

# It's not the food supply chain that's breaking, it's the meat supply chain

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Supply lines across the food industry have been impacted by the coronavirus. Shuttered restaurants, university dining halls, workplace food providers, and more have all strained the [food supply chain](#). In particular, the meat industry has suffered the hardest hit. In addition to closures of many of its largest purchasers, COVID-19 outbreaks inside meatpacking facilities have forced largest meat processing plants to shut down. The cold, damp conditions and crowded workstations in meatpacking plants make infectious diseases particularly hard to control.

On April 26, Tyson Foods Inc., the biggest U.S. meat processor, closed at least six major plants. Similar [covid-19 outbreaks](#) were reported at Danish Crown A/S, a huge pork producer; Goikoa, of Spain; Sanderson Farms Inc., America's third-largest poultry producer, and Cargill's High River slaughterhouse outside Calgary. The whole situation is an incontrovertible nightmare. But the pandemic is an opportunity to ask more probing questions about the nature of our system of animal agriculture.

Since COVID-19 began, we've seen plant-based product sales growth exceed that of animal-based products, both in meat and dairy categories. In the United States, [sales of vegan meat jumped by a staggering 280% and sales of oat milk jumped by 477%](#) in the second week of March compared to the same period last year, as the country became the epicenter of the coronavirus pandemic. This meat crisis has become a big opportunity for [plant-based protein companies](#) that have developed healthier, safer and more environmentally friendly alternatives to traditional animal products.

Choosing a plant-based diet is one of the best things you can do for the environment as plant-based diets are kind to the earth and kind to

animals. As is the case with [plant-based meat](#), plant-based dairy supply chains are much better poised to respond in real-time to changing market conditions and are not vulnerable to the type of disruptions inherent in industrial animal agriculture.