Learn more:

Who Produces Our Food?

People have grown food to eat for over 7,000 years.* In the past, most people grew the plants and cared for the animals they ate. Today, people can go to markets, stores, or restaurants to buy food. People around the world rely on food workers to produce and distribute food through each step of the global food system.

Food workers prepare the soil, plant seeds, and harvest crops. They keep the soil healthy. They may use chemicals to fertilize the soil or kill pests that can harm crops. Farm work is difficult. Food workers are in the fields for many hours each day. They may work with machines or use simple tools to do the work with their hands. Some food workers travel to new places when the seasons change so they can continue to earn money.

Food workers process crops after the harvest. They often work in factories to clean, cut, or peel fruits and vegetables. They prepare meat, milk, fish, and other animal products. Food workers check that the food is safe to eat. They put food into packages and add labels. Food workers in factories may use machines and other tools that can be dangerous.

After food is harvested and processed, food workers distribute it by truck, plane, or ship. They may transport the food to distribution centers where new food workers prepare it for companies that buy large amounts, such as hospitals and schools. Other food workers transport food to stores, markets, and restaurants.

Food workers organize and sell food to customers. In a store, stockers put food on shelves or in baskets. At markets, vendors sell food to customers. At restaurants, chefs prepare food. Wait staff serve food to customers.

Many people give their talents and energy to move food through the global food system. Their hard work is essential to get food to people. City and business leaders can collaborate to keep food workers safe in fields, factories, distribution centers, and stores. City and business leaders can also work together so that food workers at each step of the food system earn a fair amount of money for their work.

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Drag the answer below its question:

To fertilize the soil or kill pests that harm the crops.

To distribution centers or to shops, markets and restaurants.

Stockers, vendors, chefs and waiters.

For more than seven thousand years.

It is cleaned, cut, peeled, processed or packaged.

1. How long has agriculture existed?

2. Why do farmers use chemicals?

3. How is food produced?

4. Where is food distributed?

5. What jobs are related to the consumption stage?

Think about a meal you ate recently. Can you think of all the people who worked to get the food to you?

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