Food. The fundamental base of all life; without it, life wouldn't be possible. The millions of workers within our food system are the primary providers responsible for producing, collecting, and distributing the food on our plates. Although their significance to the world is substantial, their efforts and sacrifices go deeply unseen, resulting in their employers' unethical treatment of workers. Workers' health, rights, and mental health should not remain absent from the minds of their employed companies alongside us, the consumers. Many oppressed workers lie within the animal agriculture and fishery industries. Workers in these industries endure hazardous conditions, are severely overworked, and detrimentally affect their mental health.

Workers within the animal agriculture industries are subject to dangerous conditions and working environments. Workers' lives are constantly at risk, ranging from the matter they breathe in to the dead bodies of animals they handle. Ammonia is just one of the harmful gasses inhaled by workers in animal agriculture. Ammonia, a gas emitted from extensive amounts of manure and urine from animals, can harm the cilia in the throat, giving access to advance deeper into the respiratory region after continuous exposure to the gas, making it life-threatening. Fearmans Pork Incorporated, a pork plant located in Burlington, Ontario, had an ammonia leak resulting in the hospitalization of twenty workers in early March of 2023. Fourtnelty, no fatalities occurred, but the severity of damage the gas can cause is rapid and severe, leaving workers no time to react. Commercial Fishing remains one of the most dangerous jobs in the United States. Commercial fishermen face the dangers of extreme temperatures, sinking vessels, and fatal overboard. Workers cannot seek medical attention if significant injuries occur, leaving room for infections and other illnesses.

The vast majority of employees within the food system are made up of immigrant employees, many times undocumented. Several meatpacking and poultry industries have created illegal methods of gathering foreign workers to work long hours, be severely underpaid, and restrict workers from reporting physical or mental abuse. These corporations can get away with this treatment knowing workers cannot speak out against the cruel treatment they face, as they remain undocumented citizens.

Mental illnesses such as bipolar disorder, major depressive disorder, and PTSD are substantially higher for slaughterhouse workers. As a way to bear with their work, unhealthy coping strategies arise. These coping methods come in the form of substance abuse and various addictions. These drastic changes in lifestyles affect the individual themselves and their loved ones.

The food system consists of deceitfulness and abuses towards workers and animals, who lie as victims of companies prioritizing profit over welfare. A solution to solve this problem is establishing a vegan food system. Adopting a vegan food system would benefit the entirety of the environment, animals, and society. Becoming vegan takes the stance against the mistreatment of workers within animal agriculture, the slaughter of animals, and the destruction of the environment. A vegan diet has substantial health benefits, ranging from a decrease in cardiovascular diseases to even reducing certain cancers such as colon cancer. A surplus of alternative vitamins, vital acids, and iron are within the right vegan foods. Veganism also leads to

a decrease in deforestation. About two-thirds of habitable land worldwide is used for animal agriculture as grazing areas, destroying entire ecosystems and plant life. If only half the world population converted to a vegan diet, around 35% of agricultural land use would be reduced, allowing for native plants, wildlife, and ecosystems to remain. A plant-based world would also create a more compassionate world. All animals in agriculture will undeniably face an unwanted but forced death. Poultry, often slaughtered by live-shackle slaughter or ventilation shutdown, and cows stunned but can regain consciousness during slaughter, are undoubtedly brutal, inhumane ways of death. In the dairy industry, day-old calves are pulled from their mothers to start profiting from their mother's milk. In the egg industry, male chicks being unable to produce eggs, are immediately culled, as they have no profit worth to the industry.

Choosing to embrace a vegan food system provides an opportunity for equality for all living beings. Worker justice is essential for workers' rights and livelihood. People, animals, and the world would benefit tremendously, from health improvements to protecting vital land spaces. Switching to a vegan food system is a compassionate way of life, allowing us to nurture, respect, and acknowledge all life surrounding us.

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