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## Grocery workers ratify contract

**By P.J. Huffstutter***Sat Sep 24 2011 12:00 AM*

Members of Southern California's grocery union voted to ratify a new contract with Ralphs, Vons and Albertsons on Saturday night, bringing an end to labor negotiations that dragged on for more than eight months and brought tens of thousands of workers to the verge of a strike.

The new contract, said union leaders, will help ensure workers at Ralphs, Albertsons and Vons and Pavilions will stay on the job, and prevent a potentially devastating blow to the state's already shaky economy.

The results came just days after officials from the region's United Food and Commercial Workers union struck a tentative deal with the three big supermarket chains. Workers cast their ballots on Friday and Saturday, said officials.

"This deal protects our members' health care and pension, and provides modest increases in wages," Rick Icaza, president of UFCW Local 770 in Los Angeles, said in a statement Saturday night.

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