

MEDIA STATEMENT

26 May 2026



FAWU SUPPORTS THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST SHOPRITE PROFITEERING AND DEMANDS R3,000 FOOD VOUCHERS FOR ALL SHOPRITE WORKERS

The Food and Allied Workers Union (FAWU), an affiliate of the South African Federation of Trade Unions (SAFTU), fully supports the growing campaign and planned mass action over the escalating food crisis facing millions of working-class and poor households in South Africa.

At a time when unemployment, poverty, hunger and inequality continue to deepen, Shoprite Checkers continues to make billions in profits while workers and communities struggle to survive. Food prices remain unaffordable for the majority of South Africans, especially low-income earners, unemployed people, pensioners and workers earning poverty wages.

As the biggest food retailer in South Africa, Shoprite carries a social and moral responsibility towards the working class and the poor. Instead, the company continues to enrich shareholders and executives while consumers are forced to choose between food, transport, electricity and school expenses.

FAWU notes with serious concern:

1. Shoprite reportedly makes approximately R20 million profit per day while millions go hungry.
2. Shoprite CEO Pieter Engelbrecht reportedly earns approximately R87 million annually while many workers survive on wages that do not meet the cost of living.
3. Workers in the retail sector continue to face low wages, labour exploitation, insecure work and increasing economic pressure from rising food and transport costs.
4. Shoprite refuses to disclose profit margins on essential food items despite public concern over excessive pricing of staple foods.

FAWU rejects the attempt by major retailers to hide behind limited Corporate Social Investment programmes while continuing to accumulate massive profits from poor communities. Charity can never replace economic justice.

The constitutional right to sufficient food and basic nutrition cannot coexist with excessive profiteering from essential food items. Food is not a luxury it is a basic human right.

FAWU therefore supports mass mobilisation for the World Hunger Day on the 28 May 2026 under the call by Union Against Hunger **#FoodPricesMustFall**

FAWU further places the following immediate demands before Shoprite Checkers management:

1. A substantial reduction in prices of essential and staple food items across all Shoprite, Checkers and Usave stores.
2. Full transparency regarding profit margins on essential food products.
3. An immediate improvement in wages and working conditions for retail workers.
4. The introduction of a monthly food voucher of R3,000 for all workers employed by Shoprite Checkers, including workers in Shoprite, Checkers, Usave and all subsidiaries, to assist workers and their families facing the food and cost-of-living crisis.
5. Meaningful engagement with trade unions and community formations fighting against hunger and poverty.

FAWU believes that no worker employed in the food retail sector should go hungry while corporations generate billions in profits.

We call on workers, communities, progressive organisations and all defenders of social justice to unite in the struggle against hunger, exploitation and corporate greed.

Issued by:
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"Injury to one is an injury to all"