

BURGER KING FIRES LETTUCE STOMPING EMPLOYEE AND TWO OTHERS



Folks at the Burger King in Mayfield are a little rattled at the moment and why wouldn't they be, after a photo of one of their employees with his feet in the restaurant's lettuce bins went viral on the Internet. The photograph had initially appeared on 4Chan, a website which allows users to post images and participate in discussion without disclosing their names or identities. The hassled management is asking employees not to answer the constantly ringing phone as more often than not it is an angry consumer seeking answers. To leave viewers in no doubt, the posted picture carried the inflammatory cautioning, "This is the lettuce you eat at Burger King." More often than not, this is the work of a disgruntled and resentful employee getting his own back at the company for some disagreement, hoping that their complicity will remain cloaked in anonymity and they will get away with their misdemeanor. But it does manage to cause the company considerable damage and they have to work overtime to undo the harm caused by a puerile, bitter act. The company issued a statement saying that the employee who was behind posting the picture has been given the sack, along with two others. Justifying the firing, the spokeswoman said that the company has a zero-tolerance policy against such violations. Viewers of the photograph, upset that they may have involuntarily eaten shoe-dirt along with their burgers, bombarded Burger Kings with enquires and forwarded the photo to other local news outlets. The person, who had posted the photographs, did not take the precaution of stripping it of its geo-location tags, and it was only a matter of time before some 4Chan users identified the Burger King location at which the picture was shot. It was assumed that the picture was taken at the Mayfield Heights location, but the location manager initially denied it saying, "We don't believe it is true." However, the 4Chan users took barely quarter of an hour to locate the location and identify the perpetrator of the misconduct. Not only the location, they even managed to get the address and telephone numbers of the exact location. The manager conceded that the alleged culprit was a long-time employee. Ironically, this was the employee's first disciplinary incident in his employment history. Bryson Thornton, director of global communications for Burger King, confirmed that the photo was indeed taken at a Burger King location, but one that was "independently owned and operated by a Burger King franchisee." He said that the company has stringent food handling processes and that food quality and safety is a top priority for them at all their outlets. The fast food industry has of late been fertile ground for disgruntled employees and public forums to attack, through unsubstantiated claims of improper cleaning standards, unhygienic food and what goes into the recipe. The company says that it has zero-tolerance for such violations, but that does not translate to zero-damage. It does prompts diners to wonder just what happens to their meals at these fast food joints before they are handed over to them. In spite of all their attempts at damage control, there is little doubt, that for some time now the orders for the whoppers at Burger Kings will not be as plentiful as before.