



Purdue cancels contract with Russell Athletic over workers' rights

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West Lafayette - Concerns over workers' rights has led Purdue University to terminate its licensing contract with Russell Athletic.

Russell Athletic makes apparel with the university's logo. The cancellation is effective March 31.

James Almond, interim executive vice president for business and finance and treasurer, told Russell in a letter that actions surrounding the closing of two apparel manufacturing factories in Honduras were cause for the termination.

In a report released in November, the Washington, D.C.-based Worker Rights Consortium said it found substantial evidence that anti-union sentiment played a significant role in Russell's decision to close one of the Honduras plants.

The Fair Labor Association, also based in Washington, said in late January that economic factors affected Russell's decision to close the factory, but its report said investigators also found evidence of labor-management conflicts at the Honduras plants. "There are some clear areas where Russell Corporation's implementation of freedom of association was weak and did not fully protect workers' rights," the FLA report said.

Other universities that have recently decided to end their relationships with Russell because of the Honduras plant situation include the University of Miami, University of Wisconsin, Georgetown University and Rutgers University, according to a Purdue press release.



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