

The Deere strike is in danger!

Deere Strike Rank-and-File Solidarity Committee
16 November 2021

Over the weekend, workers from Deere, the auto and film production industries, and educators met to discuss the urgent issues confronting the Deere strike, which is in its second month and has reached a critical turning point.

The United Auto Workers announced on Friday that it would have workers vote on Deere's "last, best and final offer" this coming Wednesday. The UAW stated that the contract contains only "modest modifications" to the deal workers already voted to reject on November 2.

The Deere Strike Rank-and-File Solidarity Committee was formed by workers in different industries earlier in November in order to mobilize support within the working class for the strike by 10,000 workers in Iowa, Illinois and other states. The rank-and-file solidarity committee issued the statement below on Monday.

For more information on joining the Deere Strike Rank-and-File Solidarity Committee, email deerewrfc@gmail.com or text (484) 514-9797.

Download a printable version of the statement

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The Deere Strike Rank-and-File Solidarity Committee calls on all working people to come to the defense of the strike by 10,000 John Deere workers, which the United Auto Workers union is seeking to shut down and betray.

Last Friday night, the UAW announced that it was scheduling a vote for this Wednesday on the company's so-called "last, best and final offer." The contract proposal contained only "modest modifications," the UAW admitted, to the agreement workers already voted to reject by 55 percent on November 2.

In fact, the latest contract changes would promote even greater speedup and unsafe working conditions via the company's pay-for-performance scheme, CIPP. At the same time, yet another pro-corporate "joint"

UAW-management committee would be established, tasked with overseeing "corrective actions" to those teams whose productivity falls behind the company's grueling benchmarks.

The UAW is once again attempting to trample on workers' democratic rights, just as they did at Volvo Trucks earlier this year.

The union officials are forcing Deere workers to vote on a deal almost identical, if not worse, as the one they rejected two weeks ago. And they are working side-by-side with management in using scare tactics and lies to push through the contract, insisting that the company must stay "competitive" and cannot afford to provide workers what they need.

But the Deere workers have twice courageously defied the UAW and company's threats, voting down six-year contracts which failed to meet their demands for a \$10-an-hour wage increase, the restoration of retiree health benefits, and major improvements to working conditions.

The John Deere Workers Rank-and-File Committee has been in the forefront of this fight, countering the lies of the company and the UAW and working to break through the information blockade imposed by the union.

With the company making record profits and struggling to hire and meet rising demand, Deere workers are saying: **The era of concessions and givebacks is over!** Now is the time to go on the offensive and win back everything the unions have bargained away over the last 40 years.

The Deere strike, now in its second month, has inspired workers wherever they learn of it. The struggle has met with growing support among autoworkers in the US and Deere workers internationally, including in Germany and France.

This is why the UAW is so desperate to shut the strike down and convince workers that nothing more

can be won. They fear that a real victory, which is within reach, would spark an explosive movement by their hundreds of thousands of members who have similarly suffered decades of attacks on their jobs and living standards.

Everywhere workers are looking to fight, but the unions are going into overdrive to stop it. On Saturday, the unions called off a strike by 32,000 Kaiser Permanente health care workers which was set to begin today, announcing a deal with wage increases far below the current 6.2 percent inflation rate in consumer goods. In the film and TV industry, there has been widespread opposition to the sellout deal backed by the IATSE union, which entrenched brutally long workers hours and unsafe productions.

The Deere workers are taking a stand for the entire working class. A clear win there would enormously strengthen the movement of workers which is developing around the world against low wages, endless mandatory overtime, and unsafe and even deadly working conditions in the midst of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The time has come to show the powers-that-be what real solidarity and the collective strength of the working class looks like.

The Deere Strike Rank-and-File Solidarity Committee is composed of Deere workers, auto and auto parts workers, educators, nurses, and others who want to see this struggle succeed. We call on workers in every industry to mobilize and do the following to lend their support:

- **Help break through the information blackout and company propaganda:** Distribute this statement and other reports on the WSWS about the strike (wsws.org/deere) as widely as possible among your co-workers, family and friends.

- **Submit a statement of support** to the Deere Workers Rank-and-File Committee at deerewrfc@gmail.com or by text at (484) 514-9797.

- **Prepare sympathy actions at your workplace:** Slowdowns and other job actions, particularly in the auto industry and among Deere's suppliers in the parts industries, would immensely strengthen the position of

the Deere strike and encourage workers to press ahead with their demands.

- **Get the word out on social media:** Record a video or post a statement explaining why you support the strike, and use the hashtag [#DeereRankAndFileSolidarity](https://twitter.com/DeereRankAndFileSolidarity)

- **Raise the demand:** Deere workers should be paid full income while on strike, not the \$275 a week the UAW is starving them on! The union bureaucracy controls nearly \$800 million in the strike fund, built up with workers' dues. This money must be used to strengthen the strike, not fund the bloated incomes and perks of UAW executives, who are currently receiving their full salaries.

- **Get involved with our committee** and begin the process of forming a rank-and-file solidarity committee in support of the Deere strike at your plant. For more information on joining the Deere Strike Rank-and-File Solidarity Committee, email deerewrfc@gmail.com or text (484) 514-9797.



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