

## We Stand with India's Farmers! Now Let's Connect the Dots Between the Forces of Neoliberalism that Stifle Farmers, from India to the U.S.

A solidarity statement in support of the brave and historic protests in India from farmers, and other agroecology, farm and food justice networks in the U.S.

*“We are not going back — that is not in our genetic code. Agriculture has turned into a slow poison. It's better to die fighting here.”*

— Ringhu Yaspal, a protestor in Ghazipur, India.

U.S. farmers and allied food justice advocates express our solidarity with the farmer [protests](#) in India against the unjust farm laws that will increase agribusiness' stranglehold over their food system.<sup>1</sup> India's farmers have mobilized to create one of the world's most vibrant protests in history, camping on the outskirts of New Delhi for more than two and a half months. Their rallying cry is to repeal the three unjust laws that were passed without their knowledge or consultation. We extend our solidarity to countless farmers who are peacefully and boldly standing up for their rights and dignity, with [other farmers from across the globe](#).

One of the key demands of the movement is for farmers to receive a Minimum Support Price (MSP) — currently assured for just a few crops — for all produce, including vegetables, which are essential for healthy diets. This would ensure that farmers in India, already burdened by huge debts, receive a fair price for their produce. [MSP](#) is the price at which the Indian government also buys staple grains, like wheat and rice, from farmers for its public food programs so that the poor can access subsidized grains.<sup>2</sup> While the Indian government only procures a small percentage for its food programs, the MSP is a key price signal to other traders in India, and it ensures that farmers receive a fair price for these specific crops.

We recognize the role of the U.S. government in creating the conditions that have led to these repressive laws. The U.S. [has been](#) a [key opponent](#) of India's limited use of MSP at the World Trade Organization (WTO). The U.S., with Australia, Canada and European allies, has claimed that India's MSP distorts trade.

But, that is not surprising: the U.S. government has been eroding the concept of [parity](#) (similar to MSP in India) at home for decades. There is an opportunity for the Biden administration to shift U.S. trade policy to allow other countries to support fair markets for their farmers and shift agricultural policy to ensure that our food providers make a living wage.

While the U.S. agricultural sector receives inordinately large support compared to many countries, access to that support remains inequitable. In particular, Black, Indigenous, Latino, Asian-Pacific and other people of color producers, who lack secure land tenure and are concentrated in vegetable and small-scale cattle sectors, have been excluded historically.<sup>3</sup> Support flows to larger agribusiness farming operations instead of the independent family [farmers](#) whose voices we amplify.

Let us be clear: what the Indian farmers are enduring now [happened in the U.S.](#) almost four decades ago. The Reagan era furthered the farm crisis through [deliberate federal policy changes](#), with systematic erosion of [parity](#) prices and other deregulatory efforts. “Get big or get out” has been our government's mantra. Farmers with the means to consolidate have been rewarded for growing monoculture commodities. Tribal nations and traditional producers as well as small farmers who have always practiced or shifted to diversified

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<sup>1</sup> A comprehensive article explaining what the massive, historic farmers' protests in India are about [can be found here](#).

<sup>2</sup> An overview to how the MSP impacts the various states of India [can be found here](#).

<sup>3</sup> Movements for indigenous self-determination with rallying calls for [#LandBack](#), and visionary bills like the [Justice for Black Farmers Act of 2020](#) reflect continuing need to redress these historical injustices in the U.S., similar to the advocacy of Adivasis, women and other farmers in India, who have suffered from generations of displacement.

agroecological farming have effectively been subsidizing the U.S. agriculture sector. It is [rare for these food producers to make a living without supplemental income](#). Unsurprisingly, farm suicides in rural America are [45% higher](#) than the rest of the population.

The WTO has indeed worsened an already unequal playing field between the Global South and Global North. What every nation-state can do, at the very least, is protect small farmers from deregulatory efforts, such as the three farm laws in India, that diminish the limited bargaining power that farmers have, pushing them off their farms. In the U.S., [it is said that the previous administration's agenda](#), “focused primarily around deregulation and increasing aid to commodity farmers while cutting food aid to needy families, [which] will have long-lasting implications.”

The Biden-Harris administration is off to a promising start, yet [much work remains to be done](#) on parity and environmental and racial justice in relation to food and agricultural policy domestically, as well as internationally. The U.S. government must stop prioritizing the interests of agribusiness over small farmers, abetting further corporatization of the food system here and in other countries. [The U.S. must also endorse multilateral governance norms](#) that will support India's transition to climate-resilient, biodiverse and water-conserving food systems that reach all producers. This would also mean harmonizing trade rules to include parity pricing and public crop procurement.

We have great respect for the unified struggles the farmers and farmworkers of Samyukt Kisan Morcha have built, and we stand with them. We urge both governments to support independent family farmers and localized food systems, ensuring food sovereignty and securing the livelihoods of millions who are the bedrock of its food security and nutritional wellbeing.

Statement Endorsed By:

1. A Growing Culture
2. Abanitu Organics
3. AFGE Local 3354
4. Agri-Cultura Cooperative Network
5. Agricultural Justice Project
6. Agroecology Commons
7. Agroecology Research-Action Collective
8. Alabama State Association of Cooperatives
9. Alianza Nacional de Campesinas
10. Alliance for Progressive South Asians (Twin Cities)
11. American Sustainable Business Council
12. Americana World Community Center
13. Ancestor Energy
14. Association for Farmers Rights Defense, AFRD Georgia
15. Black Farmers & Ranchers New Mexico/National Latino Farmers and Ranchers Trade Association
16. Buttermilk Falls CSA
17. Center for Regional Agriculture Food and Transformation
18. CoFED
19. Community Agroecology Network
20. Community Alliance for Global Justice
21. Community Alliance with Family Farmers
22. Community Farm Alliance
23. Community Food and Justice Coalition
24. Compassionate Action for Animals
25. Disparity to Parity
26. Earth Ethics Action

27. East Michigan Environmental Action Council/Cass Commons
28. Echo Valley Hope
29. Ecologistas en Acción
30. Ecosocialist Working Group, International Committee, Democratic Socialists of America
31. Fair World Project
32. Family Farm Action Alliance
33. Family Farm Defenders
34. Farm Aid
35. Farm and Ranch Freedom Alliance
36. Farmers On The Move
37. Farmworker Association of Florida
38. Ground Operations
39. Health of Mother Earth Foundation
40. i4Farmers
41. Imagining Transnational Solidarities Research Circle
42. Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
43. Institute for Earthbound Studies
44. Just Transition Alliance
45. Land Core
46. National Latino Farmers & Ranchers Trade Association
47. National Family Farmers Coalition
48. Natures Wisdom
49. NC Climate Justice Collective
50. NeverEndingFood
51. North Carolina Association of Black Lawyers Land Loss Prevention Project
52. Northeast Organic Farming Association — Vermont
53. Northeast Organic Farming Association, Mass. Chapter
54. Northeast Organic Farming Association-Interstate Council
55. OPEIU 39
56. Peoples Architecture Commonwealth
57. Pesticide Action Network North America
58. Philadelphia Community farm
59. Real Food Media
60. Regenerative Organic Alliance
61. Regenerative Rising
62. Rural Advancement Foundation International-USA
63. Rural Advancement Fund of the National Sharecropper Fund
64. Rural Coalition
65. Rural Development Leadership Network
66. Rural Vermont
67. Safe Food and Feed Foundation
68. Santa Cruz Permaculture
69. Science for the People
70. Science for the People — Twin Cities
71. Seeds for All
72. Shaping Change Collaborative
73. Sierra Club-USA
74. Southeastern African-American Farmers' Organic Network
75. Steward Foundation
76. Texas Drought Project
77. The Carbon Underground
78. United People Community Organization, Market, and Farms

79. University of MN Food Recovery Network
80. Uprooted & Rising
81. US Food Sovereignty Alliance
82. Utopia Cornucopia
83. Vision for Change Foundation
84. Vitis and Ovis Farm
85. Washington Biotechnology Action Council
86. Wisconsin Network for Peace and Justice
87. Women's Environmental Institute