

## Roots' statement of solidarity

Stanford Roots stands in solidarity with the Black community and joins them in mourning the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and countless other Black folks.

The root of our organization is sustainable agriculture, which is closely linked to environmental and racial justice. We acknowledge the dark history of agriculture, particularly in the US, where slavery was foundational in building the agricultural system, and structural racism in the food system persists to this day. According to a 2016 report from the USDA, Black Americans own less than 1% of rural land, while white Americans own more than 98%. Furthermore, farmers of color often receive insufficient government support and must cope with the historical traumas associated with slavery. On the other hand, agriculture also provides historically oppressed people with the opportunity to restore their relationship with the land, reclaim ancestral knowledge, and provide nourishment for their communities. As Patrick Archie, Director of the Stanford O'Donohue Educational Farm, always says, agriculture represents the very best and the very worst of human relationships.

Today, we hope to draw on this positive relationship. Agriculture can be a form of healing and community building that can guide us as we work to dismantle systems of oppression in our society.

We are disgusted by the acts of violence and hate that we have seen against Black communities recently, and they are a clear reminder that, though they do not often receive the media attention they deserve, these injustices have been happening for centuries. We believe that white supremacist institutions, including policing and legal systems that target people of color, must be dismantled and that we must work towards a society centered on community-healing. The only just future is one in which these racist institutions no longer exist.

The senseless murders of Black people, disproportionate number of COVID deaths amongst Black folks (caused in part by environmental justice issues), and the injustices in our agricultural systems that put POC (Persons of color) on the frontlines as essential workers, serve as a clarion call that these acts of racism, and the systems that allow them, must immediately come to an end.

We are committed as an organization to better support Black and POC communities, center diversity within our own club, and address the deeply seated racial injustices associated with historic and modern agricultural systems.

**We are asking anyone with the means to donate to Black Earth Farms (venmo @blackearthfarms).** Black Earth Farms is a grassroots African and Indigenous farming collective in the East Bay that is currently working to bring free food to Black folks that have been arrested, injured, or are organizing bail for protesters. We were so privileged to get to

learn from Black Earth Farms earlier this year and engage in discussion about BIPOC agroecology at the event “Free the Land: Resisting Settler Colonialism with Food Sovereignty.” You can read more about the event here: <https://www.ejstanford.com/free-the-land.html>. To learn more about Black Earth Farms’ mission and actions, follow them on Instagram @blackearthfarms and visit their website <https://www.blackearthfarms.com/>. Share their instagram posts on your story, tag @StanfordRoots, and encourage others to donate as well.

Some actions we can all take are to educate ourselves and practice empathy. For those looking to learn more about racial injustice in agriculture, here are some starting points:

- Episode from the NYT podcast 1619 on Black land ownership: [Episode 5: The Land of Our Fathers, Part 1](#)
- [How Racism Has Shaped the American Farming Landscape](#)
- [Progressive Governance Can Turn the Tide for Black Farmers](#)
- Books
  - [Farming While Black](#) - A manual for African-heritage people to reclaim their place in the food system
  - Freedom Farmers: Agricultural Resistance and the Black Freedom Movement (Justice, Power, and Politics)
  - Working the Roots: Over 400 Years of Traditional African American Healing
  - The Color of Food: Stories of Race, Resilience and Farming
  - Cultivating Food Justice: Race, Class, and Sustainability (Food, Health, and the Environment)
  - [List of 10 Black Owned Online Bookstores](#), [Black Owned Bookstores by State](#)

Other resources and places to donate:

[A Guide to Allyship](#)

Adam Nayak's [External Action Guide](#)

[Expanding support to broader BIPOC movements](#)

Donate to

[@blackearthfarms](#) on Venmo

[Bail fund links](#)

[Black Lives Matter](#)

[Black Visions Collective](#)

[George Floyd's memorial fund](#)

[Reclaim the Block](#)

[Equal Justice Initiative](#)

[Color of Change](#)

[NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund](#)

[Register](#) to vote and show up to the polls (especially for local elections)!

You can use this email template to ask your professors to proactively extend academic accommodations to Black students:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1qbBIORMfk4iFqFTmgmt3z2pwl7wlf5aAZH9AF1iyydw/edit>