


# ROOTED, READY & RESILIENT

Uplifting a BIPOC-led Vision  
for Crisis-Proof Food Systems

*a messaging guide to get us through  
COVID-19, climate chaos  
& whatever else 2020 brings*





## When we are all in for all of us, we can create the world in which each and every one of us can thrive.

When faced with calamity, we are forced — as people, communities, and countries — to go beyond the realms of what we thought (or were told) was possible. Crises like the COVID-19 pandemic and various climate shocks demand that we change our behaviors, realign our priorities, and even adopt new value systems. As a result, moments of crisis are moments of transition.

And all of us, no matter what we look like or where we come from, play a critical role in stewarding this transition. Right now, as people's faith in the status quo waivers, ideas that previously only existed in the fringes are starting to capture public imagination. This is how powerful new narratives emerge.

When the HEAL Food Alliance began developing the Platform for Real Food — our north star and political compass — in 2014, we knew that many of the solutions we put forth were not yet politically possible. We understood that realizing this vision for reimagined food and farm systems required a disruption of the status quo.

*COVID-19 has done just that.*

The pause that the pandemic is giving our economy is an opportunity to reimagine how we approach it: is profit still more important than people's health? Is it more important than life on our planet?

We've created this values-based messaging guide with HEAL members and allies to invite more people to reimagine and reinvent our world together.

We're finding that ideas and policies that we have been fighting for, but were politically impossible a few months ago — those that divest from systems rooted in white supremacy and capitalism and invest in the wisdom of BIPOC leadership — are now coming to fruition. So where do we go from here?

The values and solutions we uplift in this guide center the knowledge, wisdom, and leadership of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) who have been on the frontlines of the fights for food sovereignty, racial justice, climate justice, food security, worker justice, land justice, and environmental justice. This wisdom is the very core of who we are as people. It's a wisdom that's rooted in community, in care for each other, and in the understanding that life, and all that sustains it, is sacred.

**It's time to write our new story.  
A story where all people, and our  
planet, can thrive.**

## PURPOSE OF THE MESSAGING GUIDE

- This messaging guide is intended to uplift the vision in our Platform for Real Food in a way that is 1) linked to the current pandemic in ways that are timely and resonant, and 2) true to our values and vision.
- This guide offers visioning and high-level messaging that we can use to talk about HEAL's areas of work — Health, Environment, Agriculture, and Labor — in the current context. It is not intended to be a deep dive into every solution in each of the 10 planks of the Platform or provide specific policy solutions.
- We've largely drawn from and were inspired by the Race Class Narrative (RCN) framework to develop this messaging guide.

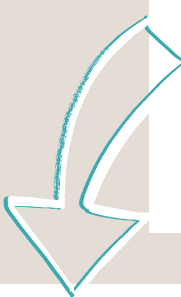
## WHO IS THIS MESSAGING GUIDE FOR?

This guide is for HEAL members and allies, as well as organizations, institutions, and individuals who are contributing to the conversation around our food and farm systems in a post-COVID-19 world.

## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

COVID-19 has illuminated for a broader public what many of us have known: that our food system as it is, doesn't work for the majority of people or for the planet. This messaging guide is designed to help inspire the persuadable public to action.





**The messages in this guide are values-based** and can be used to inform communications in ways that best suit your needs and audience. Use these messages to counter the false solutions sold by giant food businesses and a handful of powerful industrial agricultural corporations. The messages in this guide can be used to inspire hope in decentralized, community-led food systems, and their power to get us through the COVID-19 crisis and the looming climate crisis. They can help us be in cross-sectoral solidarity with each other, and move toward a shared vision grounded in the Platform for Real Food.



### **This guide follows the Race Class Narrative (RCN) framework<sup>1</sup>**

which is based on message testing, creative communications, and organizational strategy. Throughout this guide, we've followed the core principles of the RCN framework:


- Uplifting our values and solutions rather than just negating the opposition's values
- Naming a clear villain when describing problems
- Acknowledging people's emotions during this moment.

All of our messages in this guide are structured around a **core value**, under which we clearly describe **problems** caused by specific villains, uplift **solutions**, and provide **clear calls to action**. We encourage you to frame your messages in the same way.



Here are some places where you might find it especially useful:

- Email, social media, website and, other organizational communications material including fundraising and public statements
- Op-eds, letters to the editor, talking points for press, and speaking engagements
- Policy proposals, especially in those pertaining to ongoing discussions around COVID-19 stimulus packages
- Posters, infographics, videos, and other fun visual art!



<sup>1</sup> Special thanks to the team at **ASO communications** for developing and sharing the RCN Framework that we aspired to in this guide. To learn about RCN and see more messaging examples you can use in your work, check out the RCN toolkit.



## ABOUT THE HEAL FOOD ALLIANCE

The **HEAL (Health, Environment, Agriculture, Labor) Food Alliance** brings together organizations to address corporate control and racism in our food and farm systems. HEAL is committed to creating systems that are healthy, accessible and affordable for all, and fair to the people who grow, distribute, prepare, and serve food, while protecting the air, water, and land. During the COVID-19 pandemic, HEAL is organizing and advocating for resources and safer working conditions for Black, Indigenous, and People of color (BIPOC), producers and frontline food workers.

## ONE PLAN FOR OUR ECONOMY + HEALTH + ENVIRONMENT

### ECONOMY

- Ensure Dignity for Food Workers and their Families
- Provide Opportunities for All Producers
- Ensure Fair and Competitive Markets
- Strengthen Regional Economies

### HEALTH

- Dump Junk Food
- Make Real Food the Norm in Every Neighborhood
- Increase Food Literacy

### ENVIRONMENT

- Phase Out Factory Farming
- Promote Sustainable Farming, Fishing & Ranching
- Close the Loop on Waste, Runoff, and Energy



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**LABOR** PAGE 22



# HEALTH

## Core Value: Staying healthy and safe (prevention of illness)

We all want the people we love to be safe. Making millions of people vulnerable to this dangerous virus is a choice that we don't have to make.



### Describe the problem, uplift the solution and provide a clear call to action

- **PROBLEM:** A handful of massive corporations profit while putting their employees at risk on farms, in meat processing centers and warehouses. They refuse to follow CDC guidelines to ensure adequate workplace protections. By risking the health and safety of their employees — most of whom are Black, Latinx, and people of color — these corporations are also putting the health and safety of surrounding rural communities at risk.<sup>2</sup> Large corporations are now responsible for several of the nation's COVID-19 hotspots.
- **SOLUTION:** Our collective survival depends on our collective care. Together we can create food systems that center the health, safety and economic well-being of all of us. When working people have access to the necessary protections, like PPE, paid sick days, adequate housing and fair wages, everyone benefits.
- **ACTION:** By joining together, we can refuse to allow these corporations to treat employees as disposable. We can make a future where all of us have proper protection at work, the ability to stay home if we think we might be sick, and the right to speak out if our employer is abusive. We must demand that OSHA implement and enforce a mandatory standard that requires corporations to prioritize safety and ensure that working conditions are safe for all.

<sup>2</sup> Rural Counties with COVID-19 Cases from Meatpacking Have Infection Rates 5 Times Higher, The Daily Yonder



- **PROBLEM:** A few greedy politicians continue to invest billions of dollars into the criminalization of Black and Latinx communities, and a handful of corporations continue to profit from mass incarceration. Jails and detention centers are breeding grounds for the rapid spread of the virus because the people put in prisons are forced to live in overcrowded conditions that put them at higher risk for contracting COVID-19. Allowing COVID-19 to destroy Black and Brown communities in this way is unacceptable. COVID-19 has shined a light on the deadly outcomes of these unequal conditions.
- **ACTION:** Being imprisoned shouldn't be a death sentence. We should call for State and federal governments to immediately release all non-violent offenders, and help heal our communities by investing in alternatives like rehabilitation and restorative justice. No one should profit off of incarceration, and the government must close down all private prisons. Crossing a border is not a crime. We must join together in demanding all ICE detention centers be shut down, and that the federal government should abolish ICE.



## Core Value: We should all be able to get well and stay well (recovery from illness)

Our health and well-being are connected. We will get past this pandemic by ensuring that each of us, no matter what we look like or where we live, can get and stay well. In addition to healthcare, nourishment is critical.

### Describe the problem, uplift the solution and provide a clear call to action

- **PROBLEM:** When any one of us is barred from access to affordable nutritious food, it limits our ability to recover from this illness, putting all of us at risk. A handful of giant food and beverage corporations keep putting profits over our health. They spend billions of dollars peddling junk food to our communities,

then point the finger at working people — especially communities of color — for making poor food choices, when in reality unhealthy food is often the only affordable choice in many neighborhoods. Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities bear the brunt of diet-related illnesses like diabetes and heart disease that cut short the lives of loved ones — especially if infected with COVID-19. Today, a handful of politicians are picking and choosing who will live and who will die from this virus based on age-old color-coded barriers to accessing affordable healthy food options and health care.

- **ACTION:** All communities deserve access to healthy, affordable food, and by joining together, we can make that a reality. Let's put our public tax dollars where our values are. It's time to call for investment in community-led initiatives to grow and distribute fresh and healthy food while building wealth in local communities.

## Core Value: No one should go hungry

We all deserve to have enough nourishing food to eat, and for our families to be nourished and healthy. One in three families in the US going hungry during crises, like the COVID-19 pandemic, is a choice we don't have to make.

### Describe the problem, uplift the solution and provide a clear call to action

- **PROBLEM:** There is more than enough food grown in the United States to feed everyone living here. But COVID-19 is revealing the fragility of centralized global food systems, where a handful of corporations decide how and where the food grown and processed in the U.S. gets distributed. They use scare tactics, threaten food shortages, and disregard employee health while their profits soar.







- **SOLUTION:** We would all benefit if everyone had enough food to eat. It's time to put control of our food supply back in the hands of the people. Rather than allow a tiny handful of corporations to write the rules of our food system, we need to treat food as a basic human right and reclaim food as a public good.
- **ACTION:** We must join together to ensure that our elected officials will redistribute infrastructure like trucking, refrigeration, and processing centers out of the hands of a few harmful, profit-making corporations and towards meeting the needs of farmers, workers, and our communities. We must promote more resilient and healthful food and farming systems by investing public funds in regional food processing centers, refrigerated trucking, commissary kitchens and other infrastructure needed for community-owned regional production and processing.



- **PROBLEM:** Massive corporations like Amazon and Walmart are making billions of dollars off of this pandemic. The COVID-19 crisis has put millions of people out of work, leaving families dependent on nutrition assistance programs like SNAP/EBT. These corporations have lined the pockets of politicians and influenced policymakers to make it so that families can only use their SNAP/EBT benefits online at their stores.
- **SOLUTION:** These are billions of federal dollars that could strengthen regional food economies by supporting local farmers and small businesses. When we invest in our local food system, we invest in the health and well-being of our communities and economies.
- **ACTION:** We must come together to demand that Congress rewrite the rules so that families can use their SNAP benefits to buy healthy food safely — including online — from local and regional farmers, fishers, and ranchers, producers and independent businesses.

- **PROBLEM:** Self-interested politicians are choosing to look away when Black, Brown and Indigenous people are dying at higher rates because they are more interested in padding their pockets with corporate donations than taking care of the people who are continuously struggling to make ends meet. Millions of families depend on meals provided by schools to keep their kids fed, and politicians are simply not doing enough to make sure that these kids are receiving adequate nutrition.
- **SOLUTION:** Schools and local food banks can play a critical role in making sure that families have enough food to eat through hard times.
- **ACTION:** We must join together to ensure that our tax dollars support our communities. Instead of subsidizing corporations and bailing out agribusiness, stimulus dollars must invest in community organizations and independent, small-scale farmers, fishers, and ranchers who can ensure that healthy, fair, local food gets to families through these institutions.

## Core Value: We should all be free to make our own food choices



We all deserve the freedom to choose what we put in our own bodies. **[or]**  
We all deserve the freedom to choose what we eat.

### Describe the problem, uplift the solution and provide a clear call to action

- **PROBLEM:** Right now, a handful of corporations control our food supply, from seed to table. They profit every step of the way and line the pockets of politicians so that they can write the rules. Today, it's almost impossible for people to choose a meal that doesn't hurt the environment, workers, or their own families' health.





- **SOLUTION:** We can change this by putting control of our food supply in the hands of communities, not corporations. We can generate real wealth in our communities as a result.
- **ACTION:** Together, we must urge Congress and the Department of Justice to enact anti-trust laws that prevent large corporations from influencing decision-makers and strengthening their stranglehold over our food systems. We must promote more resilient and healthful food and farming systems by investing public funds in community farms, regional food processing centers, refrigerated trucking, commissary kitchens and other infrastructure needed for community-owned regional production and processing.

## EXAMPLE

*One in three families in the US going hungry is a choice we don't have to make. The COVID-19 crisis has put millions of people out of work, leaving families dependent on nutrition assistance programs like SNAP/EBT to put food on their tables. Meanwhile, massive corporations like Amazon and Walmart are making billions of dollars off of this pandemic. These corporations are using their influence to line the pockets of politicians who write the rules in their favor. [Policymakers] need to rewrite the rules so that families can use their SNAP benefits to buy healthy food online from local and regional producers and independent businesses. We need to join together and demand Congress to strengthen SNAP by increasing the maximum benefit available to all households through the longer-term economic downturn.*

*For more talking points, check out planks [5](#), [6](#) and [7](#) of HEAL's Platform for Real Food.*

# ENVIRONMENT

## Core Value: Safety and security now and for the future

No matter what we look like, where we come from, or what's in our wallets, we want safety and security now, and for generations to come. **[or]** Whether we're white or Black, rich or poor, Indigenous to this land or a newcomer, we all want a healthy and thriving planet now, and for future generations.




### Describe the problem, uplift the solution and provide a clear call to action

- **PROBLEM:** Today, we are all living through two intertwined global crises: the climate crisis, and the COVID-19 pandemic but the small handful of corporations that control most of our food and agriculture continue to prioritize profit over the planet. As these corporations grow their profit, they continue to line the pockets of a handful of greedy politicians who become their pawns to influence federal policy.<sup>3</sup> During the pandemic, these corporations have asked for and received special favors from the federal government, including rolling back environmental regulations that protect our water, land, health and best interests.
- **SOLUTION:** Allowing these greedy corporations and politicians to rig the rules and destroy the environment is a choice, and we don't have to keep making it. Time and time again, we've seen that when farmers use regenerative agroecological practices they are able to grow an abundance of food to support local communities and build resilient economies while protecting the air, water, and soil that we all depend on to live.
- **ACTION:** Now it's our turn to prove that nothing — not even this pandemic — will stand in the way of our commitment to putting our planet before profits for the greedy few. We must come together to eliminate subsidies for companies degrading the environment and support traditional agroecological practices that protect our well-being, and ensure a safe and secure future for those to come.



<sup>3</sup> Corporations spend millions of dollars lobbying every year to influence federal policy.



- **PROBLEM:** For decades, giant industrial agricultural corporations have been damaging the soil, water, and air that we all depend on to live. As a result, many people in our society, especially Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) suffer first and worst from storms, wildfires, and other damage inflicted by a few greedy corporations. To make matters worse, the federal government has rolled back several environmental regulations and stopped enforcing them during the COVID-19 pandemic, allowing corporations to pollute our land, air, and water while endangering all our health, homes, and futures.
  - **SOLUTION:** When we listen to communities that have been most burdened by harmful agricultural practices and nurture BIPOC farmers, ranchers and fishers who use traditional agricultural techniques to grow an abundance of food while protecting our land, air and water, we can design local and regional solutions that reduce harm and cultivate agricultural systems that nurture and heal our planet.
  - **ACTION:** We must join together to uplift the leadership of communities that have been most burdened by harmful agricultural practices. By coming together to organize, build power and support traditional wisdom, we can make this a planet where we can live in harmony with the rest of the natural world.
- 

## Core Value: Building resilient futures for everyone

All people, regardless of where we live or what we look like, deserve to live in a safe, resilient, and thriving environment.

### Describe the problem, uplift the solution and provide a clear call to action

- **PROBLEM:** A handful of greedy agricultural corporations profit from production methods that deplete our soil, pollute our water and air, and continue to burden rural families, leaving them more susceptible to chronic respiratory diseases like COVID-19 as well as cancers, birth defects, and other health problems.

- **SOLUTION:** Independent small-scale farmers, ranchers and fishers use sustainable and ecological methods to provide nutritious food to their local communities. When we invest in independent small-scale farmers, ranchers and fishers who use agroecological methods, we invest in practices that nurture the soil and water, build biodiversity, conserve our oceans and treat working people with dignity. We cultivate a future where our children can thrive.
- **ACTION:** Together, we can ensure that the people who grow, catch and harvest food that nourishes all of us — and our planet — have the resources that they need in order to thrive. Let's work together to eliminate federal support for greedy corporations, and demand investment in farmers, ranchers and fishers who use ecological practices.

## EXAMPLE

*Whether we're white or Black, rich or poor, Indigenous to this land or a newcomer, we all want a healthy and thriving planet now, and for future generations. During the pandemic, the handful of corporations that control most of food and agriculture have asked for and received special favors from the federal government. Allowing these few greedy corporations and politicians who rig the rules to destroy the environment is a choice we don't have to keep making. Time and time again, we've seen that when farmers use regenerative agroecological practices they are able to grow enough food to support local communities and build resilient economies while protecting the air, water, and soil that we all depend on to live. Now it's our turn to prove that nothing — not even this pandemic — will stand in the way of our commitment to putting our planet before profits. We must come together to demand policies that support traditional agroecological practices, protect our well-being, and ensure a safe and secure future for generations to come.*



For more talking points, check out planks [8](#), [9](#) and [10](#) of HEAL's Platform for Real Food.


# AGRICULTURE



Core Value: We should control our food supply as a community [OR] Food Sovereignty

We all deserve the right and the means to produce, prepare, and share food.

## Describe the problem, uplift the solution and provide a clear call to action


- **PROBLEM:** A handful of greedy corporations are gobbling up every aspect of our food and agriculture system. As they amass power, they are rewriting laws to reduce local control, squeezing out small farmers, and polluting air and water with their factory farms. They disregard communities and the environment along the way. By forcing animals to live in confinement, these corporations are creating breeding grounds for other novel viruses to emerge, and their overuse of antibiotics on factory farms is making all of us resistant to commonly prescribed drugs that treat various illnesses.
  - **SOLUTION:** Producers who use agroecological and Indigenous farming and ranching techniques have shown that it's possible for animals, humans, and ecosystems to thrive simultaneously. We must acknowledge the stewardship and resilience of these producers and make it easier for them and more people to practice ecologically sustainable and community-centered agriculture.
  - **ACTION:** We must join together and demand that the Department of Justice strengthen and enforce antitrust laws, and state governments must implement moratoria on factory farms.<sup>4</sup> Meanwhile, state and federal governments must invest in small scale farmers, fishers, and ranchers using ecological techniques that support the health of our environment and our communities. The FDA and USDA must come together to support the development of safe regional food processing centers, including meat-processing.
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<sup>4</sup> Farmers and animal rights activists are coming together to fight big factory farms, Vox



- **PROBLEM:** Throughout history, corrupt politicians have taken away Indigenous land and water rights, disenfranchised Black communities, prevented immigrants from owning farmland and confiscated land from farmers of color. Self-serving agribusiness lobbying groups ensured that government officials denied loans and other financial assistance to farmers of color, especially Black and Indigenous farmers, and relegated a majority Latinx farm workforce to a disempowered class. As a result, most BIPOC farmers struggle to remain farmers and hold on to their land, and they grow their operations at a much slower pace than their white contemporaries.
- **SOLUTION:** We all benefit from the leadership of producers who are Black, Indigenous and People of Color, whose knowledge of traditional farming techniques and ancestral foodways have proved resilient in the face of displacement and climate chaos. By investing in traditional wisdom, we can continue to build adaptive and resilient food supply chains and strong regional economies.
- **ACTION:** Together we can demand elected decision-makers divest from extractive systems that exclude our communities and degrade our planet, and invest in sustainable solutions. We need to transition land and resources to BIPOC producers, including in the form of reparations. We must ensure that decision-makers redirect funds from exploitative corporations toward community-based food systems that work for all of us.

## Core Value: Resiliency in our food systems



No matter where we live or where we come from, we all want to be able to provide for our loved ones through moments of crises, now and in the future

### Describe the problem, uplift the solution and provide a clear call to action

- **PROBLEM:** Right now, a handful of corporations control too much of our food supply. During the early weeks of the pandemic, these same corporations sounded the alarm about food shortages, leading to a rise in food prices across the country, and leaving many of us in need of food assistance. In reality, there were no food shortages: the truth is that large corporations and their cross-country distribution chains were unable to adapt to the rapidly changing needs of our communities.

- **SOLUTION:** Local farmers and small businesses are part of our communities. The more connected we are to people and places that grow our food, the more food secure each of us will be. And when food distributors are part of shorter supply chains, they are better able to adapt to the needs of our communities.

- **ACTION:** We must work together to drive investment in local food sources like neighborhood farmers markets, community farms, community-supported agriculture and fisheries. We should fight for policies that ensure that all people regardless of who they are and where they come from have access to food assistance programs like SNAP.

- **PROBLEM:** A handful of industrial agricultural corporations and the politicians they've lobbied are trying to discredit scientific evidence, and promote agriculture that destroys the planet. These same corporations control our seeds, air, land, water, and also own the chemical pesticides and fertilizers that are damaging the soil, water, air, and earth at an alarming rate. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we've seen the CEO's of these corporations benefit from special favors from the government while they continue to hurt us and place profit over the well-being of people and our planet.

- **SOLUTION AND ACTION:** It's possible to make a just transition to food and farm systems that rebuild the soil, water, and air and nurture the diverse ecosystems that enable all of us to thrive. By joining together to advocate for environmental policies that rely on agroecology and traditional, community-based practices, we can ensure that rules made about our air, water and land serve our best interests.



# Core Value: Fair return for our labor & investment

We all deserve fair compensation for our work.



## Describe the problem, uplift the solution and provide a clear call to action

- **PROBLEM:** Right now, too much of our food system infrastructure is in the hands of a small handful of corporations. Independent, small and medium scale farmers often struggle to remain viable in a food and farming industry that favors big agriculture corporations. As stadiums, college cafeterias, and chain restaurants shut down due to COVID-19, giant food and beverage corporations reduced their purchases from small independent farmers, taking away their income and forcing them to waste tonnes of food they had already invested labor and resources into growing. Meanwhile, the corporate-rigged subsidy system meant these growers had to compete with agribusiness for federal relief.
- **SOLUTION:** Local farmers and small businesses are part of our communities. And when they are part of shorter supply chains, they are better able to adapt to the needs of our communities and they also steward our land and water and nurture our regional ecosystems. We need to make it possible for independent farmers, ranchers and fishers to earn a living while continuing to provide all of us with nutritious, sustainably grown food.
- **ACTION:** Together we must urge politicians to invest in the infrastructure needed for independent small and medium-scale farmers, fishers and ranchers to thrive: regional food production, processing and distribution like farmers markets, community supported agriculture and fisheries and food assistance programs like SNAP. We must demand policies that nurture shorter supply chains that value workers, farmers, and the environment.



## EXAMPLE

*We all deserve the right and the means to produce, prepare, and share food but throughout history, corrupt politicians have taken away Indigenous land and water rights, disenfranchised Black communities, prevented immigrants from owning farmland, and confiscated land from farmers of color. As a result, many BIPOC farmers still struggle to access and hold on to land, making it difficult for them to become food producers. We all benefit from the leadership of producers who are Black, Indigenous and People of Color, whose knowledge of traditional farming techniques and ancestral foodways have proved resilient in the face of displacement and climate chaos. Together we can demand elected decision-makers to transition land and resources to BIPOC producers, including in the form of reparations.*

*For more talking points, check out planks [2](#), [4](#) and [9](#) of HEAL's Platform for Real Food and the [Opportunity for all Producers Toolkit](#).*



# LABOR

## Core Value: Dignity for all working people and their families

We all deserve safe and dignified working conditions, regardless of our occupation, immigration status, or gender.



### Describe the problem, uplift the solution and provide a clear call to action

- **PROBLEM:** COVID-19 has magnified how big food corporations like JBS, Smithfield, and Tyson put profit over the health and safety of their employees. They continue to benefit while exploiting their employees and denying them basic protections from COVID-19 in the workplace. No one should be forced to choose between their lives and their livelihoods, but corporations' deliberate negligence has led to tens of thousands infected by the virus and hundreds of food workers dead.
- **SOLUTION:** Together, we can create food and farm systems that dignify and respect the 21.5 million people who work them. When working people have access to the necessary protections they need to do their jobs, like PPE, sick days and fair wages, we all benefit.
- **ACTION:** Our food systems can and should center the health, safety and economic well-being of us all. We must join together now to demand that Congress compel OSHA to implement and enforce a mandatory standard that requires all employers to prioritize worker safety and ensure that working conditions are safe for all.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> An Open Letter Calling for Swift Action Towards Workers' and Communities' Health and Safety, HEAL Food Alliance along with 100 allies and partners. Recent figures on COVID19 cases among people working in food processing plants can be found [here](#).

## Core Value: Right to Organize

No matter where we come from or what we do, we agree that our work has value, and all working people have rights.

### Describe the problem, uplift the solution and provide a clear call to action

- **PROBLEM:** Food systems work has been deemed 'essential' during the pandemic, but greedy corporations still pay their employees the lowest median wage, leaving them and their communities often unable to afford the very food they produce, and more dependent on public assistance than any other workforce. The same corporations routinely subject their employees to dangerous working conditions without providing them access to adequate healthcare or hazard pay, and routinely fire or threaten workers that speak out.
- **SOLUTION:** Regardless of our occupation, we should all have freedom from retaliation when we speak out about abuses and the power to shape our working conditions.
- **ACTION:** By joining together and demanding the right to organize, we can revolutionize our food system such that everyone's work is valued and respected, we can all share in the wealth of our labor, and have the power to shape our working conditions and our lives.

## Core Value: We all deserve a fair return on our work

We all deserve to benefit from our own labor.

- **PROBLEM:** For decades, agribusiness has benefitted from exploiting the time and labor of a primarily Black, Brown, and immigrant workforce. Greedy corporate CEOs depend on paying their employees poorly in order to turn a profit. They prioritize productivity and efficiency over humanity and use oppressive divide-and-conquer tactics to instill fear and assert power over their employees. Many of these corporations benefit from anti-immigrant enforcement and lobby only for immigration reforms that enable them to continue to exploit migrants.



- **SOLUTION:** Working people deserve the same freedom that CEOs of big industrial agriculture corporations have: the freedom for a fair return on our work, and access to education, opportunities, and leisure to make our lives happier and more meaningful. We all deserve the time to recover when we are sick, to take care of our families, pay rent and live healthy lives.
- **ACTION:** Together, we can reimagine and create a future where all of us who work get a fair return on our labor, and where we can all take pride in our work. We must invest in worker-owned cooperatives that enable all of us to do meaningful work, grow, and share in the reward from our collective labor.

## EXAMPLE

*We all deserve dignified and safe working conditions regardless of our occupation, immigration status or gender. But today, big food corporations like JBS, Smithfield, and Tyson are prioritizing profits over the health and safety of their employees. They continue to benefit by denying their largely immigrant workforce basic protections from COVID-19 in the workplace. This lack of worker protections has deadly impacts. When working people have access to the necessary protections they need to do their jobs, and feed our communities safely, we all benefit. We must join together now to demand that OSHA implement and enforce a mandatory standard that requires all employers to prioritize worker safety and ensure that working conditions are safe for all.*

*For more talking points, check out plank **1** of HEAL's Platform for Real Food, this **Open Letter** Calling for Swift Action Towards Workers' and Communities' Health and Safety, and for recent data on COVID-19 cases in food processing facilities, check out **FERN's report and interactive map**.*

WORDS TO EMBRACE (USE THESE)	WORDS TO REPLACE (INSTEAD OF)	WHY
<b>Destructive Food System</b>	Broken Food System	"Broken" means the system worked at one point. For so many people, the system never worked and has always been destructive.
<b>Renewed Food Systems</b>	Renewed Food System	Because we know that a single consolidated food system doesn't work for us.
<b>Working People</b>	Workers	Calling people workers reduces them to the role they play and eclipses their basic needs and desires as humans
<b>Corporations</b>	Companies	Company evokes small and local; people are measurably more hostile to "corporations"
<b>People who grow our food</b>	Producers	Calling people producers reduces them to the role they play and eclipses their basic needs and desires as humans
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greedy few rigged the game</li> <li>• Corporations/CEOs take from working people</li> </ul>	Systemic inequities	Name the specific villain to target, not the vague system
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Damage to the climate</li> <li>• Lawmakers' decisions to pollute our air and water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The climate is changing</li> <li>• Sea levels are rising</li> <li>• Stop/mitigate/slow down climate change</li> </ul>	The climate isn't changing on its own, certain people are causing the destruction. Use an active voice/ name specific actors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People struggling to make ends meet</li> <li>• Peoples working to provide for family</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor, working poor</li> <li>• Marginalized</li> <li>• Underserved</li> </ul>	Humanize folks struggling to make ends meet
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fair return on work</li> <li>• People who work for a living ought to earn a living</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise wages</li> <li>• Living wage</li> <li>• Adequate wage</li> </ul>	We must make clear that the money to pay people comes from the work that we do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wealthy few who rig the rules</li> <li>• Greedy few</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Powerful elites</li> <li>• The wealthy</li> </ul>	Critical to specify we mean only certain people, thus adding "few," and to name by behavior, not category or class



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CREATIVE CREDITS

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