. The policies and procedures shall also be disseminated to all management/supervisory staff and shall also be included in any relevant policy or employee manuals distributed to employees by Defendants. Defendants shall maintain acknowledgments from each employee who receives the revised policy, in either English or Spanish depending on the language preference of each employee. Throughout the term of this Decree, Defendants shall also post the revised policy, in English and Spanish, in a place that is clearly visible to all employees at each of its facilities covered by this Decree in 15 point font. All new or rehired employees shall receive a copy of the policies and procedures within ten (10) days of being hired or rehired.

All employees and employees of subcontractors or contractors, who do business with Defendants, shall be given a copy of Defendants' policies and procedures and will be required under the terms of the agreement with Defendants to comply with those internal policies and procedures in furtherance of Title VII.

D. Complaint Procedure

Within forty-five (45) days of the Effective Date, Defendants shall ensure that it has publicized an internal complaint procedure to provide for the filing, investigation and, if appropriate, remedying of complaints of harassment, discrimination, and retaliation. Defendants shall establish a toll-free number that shall be disseminated to all Defendants employees and employees hired through a contractor or subcontractor informing them that a complaint can be logged at any time. The (800) number shall be processed and monitored by the Consultant. All calls shall be tracked by the Consultant during the term of the Decree. Defendants shall also publicize the EEOC complaint line number of (800) 669-4000 or (213) 894-1983.

Defendants and the Consultant shall:

- 1. Publicize the complaint procedure;
- 2. Track and collect all complaints filed thereunder;
- 3. Investigate and resolve such complaints in a timely and effective manner; and
 - 4. Retain records regarding resolution of all such complaints.

The Consultant shall track all complaints filed thereunder and retain records regarding resolution of all such complaints. The Consultant will review the allegations of harassment, discrimination, and/or retaliation made during the term of the Decree and conduct an investigation accordingly. The Consultant shall provide written findings at the conclusion of its investigation. The EEOC Consultant may recommend discipline, including but not limited to termination of employees who have engaged in harassment, discrimination, or retaliation. If Defendants reject the Consultant's recommended course of action, Defendants must present written justification to the EEOC for failing to adopt the Consultant's findings.

The internal complaint procedure shall incorporate the following elements:

1. A policy describing how investigations will be conducted;

2. A prompt commencement and thorough investigation by a Defendant's employee trained to conduct such investigations who is not connected with the complaint;

- 3. A statement that an investigation should include interviews of all relevant witnesses, including the complainant, and reviews of all relevant documents;
- 4. A written record of all investigatory steps, and any findings and conclusions, and any actions taken;
 - 5. Provision for the reasonably prompt resolution of such complaints;
- 6. An opportunity for at the complainant to review and respond to tentative findings, except in those circumstances in which it is necessary to take immediate action;
- 7. Confidentiality of the complaint and investigation to the extent possible;
- 8. Appropriate communication of the final conclusions of the investigation provided to the complainant;
- 9. An appeal procedure to an appropriate Defendants representative, should the complainant be dissatisfied with the results of the investigation;
- 10. A notice that employees or applicants complaining of discrimination may use the company's internal complaint procedure and contact information for the EEOC or state or local Fair Employment Practice (FEP) agencies. The notice shall also state that filing an internal complaint does not relieve the complainant of meeting any applicable deadline for the filing of a charge or complaint with EEOC or state or local FEP agencies;
- 11. A statement that the complainant shall not be required to first report the complaint to a person who is accused of the inappropriate conduct to invoke the Internal Complaint Procedure;

- 12. The internal complaint procedure will permit, but not require, an employee to initiate the complaint process by submitting a written complaint on a form designed for the purpose;
- 13. A statement that the internal complaint procedure is not intended to supplant the right of any employee to file a charge or complaint of discrimination or retaliation under any available municipal, state, or federal law;
- 14. A statement that it is unacceptable to retaliate against any associate for use of the Internal Complaint Procedure, for assisting in the investigation of a complaint, or for otherwise assisting in the utilization of the procedure; and
- 15. A statement that if an allegation of discrimination or retaliation against a manager or other associate is substantiated, then such conduct will result in appropriate discipline, up to and including discharge.

E. Training

Within one hundred fifty (150) days after the Effective Date, all of Defendants' managerial/supervisory and human resources employees shall be required to attend a comprehensive training program on harassment, discrimination, and retaliation. The training shall be mandatory and occur once a year for the first three years of the term of this Decree. The training shall be conducted in the Spanish and, if necessary, in English. Each employee, supervisor, manager, and human resources person shall be required to attend training each year, in a language that each employee best understands. Any manager, supervisor, or employee who failed to attend scheduled training shall be trained within thirty (30) days of the live training set forth above. The training shall also include persons supervising employees working for contractors that work for Defendants.

1. All employees' training shall include coverage of the subjects of equal employment opportunity rights and responsibilities, discrimination, harassment,

retaliation, and Defendants' revised policies and procedures for reporting and handling complaints of discrimination, harassment and retaliation.

- 2. A separate training of managerial and supervisory employees shall additionally include training on how to properly handle and investigate complaints of discrimination and/or harassment in a neutral manner, how to take preventive and corrective measures against discrimination and/or retaliation, and how to recognize and prevent discrimination and/or retaliation. Managers and supervisors shall also be trained on proper hiring, recruitment, promotion, screening, transfer, and/or retention procedures that ensure that female applicants and/or employees are provided with equal employment opportunities which do not deny them employment in any positions as required under Title VII. The training shall also encompass a comprehensive overview of the Defendants' policies and procedures. Managers and supervisors shall also be trained on monitoring, avoiding, and preventing retaliation in the workplace.
- 3. Human Resources training shall be specific to their obligations, including the handling and investigating of complaints of discrimination and retaliation. This training shall be above and beyond the supervisor/manager training as set forth above. Specifically, human resources individuals shall be trained in monitoring work areas to ensure compliance with Defendants' policies and procedures against harassment, discrimination, and retaliation.
- 4. For the remainder of the term of this Decree, all new employees and all employees recently promoted from a staff/hourly to a managerial position shall receive the managerial or staff/hourly employee training, as appropriate, within thirty (30) days of hire or promotion.
- 5. After the initial training as specified above, all employees shall receive the training at least annually thereafter for the remainder of the term of this Decree.

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- 6. All employees required to attend such training shall verify their annual attendance in writing. A log shall be maintained to track who attended each training.
- 7. Within forty-five (45) days after the Effective Date or fifteen (15) days after hiring the Consultant, whichever is later, Defendants shall submit to the EEOC a description of the training to be provided and an outline of the curriculum developed for the trainees.
- 8. Defendants shall give the EEOC a minimum of fifteen (15) business days advance written notice of the date, time and location of each training program provided pursuant to this Decree. An EEOC representative may attend any such training program.

F. Designation of Job Related Training Areas

Defendants and the Consultant shall ensure that female employees are not isolated and subjected to harassment. As such, any job related training shall be conducted in designated areas and/or in the presence of a female supervisor. To the extent possible, job related instructions or training shall be done during designated times and locations. Defendants shall ensure that all supervisors and managers are informed that it is their obligation and duty to report incidents of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation, particularly those perpetrated by other supervisors and managers. Failing to do so may result in discipline.

G. Hiring, Recruitment, and Retention

Defendants shall hire women into all positions, including but not limited to, pruning, vine tying, girdling, irrigation, swamping and other positions that were found to be segregated based upon sex (female) by the EEOC. If Defendants resume farming operations, as defined herein, during the term of this Decree, they shall engage in recruitment activities targeted at hiring more women into the positions where they have been excluded or limited. For each year during the term of this Consent Decree, Defendants (shall endeavor) to obtain a hiring rate of at

least fifty (50) percent women in pruning, vine tying, and irrigation, and at least ten (10) percent women in girdling, and swamping.

In pursuing this endeavor, at any time that Defendants resume farming operations as defined herein, Defendants shall engage in the following activities:

- 1. Advertise and actively recruit in the radio and print media with a likely audience of persons who would be interested in working for Defendants, including but not limited to Spanish language radio and La Prensa;
- 2. Distribute job notices to employees and create at least two visible postings centers at Defendants' facilities where employees can see job vacancy postings;
- 3. Advertise and actively recruit applicants in advocacy organizations such as Lideres Campesinas, the California Rural Legal Assistance, and Desert Community Alliance;
- 4. Implement a hiring procedure that does not rely solely on word-of-mouth for publicizing openings and that includes a systematic, predetermined hiring procedure that is disclosed to all applicants to ensure that applicants are evaluated based on their qualifications and interest in the open positions; Provide written notice of all job openings with each employee's pay-check for the relevant job and time period; and
 - 5. Any other procedures recommended by the EEO Consultant.

If Defendants fail to meet the annual hiring endeavor, the EEOC shall, in good faith, reasonably review Defendants' good faith compliance with their obligations under the Decree in order to determine whether Defendants violated the Decree. If Defendants have acted in good faith in their hiring practices, but, in spite of their good faith efforts, have not attained the hiring endeavor for that year, Defendants will be excused from such non-compliance and shall not be deemed in violation of this section of the Decree.

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H. Performance Evaluations

Defendants shall revise its performance evaluation forms for mangers and supervisors in order to include as measures for performance compliance with Defendants' Anti-Discrimination and Retaliation Policies and Procedures and Title VII.

At least thirty (30) days prior to implementing the performance evaluation forms described above, Defendants will work with the Consultant to implement a measure of holding managers and supervisors accountable for compliance with EEO laws.

- I. Claimant Specific Relief
 - Within ten (10) days of the Effective Date of this Decree, Defendant shall:
- 1. Segregate from the personnel files of each claimant identified by the EEOC, all references to the charges of discrimination filed against Defendants or their participation in this action. Specifically, all of Defendants' records pertaining to the charges of discrimination filed by Virginia Mejia and Rosario Taylor and this litigation shall be maintained confidentially and segregated their personnel files. None of these segregated documents shall be voluntarily disclosed except as required by law; and
- 2. Limit employment inquiries related to the Charging Parties Virginia Mejia, Rosario Taylor, and eligible claimants identified by the EEOC, to job title, term of employment, and rate of pay. Defendants are not obligated to rehire these two individuals.

The EEOC shall provide to the Defendants, a list of the claimants who are subject to this subsection.

XI. RECORD KEEPING AND REPORTING

A. Record Keeping of Discrimination and Retaliation Complaints

Defendants shall establish a record-keeping procedure that provides for the centralized tracking of discrimination and retaliation complaints and the

monitoring of such complaints to prevent retaliation. The records to be maintained shall include:

- 1. All documents generated in connection with any complaint, investigation into, or resolution of every complaint of harassment, discrimination or retaliation for the duration of the Decree and the identities of the parties involved. This includes any disciplinary actions taken against an employee and any findings;
- 2. All forms acknowledging employees' receipt of Defendants' revised discrimination and anti-retaliation policy;
- 3. All documents verifying the occurrence of all training sessions and names and positions of all attendees for each session as required under this Decree; and
- 4. Documents tracking and analyzing complaints filed against the same employee.
- B. Record Keeping of Recruitment, Hiring, and Transferring into Positions
 Defendants shall maintain records and establish a record-keeping procedure
 that provides for the tracking of recruitment, hiring, transferring, promotion, and
 screening processes into all positions. Defendants shall maintain documentations
 to support its recruiting efforts and all applications for hire, transfer, promotion,
 and screening during the term of the Decree. Defendants will gather gender data
 from applicants for the limited purpose of assembling data and submitting the
 Audit Report to the EEOC as provided herein.

C. Reporting

Within sixty (60) calendar days of the Effective Date and annually each year thereafter on the anniversary date of the Effective Date of this Decree for a period not exceeding three years, Defendants shall conduct an annual audit of the previous twelve month period (the "Audit Period") and submit a written report (the "Audit

Report") to the EEOC stating the total number of women and men by the following:

A. Position Applied for;

B. Were interviewed for;

C. Were hired:

D. Were offered positions but declined the employment offer;

E. Voluntarily withdrew from consideration for a position and the reason(s) for the withdrawal, if known by Defendants; and

F. Reasons why a female applicant was not for any given position.

Within 120 days after the Effective Date and annually thereafter for a period not exceeding three years, Defendants shall submit to the EEOC an initial report which contains:

- 1. A copy of the revised anti-harassment, anti-discrimination, and antiretaliation policies and procedures;
- 2. A summary of the procedures and record-keeping methods developed with the Consultant for centralized tracking of discrimination complaints and the monitoring of such complaints;
- 3. Description of compliance or non-compliance with the training requirements;
- 4. Description and analysis of all complaints raised during the review period as set forth herein;
 - 5. Description of Defendants' recruitment efforts;
- 6. Description of Defendants' hiring, promotion, screening, and transferring efforts;
- 7. compliance of Defendants contractors or subcontractors to the terms set forth in this Decree;

- 8. Confirmation of the establishment of the sex harassment, sex discrimination, and/or retaliation complaints hotline for complaints concerning the company's president, owner(s), shareholders, management and/or supervisors;
- 9. Confirmation that the Claimant-Specific injunctive relief has been carried out;
 - 10. A copy of Defendants' recruiting, screening, and hiring procedures;
- 11. A summary of the procedures for auditing employment applicants developed with the EEO Consultant for monitoring applicant flow data;
- 12. A summary of any changes of the procedures or record-keeping methods for centralized tracking of discrimination complaints and the monitoring of such complaints within thirty (30) days before implementing such changes; and
- 13. overall compliance or non-compliance with the terms of the Decree set forth herein.

Upon full payment of all sums, this Decree shall be of no further force or effect, and EEOC shall for itself and those for whom it acts (i.e., all past and present employees of Defendants) forever and fully discharge Defendants from any and all further claims and causes of action.

XII. REMEDIES IN EVENT OF A DEFAULT OR VIOLATION OF THIS DECREE

A. Acceleration of Balance Owed

In the event of a default or violation of this Decree, the EEOC shall be entitled, after written notice and a reasonable opportunity to cure, to accelerate the remaining unpaid balance owed under this Decree and declare all remaining amounts due and payable from the date of default until the amount is paid. Interest shall also be due at a rate of 10% per annum.

Defendants shall be in default under this provision when Defendants fail to make a timely payment, fail to fulfill payments to the claimants, or fail to meet the terms of This Decree. In the event of a default due to non payment or untimely payment, after notice and reasonable opportunity to cure, the EEOC may, without further notice, accelerate the entire unpaid balance due under this Decree. The meet and confer requirements under Section XIII shall not apply with respect to a failure to make payments. Defendants shall be notified in writing by the EEOC of the acceleration. Reasonable opportunity to cure is defined herein as 30 days. Otherwise, the entire balance will be due within twenty (20) days after the reasonable opportunity to cure period expires.

With respect to a default or violation of this Decree relating to injunctive relief remedies or any other provisions herein, the parties shall follow the meet and confer and enforcement mechanism set forth below in Section XIII.

B. Waiver of Right to Bankruptcy Protections

Defendants agree that their obligations and liabilities under this Decree shall not be dischargeable under the Bankruptcy Code, Title 11 of the U.S. Code enacted by the Bankruptcy Reform Act of 1978, P.L. 95-598. For Bankruptcy Code purposes only, and without this being an admission by Defendants, it is agreed that this debt is considered to have arisen from the "willful and malicious" injury by the Defendants to the class members pursuant to 11 U.S.C. '523(a)(6).

This Consent Decree shall constitute an enforceable judgment for purposes of post-judgment collection, in accordance with Rule 69 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, the Federal Debt Collection Procedures Act, 28 U.S.C. §§ 3001, et seq. and any other applicable authority. The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission shall be deemed a judgment creditor for purposes of payment of any unpaid amounts of the civil penalties, stipulated penalties, interest and/or settlement payments owed under this Consent Decree and/or Title VII.

XIII. DECREE ENFORCEMENT

The parties expressly agree that if the Commission has reason to believe that Defendants have failed to comply with any provision of this Consent Decree, the Commission may bring an action before this Court to enforce the Decree. Prior to

initiating such action, the Commission will notify Defendants and its legal counsel of record, in writing, of the nature of the dispute. This notice shall specify the particular provision(s) that the Commission believes Defendants has breached. Absent a showing that the delay will cause irreparable harm, Defendants shall have thirty (30) days to attempt to resolve or cure the breach.

The parties agree to cooperate with each other and use their best efforts to resolve any dispute referenced in the EEOC notice.

After thirty (30) days have passed with no resolution or agreement to extend the time further, the Commission may petition this Court for compliance with this Decree at any time during which this Court maintains jurisdiction over this action and the Defendants will have an opportunity to respond. Should the Court determine that the Defendants have not complied with this Decree, in whole or in part, it may impose appropriate relief, including but not limited to the imposition of attorneys' fees and costs on the Defendants and extension of the duration of this Decree for such a period as may be necessary to remedy the Defendants' non-compliance. This provision shall not apply if the breach involves a failure to pay money under this Decree. The parties shall comply with the Court's briefing schedule pursuant to the Federal Rules.

XIV. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

A. Successors In Interest

During the term of this Consent Decree, Defendants shall provide any potential successor-in-interest with a copy of this Consent Decree within a reasonable time of not less than thirty (30) days prior to the execution of any agreement for acquisition or assumption of control of any or all of Defendants' facilities, or any other material change in corporate structure, and shall simultaneously inform the EEOC of same. However, this shall not apply to any situation involving a land sale or a restructure of business if same owners involved.

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B. Notice

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During the term of this Consent Decree, Defendants and its successors shall assure that each of its officers, managers and supervisors is aware of any term(s) of this Decree which may be related to his/her job duties.

Unless otherwise stated, all notices, reports and correspondence required under this Decree shall be delivered to the attention of the Regional Attorney, Anna Y. Park, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Los Angeles District Office, 255 E. Temple St., 4th Fl., Los Angeles, CA. 90012.

C. Cost and Attorneys Fees

Each party shall bear its own costs of suit and attorneys' fees. Defendants shall bear all costs associated with its administration and implementation of its obligations under this Consent Decree, including the costs of the EEO Consultant. All costs associated with executing the Decree and the distribution of the settlement funds to Charging Parties and similarly situated persons shall be paid by Defendants, including without limitation, all costs related to the issuance and mailing of checks.

D. Modification and Severability

This Decree constitutes the complete understanding of the parties with respect to the matters contained herein. No waiver, modification or amendment of any provision of this Decree will be effective unless made in writing and signed by an authorized representative of each of the parties.

If one or more provisions of the Decree are rendered unlawful or unenforceable, the parties shall make good faith efforts to agree upon appropriate amendments to this Decree in order to effectuate the purposes of the Decree. In any event, the remaining provisions will remain in full force and effect unless the purposes of the Decree cannot, despite the parties' best efforts, be achieved.

By mutual agreement of the parties, this Decree may be amended or modified in writing.

E. Counterparts and Facsimile Signatures

This Decree may be signed in counterparts. A facsimile signature shall have the same force and effect of an original signature or copy thereof.

The parties agree to entry of this Decree and judgment subject to final approval by the Court. All parties, through the undersigned, respectfully apply for and consent to the entry of this Consent Decree as an Order of this Court.

Respectfully submitted,

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8	Dated: June 14, 2005	Anna Y. Park
9		Cherry-Marie D. Rojas
10		Sue J. Noh
11		Elizabeth Esparza-Cervantes
12 .		By:
13		Anna Y. Park
14		Regional Attorney
15		Attorneys for Plaintiff, EEOC
16	Dated: June, 2005	Law Offices of Shawn Caine
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18		By:
19		Shawn Caine
20		Attorneys for Defendants
21		Attorneys for Detendants
22	Dated: June , 2005	By:
23	Bated: Julie, 2003	
24		Blas.Rivera,
		as Chief Executive Officer for
25		Defendants and as an individual
26		and trustee of the Rivera
27		To the management of the revolu

Family Trust

E. Counterparts and Facsimile Signatures

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Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: June, 2005	Anna Y. Park		
	Cherry-Marie D. Rojas		
	Sue J. Noh		
,	Elizabeth Esparza-Cervantes		
	Ву:		
,	Anna Y. Park		
	Regional Attorney		
	Attorneys for Plaintiff, EEOC		
Dated: June, 2005	Law Offices of Shawn Caine		
	By:		
	Shayar Caine		
	Andraeys for Defendants		
Dated: June 10, 2005	By. Alle		
	Blas Rivera,		
	as Chief Executive Officer for		
	Defendants and as an individual		
	and trustee of the Rivera		
	Family Trust		

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ORDER OF THE COURT

GOOD CAUSE APPEARING,

The Court hereby retains jurisdiction and the provisions of the foregoing Consent Decree are hereby approved and compliance with all provisions thereof is fair and adequate.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Dated: June 14, 2005

Honorable Kobert J. Timlin