

The Inescapable Harms of Animal Agriculture: How Might Sanctuaries Respond to Threats from Climate Disasters and Diseases

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Abstract: Farmed animal sanctuaries are upheld as refuges, spaces demarcated materially and discursively, where formerly farmed animals have the right to grow old, participate in multispecies communities and collaborate in larger political projects that imagine the *freedom* for all and resistance against animal exploitation. Sanctuaries disengage and agitate against food production narratives of how these animals ought to live both spatially and relationally. However, the reach of the animal agriculture industry is creeping into sanctuary spaces through ever-increasing risks such as diseases (e.g., avian influenza), the climate crisis (e.g., fires and floods), and other disaster events, revealing inescapable harms that must be addressed.

This article considers the shared, albeit unevenly experienced vulnerability to disasters for farmed animals, as well as what the inescapable harms imposed by animal agriculture mean for sanctuaries. We first identify human sovereignty as the source of intensifying crises and disasters that sanctuaries are forced to confront, as well as the overarching context that sanctuaries are operating within. Following that, we engage with biological and climate disasters as two main case studies, examining how sanctuaries have responded to them, and what alternative actions sanctuaries could take. Finally, we consider how sanctuaries might take up the labor and responsibility of participating in broader struggles for institutional change beyond the sanctuary-gate, educating people about the relationships between the climate crisis, disease risk, and all scales of farmed animal production and the subsequent challenges they pose to sanctuaries. Through a multispecies justice framework, we suggest that disaster events represent key opportunities for sanctuaries to engage with the political project of ending animal production at all scales to ensure a safer future for humans and more-than-humans alike.

Keywords: Animal agriculture; sanctuaries; farmed animals; climate change; disasters; multispecies justice.

1 Introduction

In his critical discussions regarding the role of animal sanctuaries, Timothy Pachirat asks how might animal advocates reconcile a conceptualization of sanctuary as a secluded, sacred protective space, with a strategic and instrumental understanding of sanctuary “not as utopian (no-place) refuge but as specific staging grounds for resistance?”¹ With regards to the latter, Pachirat cites the *Oxford Essential Dictionary of the US Military (2001)*, which states that sanctuary is “a nation or area near or contiguous to the combat area that, by tacit agreement between the warring powers, is

¹ Timothy Pachirat, “Sanctuary,” in *Critical Terms for Animal Studies*, ed. Lori Gruen (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2018), 338.

exempt from attack and therefore serves as a refuge for staging, logistics, or other activities of the combatant powers.”² We want to hold on to the idea of sanctuary as a space of resistance as Pachirat conceptualizes it, while at the same time push back on the definition he has cited; we observe that sanctuaries are in fact not immune to direct or indirect assaults from animal agriculture. Sanctuaries could never fully escape from the harms of animal agriculture largely due to the animal-industrial complex’s regulatory capture of political and legal institutions, and because of the emerging disasters that the industry is complicit in reproducing, such as zoonotic disease outbreaks, fires, floods, and other crises pervade all boundaries. Our aim here is to first make a theoretical case for how and why the destructive impacts of animal agriculture against animals could be considered a war that continues through human sovereignty, then highlight how animal sanctuaries have struggled with these challenges to offer some material observations of “how precarious the sanctuary vision for animal futures can be.”³

We begin by establishing this broader context of war and conflict between humans and animals in the first section, which offers a productive framework for our analysis on the entanglements between animals, sanctuaries, and the threats of animal agriculture. Specifically, we draw on Dinesh Wadiwel’s theorizing of the ways in which humans are waging a biopolitical war against animals legitimized through a totalizing human sovereignty, to examine how farmed animal sanctuaries are simultaneously resisting yet forced to reproduce harms towards animals during times of disasters and crises.⁴ In section two, we provide an overview of a range of direct and indirect threats emanating from animal agriculture, how sanctuaries have responded to these threats in practice, and the challenges sanctuaries have faced in their responses. In this section, we seek to expand how animals are discussed in relation to disaster events. In the animal disaster literature, there are four broad categories of animals: (1) companion animals; (2) farmed animals; (3) other captive animals such as those held in entertainment complexes or research facilities; and (4) wildlife.⁵ Our intervention is motivated to capture how formerly farmed animals or sanctuary residents do not neatly fit into any of the four broad categories, thus we make a case for considering their unique and distinct experiences in disasters. In the third and final section, we return to Pachirat’s envisioning of animal sanctuaries as resistive sites and consider the liberatory promises of sanctuaries through a multispecies justice lens.⁶

2 Frame of Analysis: The Crisis of Human Sovereignty

Critics of industrial animal farming and other animal exploitation industries have long recognized that these industries are not just systematically and institutionally violent against animals, but cause harm for many humans and our shared environment as well. A recent example of such analysis could be found in David Nibert and Sue Coe’s co-edited two volumes entitled *Animal Oppression and Capitalism* (2017), where contributors discuss topics ranging from the highly dangerous and at times deadly

² Pachirat, “Sanctuary,” 337.

³ Elan Abrell, *Saving Animals: Multispecies Ecologies of Rescue and Care* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2021), 197.

⁴ Dinesh Wadiwel, *The War against Animals* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2015).

⁵ Irvine, Leslie. *Filling the ark: animal welfare in disasters*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2009.

⁶ Danielle Celermajer, Sria Chatterjee, Alasdair Cochrane, Stefanie Fishel, Astrida Neimanis, Anne O’Brien, Susan Reid, Krithika Srinivasan, David Schlosberg, and Anik Waldow, “Justice Through a Multispecies Lens,” *Contemporary Political Theory* 19, no. 3 (2020): 475–512.

labor that the efficiency of capitalist production imposes on slaughterhouse workers, to issues such as state capture by the animal-industrial complex, and the direct complicity of industrial animal farming on intensifying biodiversity loss and climate disasters.⁷

Within capitalist economies, the term “livestock” signifies not only the legally codified property status of farmed animals, but also how the animals are treated as commodities that could be bought and sold.⁸ However, animal studies scholars who have applied Foucauldian analysis to examine the power relations between humans and animals have supplemented the above, pointing out that within spaces of animal exploitation, animals are not simply commodified beings, but also highly disciplined and controlled biopolitical subjects.⁹ For instance, Chloë Taylor provides an overview of the mixture of powers that farmed animals in particular routinely face within agricultural settings: sovereign power (the right to kill), the disciplinary and regulatory dimensions of biopower (to foster life and let die), as well as pastoral power (domination through care and dependency).¹⁰

In *Society Must Be Defended*, a series of lectures from 1975-6, Michel Foucault proposes that in a scenario where the victors spare the lives of those they have conquered after a war, sovereignty becomes a means by which a relationship of domination between the victors and the spared is juridically legitimized; that is to say, what is foundational to sovereignty is the will of the conquered and defeated to prefer life (whether in domination, servitude, or slavery) over death, out of their fear of death.¹¹ This perspective suggests that relations of war and conflict actually continue beneath seemingly peaceable civil relations; beneath the rule of law, a secret and coded war wages on.¹² Consistent with this view, Foucault states elsewhere that “politics is war pursued by other means.”¹³

Wadiwel applies this Foucauldian analysis above to reconceptualize sovereignty “as a mode of human domination of animals.”¹⁴ Human sovereignty manifests itself through the ways in which human dominion over animals is assumed and predetermined, such that ethical considerations could only attend to how we ought to use and relate to other animals, as opposed to whether any use and exploitation could be justified in the first place.¹⁵ Further, Wadiwel argues that this sovereign rule over animals is “distinctly *biopolitical*,” concerning itself with both the fostering of life and the enforcement of death.¹⁶ Taken together, the existing relational conditions between humans and other animals is one in which human sovereignty enables a largely hidden and self-legitimizing biopolitical war against animals to continue, sustained and supported by various human institutions. We see this ever-increasingly in moments of

⁷ David Nibert and Sue Coe, *Animal Oppression and Capitalism* (Santa Barbara, California: Praeger, 2017).

⁸ patrice jones, “Property, Profit, and (Re)Production: A Bird’s-Eye View,” in *Animal Oppression and Capitalism*, ed. David Nibert and Sue Coe, (Santa Barbara, California: Praeger, 2017)

⁹ Matthew Chrulew and Dinesh Joseph Wadiwel, *Foucault and Animals* (Boston: Brill, 2016).

¹⁰ Chloë Taylor, “Foucault and Critical Animal Studies: Genealogies of Agricultural Power,” *Philosophy Compass* 8, no. 6 (2013): 539–51.

¹¹ Michel Foucault, François Ewald, Alessandro Fontana, David Macey, and Mauro Bertani, *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-76* (London: Penguin, 2003), 95.

¹² Foucault, *Society Must be Defended*, 50-51.

¹³ Foucault derives this statement by inverting Carl von Clausewitz’s observation that “war is policy pursued by other means.” For context, see Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: Volume 1, an Introduction* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 93.

¹⁴ Wadiwel, *The War against Animals*, 21.

¹⁵ Wadiwel, *The War against Animals*, 22.

¹⁶ Wadiwel, *The War against Animals*, 24-25.

disasters, when human sovereignty circumvents any safety that sanctuaries are supposed to provide.

2.1 Positioning and Situating Farmed Animal Sanctuaries

We apply Wadiwel's framework and conceptualizations to produce an understanding of animal agriculture's direct exacerbation of climate catastrophes and spread of zoonotic diseases as part and parcel of the war against animals. Circling back to animal sanctuaries as sites of resistance, this framework helps us acknowledge how sanctuaries are forced to confront the various inescapable external forces manifested and sustained through human sovereignty. However, given that human sovereignty is all-pervasive, sanctuaries may often find themselves internally reproducing and replicating certain harms due to the coercive external structural forces. One example of this dynamic lies in the power that the state possesses in mandating the depopulating of animal residents at farmed animal sanctuaries amidst an avian influenza outbreak, as we illustrate in the sections to follow. These types of challenging and complex ethical decisions humans must make over the lives of animals are rooted in the same sovereign power that enables all other forms of violence towards animals, regardless of how much sanctuary staff and volunteers might work to resist them.

To give material substance to the human sovereignty we are referring to, which is imposed on sanctuaries, we consider two key intersections between sanctuaries and animal agricultural facilities: (1) supply chains and knowledge, and (2) spatiality. Together, these intersections produce and exasperate how sanctuaries experience disasters and impose short- and long-term challenges to the ethical and political projects of farmed animal sanctuaries.

Elan Abrell writes that “[s]anctuaries are embedded within many of the same political-economic systems of animal use that they seek to challenge, such as the animal agriculture industry and the animal entertainment industry.”¹⁷ Abrell notes how sanctuaries are dependent on the very same supply-chains that are embedded in the animal agriculture industry to provide food, housing materials (e.g., hay, woodchips), equipment and other resources such as veterinarian care and knowledge. One of the challenges of relying on these supply-chains is that they are oriented towards sustaining a particular kind of capitalist-farmed animal, one who is not meant to grow old.¹⁸

Dependency on the same supply-chains and resources including knowledge introduces several challenges for sanctuaries. A constant challenge sanctuaries face is accessing medical care for residents. Veterinarians servicing sanctuaries have developed much of their medical knowledge about farmed animals and spend the majority of their time in industrial farming spaces working within the demands of production. Their knowledge has to be translated and re-interpreted to be applied in sanctuary settings.¹⁹ For example, in production spaces, a sick chicken will be ‘culled’ whereas in a sanctuary, a sick chicken is to be diagnosed, and treated for their ailment. Heather Rosenfeld argues that sanctuary medical care is an example of “undone science.”²⁰ In their research on veterinarian care for sanctuary bird residents,

¹⁷ Abrell, *Saving animals: Multispecies ecologies of rescue and care*, 18.

¹⁸ Isa Leshko, *Allowed to Grow Old*. (University of Chicago Press, 2019).

¹⁹ Heather Rosenfeld, "Witnessing Pandora: Doing" Undone Science" at Chicken Sanctuaries," *Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience* 7, no. 2 (2021).

²⁰ Rosenfeld, "Witnessing Pandora: Doing" Undone Science" at Chicken Sanctuaries,"; Frickel, Scott, Sahra Gibbon, Jeff Howard, Joanna Kempner, Gwen Ottinger, and David J. Hess. "Undone science:

Rosenfeld was told by a sanctuary caregiver that the available medical knowledge at this point is “where human medicine was in the nineteenth century.”²¹

Further, the food sourced for sanctuary residents is the product of agricultural science that has developed feed formulas to ensure maximum efficiency and feed-growth rations on farmed animals, ignoring the long-term health impacts on animals like rapid-weight gain. Despite the production-orientation of the supply chains and knowledge, sanctuaries have creatively engaged with and made efforts to “adapt[] this knowledge to their own needs,” generating a groundswell of sanctuary-oriented knowledge.²² Building this capacity and sanctuary-specific knowledge is integral to caring for formerly farmed animals.²³

In addition, as highlighted in the growing body of farmed animal sanctuary literature, authors remark on how sanctuaries can conjure up the image of bucolic farm sung about in the jingle ‘Old McDonald Had a Farm.’²⁴ Sanctuaries are most often spatially located in what are predominantly agricultural communities. The decision to operate a sanctuary in the midst of agricultural production is influenced by access to land, proximity to key resources, and dictated by legal institutions through zoning by-laws that spatially confine farmed animals to rural areas.²⁵

Zoning bylaws function to limit the visibility of farmed animals and reduce the reach of sanctuaries’ political messaging by relegating and confining both to rural areas.²⁶ This spatial confinement limits the material possibilities as well as the imagination for where farmed animals can live. The running argument supporting this spatial-fixing of where farmed animals can live is that urban environments would deprive farmed animals of their needs and prevent them from flourishing.²⁷ This belief has been challenged many times, notably by The Microsanctuary Movement that has pushed against spatially-fixing farmed animals to rural areas; however, this attempt of giving farmed animals a presence outside rural areas comes with numerous legal and social challenges for advocates who are moving farmed animals into urban, residential areas.

Sanctuary dependency on the same supply-chains, knowledge, and land as industrial farming production shape and govern sanctuaries reflect what Pachirat calls the “topography of enmity.”²⁸ Access to food, resources, veterinarian care, urban spaces, and more are just a few of the limiting factors sanctuaries must navigate.

To return to Abrell’s acknowledgement that sanctuaries are embedded in the same economic and political systems that were created and continue to be reproduced through agricultural industries, we propose extending this analysis to consider

Charting social movement and civil society challenges to research agenda setting." *Science, Technology, & Human Values* 35, no. 4 (2010): 444-473.

²¹ Rosenfeld, “Witnessing Pandora: Doing” Undone Science” at Chicken Sanctuaries,” 2.

²² Abrell, *Saving animals: Multispecies ecologies of rescue and care*, 69.

²³ The Open Sanctuary Project has championed this initiative developing online resources and guides for caregivers of formerly farmed animals to consult and contribute to. See www.opensanctuary.org

²⁴ Gene Baur, *Farm sanctuary: Changing hearts and minds about animals and food*, Simon and Schuster, 2008.

²⁵ At times sanctuaries even re-appropriate pre-existing agricultural production infrastructure such as barns. Sue Donaldson and Will Kymlicka, “Farmed animal sanctuaries: The heart of the movement,” *Politics and Animals* 1, no. 1 (2015): 50-74.; Open Sanctuary Project, ‘Know your sanctuaries zoning rights restrictions’ (*Open Sanctuary*, 12 June 2018). <<https://opensanctuary.org/know-your-sanctuaries-zoning-rights-restrictions/>> accessed 10 December 2022.

²⁶ Darren Chang, ‘Resisting Species Segregation: Integration, separation, and infiltration with farmed animals,’ (MA Thesis, Queens University, 2018), 15.

²⁷ Darren Chang, ‘Resisting Species Segregation: Integration, separation, and infiltration with farmed animals,’ 15.

²⁸ Pachirat, “*Sanctuary*,” 339.

broader ecological and biological relations between sanctuaries and industrial agricultural production. We extend the analysis to how some of the dependencies between sanctuaries and industrial production take on new meanings as hazards for sanctuary residents in the context of ongoing catastrophic disasters that sanctuaries are facing. By considering these additional relations, those that are biological and ecological in origin, we argue that the relationship between sanctuaries and disasters are expressions of direct and indirect attacks from the animal-industrial complex. Our goal in this paper is to build on our understanding of the *enduring legacies* of agricultural production on the lives of residents and explore what this means for the ethical and political projects of sanctuaries more broadly.

3 The Biological Disasters

In this section we will identify the link between zoonotic diseases, animal agriculture, and the capitalist farmed animals captive within these systems. We want to draw attention to how production relations are driving and distributing the biological threats, making sure to avoid turning the animals themselves into scapegoats.²⁹ We will follow this section by identifying an emerging issue for sanctuaries related to exposure to zoonotic diseases, particularly the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI). By exploring this example, we will identify how sanctuaries are responding to such threats, tracing how the response is shaped by a globalized governance of agricultural production that does not care that sanctuary bird residents have been removed from production spaces and construe them as a threat to captive birds in production.

3.1 Industrial Agriculture and Zoonotic Diseases

The COVID-19 pandemic reinvigorated public interest in the relationship and potential for disease transmission between humans and animals. COVID-19 brought to the fore how human relations to animals are not just political or social, but also operate on biological scales. The emergence of COVID-19 in particular fueled racist and sinophobic rhetoric that led to violence and supported western imaginations of the correct consumption and relational practices between humans and animals, strategically weaponizing COVID-19 to distance western food production practices and diseases.³⁰

However, COVID-19 is just one of many zoonotic diseases circulating in contemporary society, many of which can be traced to the western development of what are called concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs). According to the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), 60% of infectious diseases are zoonotic, and at least 75% of these diseases can move between species, including those that are reverse-zoonotic, such as when humans were the vector to transmitting COVID-19 to mink.³¹

Farmed animals' captivity in CAFOs can serve as the "epidemiological bridge" between human and other species, highlighting the key role these animals have in

²⁹ Charlotte E. Blattner, "From Zoonosis to Zoopolis," In *Derecho Animal. Forum of Animal Law Studies*, vol. 11, no. 4, pp. 41-53. 2020.

³⁰ Darren Chang and Lauren Corman, "Multispecies disposability: Taxonomies of power in a global pandemic," *Animal Studies Journal* 10, no. 1 (2021): 57-79.

³¹ FAO, 'One Health,' (FAO, 1 December 2021) <<https://www.fao.org/one-health/en>> accessed 10 December 2022.

zoonotic disease transmission and mutations.³² CAFOs produce animals with poor immune systems who are subject to stressful, confined, and concentrated living spaces. Compounding this situation, farmed animals live directly on top of their own waste. To address the adverse conditions, farmed animals have been fed or injected a cocktail of antibiotics, which has led to the crisis of antibiotic resistance.³³

Between the concentrated living space and standardized immunocompromised animals, the ideal environment for transmission and mutations of diseases to occur is locked in. However, these drivers of zoonotic diseases are “within the farm gate.”³⁴ According to Matthew Hayek, the attribution of zoonotic diseases to agriculture is actually “conservative” as only on-farm drivers are considered in these scenarios. If we factored in the “before and after the farm gate” impacts of agriculture, including “commodity-driven deforestation” that results in the loss of disease regulation, more emerging zoonotic diseases would likely be traced to animal agricultural production.³⁵ Despite having an impoverished estimate of the relationship between agricultural production and zoonotic diseases, scientists can say with certainty that over 50% of emerging zoonotic diseases are affiliated with industrial animal agriculture.³⁶ With global commitment to support more concentrated and confined agricultural facilities through what is called sustainable-intensification, the present moment and future can be described as stuck in the “infectious disease trap of animal agriculture.”³⁷

3.2 Sanctuaries and Their Zoonotic Attunement

As animal agricultural facilities navigate zoonotic diseases, so do farmed animal sanctuaries. What brings these two radically different spaces together is spatial proximity and housing genetically similar farmed animals. Pre-dating the COVID-19 pandemic, sanctuaries already have been engaged with “disease situations,” such as zoonotic outbreaks or viral infections traced to residents’ time in utero.³⁸ Abrell offers the concept of “necro-care,” a type of care that functions through the management or control of other life such as pest control, to describe sanctuaries’ attempts of mitigating external threats that can lead to potential “disease situations.”³⁹ External threats can look like commensal species such as rats helping themselves to food bins and leaving behind shedding’s of viruses, or undomesticated birds co-mingling with bird residents at the pond, or even through the arrival of a new resident not having been subject to a sufficient quarantine period.

Zoonotic attunement has increasingly become important for sanctuaries because of overarching institutions governing globalized food systems. Avian Influenza (AI), specifically Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) is increasingly

³² Delia Grace, Bernard K. Bett, Hu Suk Lee, and Susan MacMillan, “Zoonoses: Blurred lines of emergent disease and ecosystem health,” (2016).

³³ Matthew N. Hayek, “The infectious disease trap of animal agriculture,” *Science Advances* 8, no. 44 (2022): eadd6681.

³⁴ Hayek, “The infectious disease trap of animal agriculture,” 1.

³⁵ Serge Morand and Claire Lajaunie, “Outbreaks of Vector-Borne and Zoonotic Diseases Are Associated with Changes in Forest Cover and Oil Palm Expansion at Global Scale,” *Frontiers in Veterinary Science* 8 (2021): 661063–661063.

³⁶ Jason R Rohr, Christopher B Barrett, David J Civitello, Meggan E Craft, Bryan Delius, Giulio A DeLeo, Peter J Hudson, et al., “Emerging Human Infectious Diseases and the Links to Global Food Production,” *Nature Sustainability* 2, no. 6 (2019): 445–56.

³⁷ Hayek, “The infectious disease trap of animal agriculture.”

³⁸ Steve Hinchliffe, Nick Bingham, John Allen, and Simon Carter, *Pathological lives: Disease, space and biopolitics*, John Wiley & Sons, 2016, 98.

³⁹ Abrell, *Saving animals: Multispecies ecologies of rescue and care*, 181.

becoming a challenge for sanctuaries to navigate as we reach the nearly endemic, or enzootic status globally.⁴⁰ HPAI presents unique issues for sanctuaries because it interacts with the ‘topography of enmity’ by redefining the conditions for spatial and relational configurations on sanctuaries. The two principal ways sanctuaries are experiencing HPAI is directly by avian influenza infecting the resident birds, or indirectly, by being in what is called a control or prevention zone.

The Open Sanctuary Project calls HPAI and similar zoonotic diseases examples of a “double-pronged threat.”⁴¹ The first deadly-prong is that if infected by HPAI or another strain of avian influenza, there is a very high chance that the bird residents will succumb to the virus. While death from the virus is not guaranteed, death itself usually is—the “second-prong.”⁴² If HPAI is detected in a given region, the region receives a “potentially deadly risk” classification, and all surrounding properties housing farmed animals are categorized as “at-risk.”⁴³ Once labeled “at-risk,” the surrounding facilities are under temporary emergency biosecurity measures ranging from forced confinement of birds to depopulating all birds, as they are potential vectors under scorched-earth policies. By considering matters of agency and freedom, we will turn to each scenario focusing on avian influenza.

The first scenario is when sanctuaries have confirmed HPAI on-sanctuary, marking their location as “infected premise.”⁴⁴ In March 2022, Pumpkin Wall Farm Sanctuary located in New Hampshire was confirmed to be the point-source of HPAI in the region. After confirming with the state veterinarian that five turkeys who suddenly died had HPAI, state-workers arrived at the sanctuary, quickly isolating, and depopulating all 80 bird residents, regardless of their infection status. Brendena Fleming, founder of Pumpkin Wall Farm Sanctuary familiar with the criticisms surrounding the scientific effectiveness of “stamping-out,” appealed to the state veterinarian to individually test the 75 birds for HPAI; however, the request was denied, and Fleming had no legal recourse to appeal.⁴⁵ Fleming’s appeal joins in a larger scientific and agricultural production call against the stamping-out approach. In the United States, over 52.7 million birds were depopulated in 2022, marking this year as a new record. However, the “vast majority are being culled through flock

⁴⁰ Michelle Willie and Ian G. Barr, “Resurgence of avian influenza virus,” *Science* 376, no. 6592 (2022): 459-460.

⁴¹ Julia Magnus, ‘Highly pathogenic avian influenza: Your sanctuary and the law,’ (*The Open Sanctuary*, 21 April 2022) <<https://opensanctuary.org/highly-pathogenic-avian-influenza-your-sanctuary-and-the-law/>> accessed 10 December 2022.

⁴² Magnus, ‘Highly pathogenic avian influenza: Your sanctuary and the law.’

⁴³ Magnus, ‘Highly pathogenic avian influenza: Your sanctuary and the law.’

⁴⁴ USDA, ‘Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) response ready guide - Overview of zones,’ (*USDA*, May 2017)

<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/emergency_management/downloads/hpai/hpai_zones.pdf> accessed 10 December 2022.

⁴⁵ Ryan Lessard, ‘State to euthanize about 80 sanctuary farm birds after avian flu deaths,’ (*Manchester Ink Link*, 17 March 2022) <<https://manchesterinklink.com/state-to-euthanize-about-80-sanctuary-farm-birds-after-avian-flu-deaths/>> accessed 10 December 2022. ; n.n, ‘Birds at NH sanctuary euthanized due to avian influenza,’ (21 March 2022)

<<https://www.nbcoboston.com/news/local/birds-at-nh-animal-sanctuary-euthanized-due-to-avian-flu/2674697>> accessed 10 December 2022.

‘depopulation.’”⁴⁶ Critiques against deploying the stamping-out policies are based on showing how it prioritizes economic over scientific or social values.⁴⁷

The logic is that by “stamping out” all birds that are either infected or potentially exposed to the virus, the virus will effectively be eliminated from the region, returning the region to a disease-free status.⁴⁸ International markets, rather than scientific consensus inform the policy to “stamp out” all birds in an infection zone. During farmed animal disease outbreaks, the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) highly encourages restricting the export of farmed animals (alive, or those disarticulated) from known containment zones. Additionally, countries can choose to introduce temporary embargoes against other countries or specific areas listed as having active farmed animal disease outbreaks: one such example happened in 2004, when the United States was under embargo from 44 importing countries banning the purchase of poultry from either the host-state or the US entirely.⁴⁹ Thus, by stamping-out or eliminating all birds in a containment zone, regions or countries are able to return to the status of being disease-free and regain access to the market as quickly as possible. At Pumpkin Wall Farm Sanctuary, the 5 confirmed infected birds, and the 75 other birds of unknown status represented a threat to the region, and possibly the entire country's agricultural production. Their tragic encounter with HPAI, and larger forces of international farmed animal health governance reveal a critical issue for farmed animal sanctuaries. Despite the birds living at Pumpkin Wall Farm Sanctuary, they were still subjected to the same biological control measures exercised in agricultural production, showing how sanctuaries and their residents remain embedded in larger animal production logics.

Another valuable insight this tragic incident illuminates is that regardless of bird residents’ living in a sanctuary, the goal of providing a good death is not guaranteed. Sanctuaries are spaces where individual animals’ lives are not just “background noise,” but places where animals’ lives are grievable and during the death-process, care is put into how animals may experience the end of their life.⁵⁰ At Pumpkin Wall Farm Sanctuary, residents’ death was determined by external actors, and the birds were subjected to industry-killing methods. At sanctuaries, if residents do not die naturally, caregivers will typically request veterinarians to provide sedatives or pentobarbital, the pharmaceutical used by veterinarians to euthanize companion animals. However, this, and other medical interventions can be complicated by the legal categorization of farmed animals as “food animals” and impose restrictions on what medicines veterinarians can prescribe to them.⁵¹

⁴⁶ Bill Chappel, ‘What we know about the deadliest bird flu outbreak in history,’ (NPR, 2 December 2022) <<https://www.npr.org/2022/12/02/1140076426/what-we-know-about-the-deadliest-u-s-bird-flu-outbreak-in-history>> accessed 10 December 2022.

⁴⁷ Terry L. Whiting, “Why must we rush to bury our dead (pigs): The option of excarnation by exposure,” *The Canadian Veterinary Journal* 62, no. 12 (2021): 1309.

⁴⁸ WHO, ‘Terrestrial code online access,’ (WHO, 2021) <https://www.woah.org/en/what-we-do/standards/codes-and-manuals/terrestrial-code-online-access/?id=169&L=1&htmlfile=chapitre_avian_influenza_viruses.htm> accessed 10 December 2022.

⁴⁹ Matthew J. MacLachlan, David Boussios, and Amy D. Hagerman, “Market Responses to Export Restrictions from Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Outbreaks,” *Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics* 47, no. 1 (2021): 209-224.

⁵⁰ Deborah Bird Rose, “In the shadows of all this death,” in *Animal Death*, ed. Jay Johnston and Fiona Probyn-Rapsey, (Sydney University Press, 2013), 2.; Kathryn Gillespie, “Provocation from the field: A multispecies doula approach to death and dying,” *Animal Studies Journal* 9, no. 1 (2020): 1-31.

⁵¹ Rosenfeld, “Witnessing Pandora: Doing “Undone Science” at Chicken Sanctuaries.” ; Scott Frickel, Sahra Gibbon, Jeff Howard, Joanna Kempner, Gwen Ottinger, and David J. Hess. “Undone Science: Charting Social Movement and Civil Society Challenges to Research Agenda Setting,” *Science, Technology, & Human Values* 35, no. 4 (2010): 444-73.

Fleming was asked by the state veterinarian how she wanted the birds to be euthanized, to which she responded humanely and off-site. However, her request was not possible because it could further spread the virus. She was told it needed to be done as fast and quickly as possible. According to the HPAI Red Book, during a disease-outbreak, depopulation is favored over euthanasia.⁵² According to the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), “depopulation refers to the rapid destruction of a population of animals to respond to urgent circumstances with as much consideration to the welfare of animals as practicable.”⁵³ Depopulation contrasts euthanasia according to the AVMA by sheer urgency of the “circumstance[] [that] may frustrate adherence to the Animal Welfare Principles or humane methods outlined in the AVMA Guidelines for the Euthanasia of animals.”⁵⁴ Whatever happened between the 80 birds and state-workers deployed to exterminate their life to deactivate the potential virus within their bodies undercuts a goal of sanctuaries to provide a good death for residents.

Turning to the second scenario, sanctuaries can be externally threatened by agricultural production facilities by being located in control or prevention zones. Here With Us Farm Sanctuary in Pennsylvania was confined within a control or prevention zone. In a social media post to their followers in the spring of 2022, Here With Us Farm Sanctuary shared with their followers on social media that just 27 miles (or 43.5 km) away from their sanctuary, at least 1.4 million individual laying hens were depopulated because of either a confirmed case or exposure to HPAI.⁵⁵ This meant that their sanctuary was categorized as an *at-risk premise*. In the United States context, this means that there are temporary imposed movement controls and surveillance measures, typically communicated through a letter in the mail or a visit from the appropriate department.

Included in such letters is typically a mandate to follow the “no birds out, no birds in” protocol. *No birds out* translates to the requirement that all birds must be enclosed and quarantined from external ecologies to effectively reduce the transmission routes of avian influenza. Here With Us Sanctuary designed enclosures with canopy roofs effectively quarantining the bird residents from external animals, both other residents and visitors such as wild birds. The *no birds in* prohibits sanctuaries from welcoming new bird residents. Part of why the sanctuary took to social media to share the imposed disease management requirements was because the imposed measures introduced an infrastructural problem on the sanctuary. A central objective of farmed animal sanctuaries is to allow residents to be “as free as possible,” in the words of co-founder of VINE Sanctuary, Miriam Jones.⁵⁶ This means that residents should face very few barriers in deciding where they want to spend time, or who they want to spend their time with. As was put in a Farm Sanctuary blog post, we are seeing the transformation of the favored pond to the “area [...] that poses the greatest risk of infection.”⁵⁷

⁵² USDA. *Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Response: The Red Book*. USDA. 2018.

⁵³ AVMA. *AVMA Guidelines for the Depopulation of Animals: 2019 Edition*. AVMA, 2019.

⁵⁴ AVMA, *Guidelines for the Depopulation of Animals: 2019 Edition*, 4-5.

⁵⁵ Here With Us Farm Sanctuary, “We have a very important DONATION MATCH. Please read below to find out why”. Facebook, April 18, 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/herewithusfarmsanctuary/>.

⁵⁶ Miriam Jones, “Captivity in the context of a sanctuary for formerly farmed animals,” *The ethics of captivity* (2014): 90-101, 91.

⁵⁷ Susie Coston, “What you need to know about Avian Flu,” (*Farm Sanctuary Blog*, 1 May 2015) <<https://blog.farmsanctuary.org/2015/05/what-you-need-to-know-about-avian-influenza/>> accessed 10 December 2022.

Avian influenza and the accompanying unprecedented government-enforced measures significantly impact animal agency and freedom at sanctuaries. Farmed animal sanctuaries attempt to expand freedom for residents by removing obstacles to residents' movement. Sanctuaries do factor in the risks, but tend to prioritize "the benefit[s]" of "a much richer and more stimulating environment for the animals, one that allows them to test and extend their capacities, and to exercise some control about the extent of contact with humans and other animals."⁵⁸ Sanctuaries have been able to navigate risks; however, disease outbreaks that siege agricultural production, accompanied by temporary biosecurity measures circumscribe sanctuaries' abilities to make decisions for their residents. The liberated bird once again becomes a victim of animal agriculture production.

Some sanctuaries have approached biological threats through building in safety mechanisms and protocols; unfortunately, as HPAI and other viruses become endemic, the likelihood that these temporary measures become ordinary operational procedures appears likely. Globally, zoonotic diseases are becoming more of an endemic feature of industrial animal agriculture, prompting research into a universal vaccine to be used in production settings.⁵⁹ The promise of a vaccine "offers a targeted, biological approach that bypasses the ecological, social, and economic conditions of virus emergence and spread," that "decontextualized the virus from its social relations from hosts and habits."⁶⁰ This leaves sanctuaries in a status of dependency and waiting for a 'better future' under a regime less interested in reducing the possibilities of zoonotic viruses, and searching instead for strategies that merely react to the risk. Perhaps the vaccines will arrive and be distributed evenly across farmed animals, both for those in production and those that are living as free as possible. For now, sanctuaries are left in a precarious position where they must first consider if they will respond to ongoing disease threats at all, and secondly, if they do, how will they navigate and preserve the goals of sanctuaries (e.g., freedom, agency) in these new conditions?

The global response to disease threats, as governed by interests to reproduce agricultural production and sustain market access, pose real risks to sanctuaries as they threaten decision-making and redefine the possibilities of sanctuaries. Natalie Porter writes that biosecurity is "less about blocking biological exchanges than it is about promoting 'good' biological exchanges."⁶¹ Underscoring the idea about 'good' biological exchanges is the recognition that human-farmed animal relations are relational, and importantly, risky. However, this elevated risk is due to a particular human-farmed animal relation that is shaped by industrial food systems that produce the conditions for diseases. To live with the risk, agriculturalists introduce biosecurity protocols that enforce the "public health principle of social distancing and applying it across species."⁶² Thus, the primary way to manage risk is to restructure encounters between humans and farmed animals through mechanisms that distance and enclose both actors.

Going forward, we can expect further efforts to "restrict pathogen circulation" by restricting economically unproductive risky relations such as formerly farmed birds

⁵⁸ Donaldson and Kymlicka, "Farmed animal sanctuaries: The heart of the movement," 61.

⁵⁹ Shravan Singh Rathore, Hem Singh Gehlot, Gyan Prakash, and Jayashree S. Nandi, "Epizootic, Endemic and Pandemic Zoonotic Viral Infections," *Journal of Biosciences and Medicines* 10, no. 3 (2022): 90-96.

⁶⁰ Natalie Porter, *Viral economies: bird flu experiments in Vietnam*, (University of Chicago Press, 2019), 65.

⁶¹ Porter, *Viral economies: bird flu experiments in Vietnam*, 36.

⁶² Porter, *Viral economies: bird flu experiments in Vietnam*, 37.

and humans together at a sanctuary.⁶³ Porter's book is primarily concerned with non-commercial subsistence agriculturalists in Vietnam who are seeing their livelihoods foreclosed with the introduction of industrial farming as a national strategy to mitigate zoonotic risk. We can extend this concern to places of sanctuary that are similarly trying to have alternative relations with farmed animals that look very different from those found on a commercial farm. Just as the introduction of commercial farming rests on the promise to secure public health threats from infected poultry in Vietnam, we are starting to see global government-led interventions mandating free-ranging birds be enclosed during outbreaks of avian influenza that are gradually becoming globally endemic. Therefore, we are seeing the proliferation and prioritization of a particular human-farmed animal relation that holds the power to determine that other ways of relating to farmed animals are "bio-insecure" to its production system and must be slowly stamped out.⁶⁴

4 The Climate Crisis

Extreme weather events are more frequent and intense, amplified by the climate crisis, which is itself fueled by extractive and exploitative relations with the earth. The living archive of the Anthropocene is added to each day with a new story of a flood, a drought, a fire, a heat wave and the attendant initial and secondary impacts to human and more-than-human communities. The devastation does not solely come from encountering the elements, but also the failure of material infrastructure, governments, the private-sector, or absence of solidarity from social institutions. The devastation can be aggravated by the disaster response itself (e.g., poor handling of mass mortality can cause secondary environmental issues). It is not that these are random failings or events, but rather the conditions of living in the Anthropocene.⁶⁵ Similar to how zoonotic diseases are responded to, extreme weather event responses are geared towards returning agricultural producers to production as quickly as possible instead of grappling with the nuances of the disaster-event, or building back differently in ways that would meaningfully address the hazards contributing to the vulnerability, such as being located in a flood zone.⁶⁶

4.1 Animal Agriculture as a Driver of the Climate Crisis

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), agriculture is responsible for at least 14.5% of total Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions.⁶⁷ Recent and a more comprehensive analysis has adjusted the 14.5% to 34-35%, and of those emissions, 57% is associated with animal-sourced production.⁶⁸ In

⁶³ Porter, *Viral economies: bird flu experiments in Vietnam*, 37.

⁶⁴ Steve Hinchliffe and Nick Bingham, "Securing life: the emerging practices of biosecurity," *Environment and Planning A* 40, no. 7 (2008): 1534-1551, 1543.

⁶⁵ Danielle Celermajer, *Summertime: Reflections on a Vanishing Future*, (Hamish Hamilton, 2021).

⁶⁶ Sam Rowan, "Extreme weather and climate policy," *Environmental Politics* (2022): 1-24.; Eccles, Stephanie and Stoddard, Lisa, "Troubling the Legal Standing of Farmed Animals During a Disaster," Forthcoming.

⁶⁷ PJ Gerber, Steinfeld H, Henderson B, Mottet A, Opio C, Dijkman J, et al., "Tackling Climate Change through Livestock: A global assessment of emissions and mitigation opportunities," Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; 2013. Available from: <http://www.fao.org/3/i3437e/i3437e.pdf>.

⁶⁸ M. Crippa, E. Solazzo, D. Guizzardi, F. Monforti-Ferrario, F. N. Tubiello, and A. Leip, "Food Systems Are Responsible for a Third of Global Anthropogenic GHG Emissions," *Nature Food* 2, no. 3

terms of total food emissions, animal agriculture is estimated to account for over half of all food-related GHG emissions despite only providing 37% of protein and 18% of calories globally.⁶⁹ Animal agriculture is following a trajectory that will account for 37-49% of the global GHG budget by 2030 if the sector continues ‘business as usual.’⁷⁰ Critical to note is that additionally, animal agriculture is responsible for 44% of total methane (CH₄) emissions, and nitrous oxide (N₂O), another important GHGs. Methane and nitrous oxide are increasingly being discussed in relation to ‘tipping points,’ defined by the IPCC as: “critical thresholds in a system that, when exceeded, can lead to a significant change in the state of the system, often with an understanding that the change is irreversible.”⁷¹

Moving beyond a focus on emission-related activities, animal agriculture is considered the driving force behind the defaunation of our planet, resulting in biodiversity loss, the leading cause for emerging infectious diseases, acidification, eutrophication, and is a chief consumer of natural resources including land and water.⁷² It is estimated that animal agriculture requires just over one-fourth of all habitable land, and the remaining land is fragmented in ways that leave very little space for animals to live.⁷³ As emissions accumulate, resources are depleted and land-use patterns are changed to meet the demands of agricultural production, extreme weather moves into these vulnerable, fragmented, and changing ecosystems.

Not only is the capitalist agricultural food system a primary sector driving the climate crisis, it is simultaneously also a “victim” to the climate crisis.⁷⁴ Ranging from uncertainty surrounding access to water, arable land, and labor resources to the arrival of extreme weather events, agricultural production is a sector that is highly impacted by climate change.⁷⁵ The impacts of the climate crisis on agriculture are thus of grave concern according to the FAO.⁷⁶ Extreme weather events are most often discussed as massive economic catastrophes, but underneath discussions of economic losses are grave social and ecological impacts, including the death of millions of farmed animals annually from immediate or secondary impacts. Photojournalists such as those working at WeAnimals have been instrumental in helping the public “look beyond the numbers” and see what the losses of millions of farmed animals in concentrated areas

(2021): 198–209.; Xiaoming Xu, Prateek Sharma, Shijie Shu, Tzu-Shun Lin, Philippe Ciais, Francesco N. Tubiello, Pete Smith, Nelson Campbell, and Atul K. Jain, "Global greenhouse gas emissions from animal-based foods are twice those of plant-based foods," *Nature Food* 2, no. 9 (2021): 724-732.

⁶⁹ Joseph Poore and Thomas Nemecek, "Reducing food's environmental impacts through producers and consumers," *Science* 360, no. 6392 (2018): 987-992.

⁷⁰ Helen Harwatt, "Including animal to plant protein shifts in climate change mitigation policy: a proposed three-step strategy," *Climate Policy* 19, no. 5 (2019): 533-541.

⁷¹ Ove Hoegh-Guldberg, Daniela Jacob, M. Bindi, S. Brown, I. Camilloni, A. Diedhiou, R. Djalante et al., "Impacts of 1.5 C global warming on natural and human systems," *Global warming of 1.5° C*. (2018).

⁷² Poore, and Nemecek, "Reducing food's environmental impacts through producers and consumers."; Michael B. Eisen and Patrick O. Brown, "Rapid global phaseout of animal agriculture has the potential to stabilize greenhouse gas levels for 30 years and offset 68 percent of CO₂ emissions this century," *PLoS Climate* 1, no. 2 (2022): e0000010.

⁷³ Ritchie, Hannah and Roser, Max, 'Land Use,' (Our World in Data, 2019 September) <<https://ourworldindata.org/land-use>> accessed 10 December 2022.

⁷⁴ Johan Rockström, Ottmar Edenhofer, Juliana Gaertner, and Fabrice DeClerck, "Planet-proofing the global food system," *Nature Food* 1, no. 1 (2020): 3-5.

⁷⁵ Xiao Zhang and Ximing Cai, "Climate change impacts on global agricultural land availability," *Environmental Research Letters* 6, no. 1 (2011): 014014.

⁷⁶ FAO. 2021. *The impact of disasters and crises on agriculture and food security: 2021*. Rome.

mean socially and ecologically.⁷⁷ James Sawyer and Gerardo Huertas write, “[t]he silent disaster that unfolds in the backdrop to the human story is one that is often unseen by those who have the power to make a difference.”⁷⁸ Photojournalists work to capture and make public knowledge of the “silent disasters,” resist the erasure of individual animals’ lives referred to in the media as “lost inventory,” while simultaneously assigning responsibility to those that have the power to reduce the vulnerability of these animals in the first place.⁷⁹

This paper does not intend to tell the stories of those farmed animals who remain captive in the capitalist agri-food system; rather, we talk about more expanded and emancipatory experiences of farmed animals past the farm gate in the peripheries of areas zoned for agriculture.⁸⁰ We will explore the immediate impacts experienced by sanctuaries during extreme weather events (the quick violence) and some of the secondary impacts (the slow violence, or undoing), including having to reimagine what solidarity looks like between the sanctuary movement and farmed animals seeking refuge during the climate crisis.

4.2 Sanctuaries and the Climate Crisis: The Quick Violence

As sanctuaries are predominantly found in agricultural zones, and agricultural zoning areas are more often than not built-in vulnerable geographies such as flood plains, this indexes a major hazard for sanctuaries. Looking back to the 2019 Australian bushfires, Danielle Celermajer writes that despite having the most informed and thought-out contingency plans, including having consulted local disaster authorities, the wildfires managed to ravage her sanctuary. Not only did the wildfires leave her sanctuary unrecognizable, but they transformed how she conceptualized the possibilities for freedom and safety at farmed animal sanctuaries in the Anthropocene.

In *Summertime: Reflections on a Vanishing Future*, Celermajer opens with the moving story of Jimmy and Katy, two rescued pigs who were transformed by the 2019 Australian bushfires.⁸¹ Of the over one billion animals that were said to have died during the wildfires, Celermajer tells the story of one of those casualties.⁸² Katy was engulfed and killed by the flames, and Jimmy was engulfed in grief and trauma from being surrounded by the same flames that claimed his companion Katy’s life. In preparing for the fires, Celermajer and her partner evacuated many of the sanctuary residents, relocating them to temporary places of refuge - this time from the elements of the extreme weather. Despite this effort, there is no guarantee of safety, as she writes “the very idea of being safe...is one of the main casualties of the climate catastrophe.”⁸³

Celermajer directs readers’ attention to the challenges of operationalizing temporary capture and relocation for sanctuary residents during extreme weather events. She states that not only were they lacking access to disaster equipment such as

⁷⁷ Barbara, J. King, “As Florence kills pigs and millions of chickens, we must ‘open our hearts,’” (NPR, 24 September, 2018) <<https://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2018/09/24/650437498/opinion-as-florence-kills-pigs-and-millions-of-chickens-we-must-open-our-hearts>> accessed 10 December 2022.

⁷⁸ James Sawyer and Gerardo Huertas. *Animal management and welfare in natural disasters*. Routledge, 2018, 2.

⁷⁹ King, ‘As Florence kills pigs and millions of chickens, we must ‘open our hearts’.

⁸⁰ Emmerman, Karen S. "Sanctuary, not remedy." *The ethics of captivity* (2014): 213-230.

⁸¹ Celermajer, *Summertime: Reflections on a Vanishing Future*.

⁸² The University of Sydney, ‘More than one billion animals killed in Australian bushfires’ (*The University of Sydney*, 8 January 2020) <<https://www.sydney.edu.au/news-opinion/news/2020/01/08/australian-bushfires-more-than-one-billion-animals-impacted.html>> accessed 10 December 2022.

⁸³ Celermajer, *Summertime: Reflections on a Vanishing Future*, 179.

hauling trucks to relocate animal residents, but being a sanctuary, they struggled to recapture residents. At sanctuaries, human caregivers relate and approach residents in ways that enable animal agency, including the ability to evade capture. By not training the animal residents at the sanctuary, they are allowed to “move across the land according to their own rhythms, respecting their approach to approach or withdraw.”⁸⁴ Sanctuaries aim to promote rather than discourage animal agency, unlike in agricultural production; however, this relationality can become an obstacle during disaster events.⁸⁵ During the bushfires, Celermajer’s efforts to recapture the resistant donkeys resulted in what she describes as their loss of trust in her, a type of situation that compels us to “rethink freedom” in spaces of sanctuary.⁸⁶

Celermajer’s text offers both general readers and the sanctuary movement a brutally honest, and at times uncomfortable chronicle of what one sanctuary experienced when the fires swept across the land, consistent with an expanding literature dedicated to archiving and documenting the experiences of animals and disasters.⁸⁷ As sanctuaries face extreme weather events, caregivers are forced to grapple with mitigating and responding to death, largely dictated by a lack of resources and the unpredictability of extreme weather events, which also force sanctuaries to grapple with issues surrounding the intake of animals and solidarity with animal victims and survivors during these disasters.

4.3 Intake

At its core, farmed animal sanctuaries are spaces where life-long care and protection is provided to previously farmed animals in a permanent “physical refuge.”⁸⁸ Farmed animal sanctuaries vary in whom they provide refuge to, but most often sanctuaries tend to be multispecies in that there are a range of species-representation across residents. This tends to be strategic in that sanctuaries want to have farmed animal species as ambassadors to advance their public educational component.⁸⁹ An obvious, but underappreciated limitation of a sanctuary is that they can only provide forever-homes to an “infinitesimally tiny percentage of the billions of animals raised and killed annually.”⁹⁰ Due to limitations in capacities, sanctuaries tend to negotiate intake. This can look like responding to requests from legal owners who want to ‘donate’ or ‘retire’ farmed animals that have pulled on their heartstrings. Or, it can look like conversations with animal liberators who are planning an open or clandestine rescue. By controlling intake this way, sanctuaries can match their capacity and resources for care with how many residents live at the sanctuary.

However, sanctuaries can also become populated through animal-directed liberation, such as when animals escape slaughterhouses, or free each other.⁹¹ Before farm sanctuaries, animals liberated through animal-directed liberation were rarely able to experience their new-found freedom permanently. Rather, their property

⁸⁴ Celermajer, *Summertime: Reflections on a Vanishing Future*, 31.

⁸⁵ Charlotte E. Blattner, Sue Donaldson, and Ryan Wilcox, “Animal agency in community,” *Politics and Animals*, 6 (2020): 1-22.

⁸⁶ Celermajer, *Summertime: Reflections on a Vanishing Future*, 7.

⁸⁷ Leslie Irvine, *Filling the Ark Animal Welfare in Disasters*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2009).; Annie Potts and Donelle Gadenne, *Animals in emergencies: learning from the Christchurch earthquakes*, (Canterbury University Press, 2014).

⁸⁸ Donaldson and Kymlicka, “Farmed animal sanctuaries: The heart of the movement,” 51.

⁸⁹ Donaldson, and Kymlicka, “Farmed animal sanctuaries: The heart of the movement.”

⁹⁰ Donaldson, and Kymlicka, “Farmed animal sanctuaries: The heart of the movement,” 52.

⁹¹ Sarat Colling, *Animal resistance in the global capitalist era*, (MSU Press, 2020).

status would be reinscribed when authorities force the escapees back into production or kill them on-the spot upon recapture. However, dating back to 1986 with the opening of Farm Sanctuary in Watkins Glen, New York, sanctuaries have been serving as interlocutors in renegotiating animals' fate with owners and authorities in instances of animal-directed liberation.⁹²

Another ever-increasing route of liberation is during extreme weather events when animals are released intentionally by the producers, are flushed out of barns, or liberate themselves.⁹³ Important to be cognizant is that not all farmed animals are equally releasable, flushable, or possess the same degree of agency during extreme weather events. For instance, animals such as dairy cows that remain tethered or chained by their necks to a metal rod, or caged like sows in gestation crates, have little to no chance of exercising agency for escape.⁹⁴ Opening a pen full of free-range animals is easier than individually releasing animals. Being aware of the differential vulnerabilities animals face is important as it directly shapes who will find themselves on the outside of the agricultural production facility.

4.4 Acting in Solidarity to Farmed Animals during Extreme Weather Events

During extreme weather events that impact agricultural regions, the media becomes saturated by reports of farmed animals who died or were re-captured through valiant efforts of agricultural-embedded rescue workers.⁹⁵ These stories are elevated for two primary reasons: (1) to publicly communicate what rescue efforts were made to mitigate animal welfare issues and; (2) to solicit public acceptance for publicly subsidized government disaster relief. Within this framing, farmed animals are presented as either dying from the extreme weather event or are re-captured (or "rescued") to re-enter agricultural production.⁹⁶

However, there remains a third possibility that does not get broadcast as it threatens the first framing. This alternative captures the stories of farmed animals leaving the logic of production entirely.⁹⁷ Farmed animals can leave production through either being captured and introduced to a farmed animal sanctuary through this emerging intake pathway or they can defy capture all together and join feral communities.⁹⁸

⁹² Colling, *Animal resistance in the global capitalist era*.

⁹³ However, this is becoming increasingly rare because producers/farmers are instructed not to because of the risk of introducing secondary disasters (e.g., domesticated hogs joining feral hog populations), or because disaster relief including insurance de-incentivizes animal release.

⁹⁴ Elisabeth A. Stoddard and Alida Cantor, "A relational network vulnerability assessment of the North Carolina Hog Industry," *Annals of the American Association of Geographers* 107, no. 3 (2017): 682-699.

⁹⁵ Danielle Every, Clemence Due, Kirrilly Thompson, and Jillian Ryan, "Conflicting perspectives on nonhuman animal rescues in natural disasters," *Society & Animals* 24, no. 4 (2016): 358-382.

⁹⁶ Stories of reunification portray a false narrative. Farmed animals re-captured are more likely to be euthanized due to exposure to toxic floodwaters, or flames deeming them contaminated or decreasing their productivity. For example, during the Australian bushfires burnt livestock were euthanized (see Brendan David Cowled, Melanie Bannister-Tyrrell, Mark Doyle, Henry Clutterbuck, Jeff Cave, Alison Hillman, Karren M. Plain, Caitlin Nicole Pfeiffer, Michael Laurence, and Michael Ward, "The Australian 2019/2020 black summer bushfires: analysis of the pathology, treatment strategies and decision making about burnt livestock," *Frontiers in veterinary science* (2022): 83.

⁹⁷ Eccles and Stoddard, "Troubling the Legal Standing of Farmed Animals During a Disaster".

⁹⁸ Colling, *Animal resistance in the global capitalist era*.

These particular stories of farmed animals' route to sanctuary are controversial because they directly challenge ideas about farmed animals' subjectivity. Farmed animals are typically presented as "limited beings whose lives unfold according to fixed genetic or species-specific scripts," casting them as dependent on human care and infrastructure.⁹⁹ However, stories that circulate following a disaster event showcase how farmed animals' can adapt to novel environments, such as domestic pigs becoming rewilded by joining feral communities. Having stories populate the media that document farmed animals acting both individually and collectively to navigate and survive novel environments outside of the controlled and confinement agricultural facilities reveals their subjectivity and shows what agency can look like unrestrained.

These counter-narratives can cultivate public sympathy by directly confronting the public about the "dysfunction in our legally constructed relationships with animals" that made them vulnerable in the first place, and what legal and economic incentives led to a lack of rescue interventions.¹⁰⁰ The threat that animal agriculture industries sense in such stories regarding the post-production lives of animals is that it enables "a statistic to [become] an individual in the view of the public."¹⁰¹ Animals that are re-captured and introduced into sanctuary spaces generate powerful stories that challenge our institutionalized relations with farmed animals, and shed light not just on post- but also pre-disaster lives.

Crucial to these rescue stories and counter-narratives is the presence of humans mobilizing and acting in solidarity with farmed animals during a disaster event. In some circles, these individuals would be called animal rights, or liberation advocates, whereas in more institutional spaces they are recognized as "spontaneous uninvited volunteers" (SUVs).¹⁰² What makes SUVs "uninvited" according to disaster management literature is that they can cause "harm" to themselves (e.g., exposing themselves to dangerous situations), animals (e.g., improper handling), and agricultural communities (e.g., disaster rustling).¹⁰³

Mitigating the third harm is ranked as the most important because following an agricultural disaster, the most important goal is to return producers to production as fast as possible. Meeting this objective can be delayed if counter-documentation of the disaster circulates in the media engendering questions from the public about production in general, leading to criticisms of the systems that produce the vulnerability in the first place.¹⁰⁴ This becomes a public relations nightmare for the agricultural community, corporations, and the different levels of government involved. In addition to efforts to control the framing of the disaster that reveal the vulnerability of farmed animals as created by production systems, SUVs challenge the definition of

⁹⁹ Blattner et al., "Animal agency in community," 1.

¹⁰⁰ Ashleigh P.A. Best, "Material vulnerabilities and interspecies relationalities: a critical appraisal of the legal status of animals in disasters," *Griffith Law Review* 31, no. 2 (2022): 287-311, 288. During disaster events, even if contracted-farmers want to attempt at rescue-efforts they can face directives from insurance, or the companies who own the animals to keep the barn door closed as it is considered more cost-effective, and environmentally friendly, disregarding the sentience of these animals.

¹⁰¹ Best, "Material vulnerabilities and interspecies relationalities: a critical appraisal of the legal status of animals in disasters."

¹⁰² Dick Green, *Animals in disasters*, (Butterworth-Heinemann, 2019), 108.

¹⁰³ Steve Glassey, "Do no harm: A challenging conversation about how we prepare and respond to animal disasters," *Australian Journal of Emergency Management* 36, no. 3 (2021): 44-48.; Steve Glassey, "Animal Welfare and Disasters," In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*, (2020), n.p.

¹⁰⁴ Irvine, *Filling the ark: animal welfare in disasters*.

rescue during disasters by offering an alternative to rescuing and returning farmed animals to production.

Following the 2008 Iowa floods, Farm Sanctuary, alongside other animal rescue organizations mobilized and deployed teams of rescue-workers to embark on “one of the most ambitious farm animal rescue efforts ever undertaken.”¹⁰⁵ Together, the rescue teams were able to re-capture 69 pigs, several of whom were pregnant. Between these rescues, the teams were also having to make difficult decisions to euthanize survivors who were “beyond aid.” Susie Coston, the National Shelter Director of Farm Sanctuary at the time commented that, “without the floods they wouldn’t be here, which is kind of creep and scary that that kind of tragedy could actually make their lives better.” During the 2008 rescue, Farm Sanctuary and the other organizations were seen as less ‘uninvited,’ and more welcomed because they were able to contribute to the disaster response during an animal welfare disaster. However, over the past decade, with more frequent extreme weather events, and the industry and government working in tandem to control the narrative of what happens before, during, and after an agricultural disaster, rescue-workers such as those that came with Farm Sanctuary are categorized as SUVs and actively de-mobilized on the ground through police blockades or through fear of being subject to various ag-gag laws.

Despite the obstacles that have been erected for the sanctuary movement to respond to disaster events, SUVs still show up because they know with medical intervention tending to both pre- and post-disaster health issues, chickens, turkeys, cows, and pigs can find their way to sanctuary and thrive.

One recent example took place in North Carolina, one of the top-ranked agricultural-producing states in the United States. North Carolina captured the media’s attention during Hurricane Florence in 2018 as millions of farmed animals who were once contained in industrial-scaled facilities were now floating dead or nearly-dead in the contaminated floodwaters. Almost two decades earlier in 1999, the media reported a remarkably similar situation following Hurricane Floyd, where the public demanded government and industry to develop disaster management plans for farmed animals after seeing how animals were institutionally abandoned. Despite almost two decades of developing disaster management for farmed animals, reviewing the coverage following Florence in 2018, it was almost a copy-paste animal welfare crisis of what happened in 1999.

What differs between Hurricane Floyd and Florence is who responded to rescue, what rescue efforts looked like on the ground, and how this information was circulated. Following Florence, international media presented an entirely different response to farmed animals in disasters. Within the stories that emerged post-Florence are courageous accounts of SUVs or specifically people involved in the sanctuary movement who were able to show up, document, intervene and extend refuge to nearly a thousand farmed animals that had been released by anthropogenic or other means.¹⁰⁶

Flo, a pig whose lungs were filled with water after surviving Hurricane Florence, was found on Josh Wall’s property. Instead of calling the authorities, Wall contacted Ziggy’s Rescue Farm Sanctuary. Flo was later joined by pigs Jox, Champ, and Barney,

¹⁰⁵ Farm Sanctuary, ‘Midwest flood rescue: Ambitious operation saves 69 pigs,’ (*Farm Sanctuary*, 9 September 2008) <<https://www.farmsanctuary.org/news-stories/midwest-flood-rescue-ambitious-operation-saves-69-pigs/>> accessed 10 December 2022.

¹⁰⁶ Stephanie Eccles and Stoddard, Lisa, “Hurricane Florence’s impact: Policies on animals living in confined animal feeding operations in Eastern North Carolina,” *World Animal Protection Report*, 2021.

whose experiences were told in the short documentary called Hurricane Hero's produced by Mercy for Animals.¹⁰⁷ There was Red, a cow, rescued by Skylands Animal Sanctuary and Rescue, who upon arrival at the sanctuary, met Hurricane Harvey survivor, Babe and have since been bonded.¹⁰⁸ There were at least 75 broiler chickens rescued by Sweet Bear Rescue.¹⁰⁹ There was the heartbreaking story shared by WeAnimals of the almost rescue of ten-pigs.¹¹⁰ And then there was Erika Lovato, living in Jacksonville, North Carolina whose rental property became a "physical space of (limited) protection" for pigs who were fleeing production floodwaters, and residents who saw the pigs as target practice.¹¹¹ In an attempt to provide temporary refuge for these pigs, Lovato built a temporary structure in her backyard for the over 43 pigs that she rescued, and eventually relocated most of them to other sanctuaries in the months following Hurricane Florence. Shortly after, Lovato and her family purchased property in the middle of 'hog county,' a place where pigs outnumber humans 30:1, opening Out of the Woods, a homage to the survivors, and eventually renaming the site to Sisu Refuge, a multispecies sanctuary whose origin story is traced to the Hurricane Florence survivors.

These examples come from one extreme weather disaster, but they represent an emerging route for farmed animals to resist, escape, defy capture or seek refuge in sanctuaries, putting new demands on the sanctuary movement.¹¹² As farmed animals are flooded out, released, or escape confinement during extreme weather events, an emerging and perhaps higher than manageable demand of internally displaced "seekers" are looking for refuge.¹¹³ We want to emphasize this challenge in our article because we see a lack of attention and engagement on this significant problem the sanctuary movement will increasingly face. In the following section, we will look at how extreme weather events are prompts to rethink what solidarity means, this time in instances where refuge is denied.

4.5 Rethinking Solidarity at a Sanctuary During Extreme Weather Events

Within the disaster literature, disasters are said to be "focusing events" in that they bring to the fore key lessons about how to build back better, such as by highlighting what makes animals vulnerable in the first place and what is to be done to address identified hazards.¹¹⁴ As extreme weather events increase in their frequency and

¹⁰⁷ Mercy for Animals, "Hurricane Heros," November 18, 2018, YouTube, 10:10, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JroUIFqyKNE>.

¹⁰⁸ Elizabeth Claire Alberts, 'Pig Who Swam for his Life During Hurricane Florence Shows up in a guy's yard--and changes his life' (*The Dodo*, 2018, 21) <<https://www.thedodo.com/on-the-farm/farm-pig-rescued-hurricaneflorence>> accessed 10 December 2022.

¹⁰⁹ Ashley Capps, 'Meet Farmed Animals Rescued from Florence Floods' (*A Well-Fed World*, 2018) <<https://awellfedworld.org/issues/florence-survivors/>> accessed 10 December 2022.

¹¹⁰ Guerin, Kelly, 'Documenting the aftermath for animals of Hurricane Florence' (*WeAnimals*, 13 September 2018) <<https://weanimalsmedia.org/2018/10/13/hurricane-florence/>> accessed 10 December 2022.

¹¹¹ Sisu Refuge, 'Starting the sanctuary' (*Sisu Refuge*, 2018) <<https://sisurefuge.org/starting-the-sanctuary/>> accessed 10 December 2022.; Abrell, Elan. "Sanctuary-making as rural political action." *Journal for the Anthropology of North America* 22, no. 2 (2019): 109-111, 109.

¹¹² Colling, *Animal resistance in the global capitalist era*.

¹¹³ Pachirat, "Sanctuary," 338.

¹¹⁴ Greg Bankoff, "Learning about disasters from animals," In *Learning and Calamities*, (Routledge, 2014), pp. 62-75, 63.; James Sawyer and Gerardo Huertas, *Animal management and welfare in natural disasters*, (Routledge, 2018).

intensity, the limitations of the sanctuary's capacities to provide refuge will be brought into sharp relief, becoming a key question for the sanctuary movement. Abrell writes, "just as resources and space are limited within sanctuaries, sanctuaries as a collective resource for rescuing animals are even more limited."¹¹⁵ Sharing this view, Leslie Irvine argues that "the 'solution' to disasters involving farmed animals does not involve rescuing as many as possible, although some rescue will occasionally have to take place....It involves curtailing and eventually ending the perverse industrial farming practices that make animals so vulnerable."¹¹⁶ Acknowledging the extraordinary position the sanctuary movement is in when it comes to providing refuge to farmed animals during the climate crisis, we turn to recent examples highlighting some decisions sanctuaries are forced to make, which necessitate a rethinking of what it means to be in solidarity with farmed animals, or recognition of the limitations of solidarity during climate crisis catastrophes.

Identified earlier in this article is the problem of the sanctuary's dependence on agricultural supply-chains. During the 2021 Abbotsford floods in British Columbia that claimed the lives of over 600,000 farmed animals, which occurred simultaneously during outbreaks of HPAI, the handful of sanctuaries in the area were not able to meet the demand and intake farmed animals who were released, flushed out, or escaped. The sanctuaries in the surrounding region could not intake birds because of the "no birds in, no birds out" policy. Not only this, but the sanctuaries were facing supply-chain issues due to the floodwaters, damaged infrastructure, and exceptional demands on an already constrained supply-chain of critical farmed animal supplies including hay, woodchips, and feed. The scarce resources that were available were redirected according to a triage system of agricultural production needs. The sanctuaries in the region reliant on the same supply-chains were prevented from accessing critical farmed animal supplies due to both shortages and inflation. Happy Herd Farm Sanctuary reported that the prices of hay jumped from \$5 per bale to as much as \$25 per bale, and unlike the agricultural producers, they were not able to access disaster relief that would subsidize post-disaster costs (e.g., the Livestock Relocation Policy). With these challenges that are certain to occur more frequently, the four sanctuaries in British Columbia made the difficult decision to stop intake because "with the future so uncertain, they dare not overburden themselves."¹¹⁷ As a result, there were farmed animal escapees who were not given refuge because of the sanctuaries' self-imposed limitations.

Extreme weather events, despite all of the destruction and death, represent an emerging route to freedom for farmed animals as highlighted in the case of the Iowa floods and Hurricane Florence. The question remains how humans committed to animal liberation, or the SUVs, "strategically mobilize" to respond to this crisis?¹¹⁸ How can sanctuaries respond to the growing demand on them to provide refuge for the animals who are both climate crisis survivors and animal industrial complex escapees? How might these challenges change our conceptualization of sanctuaries? And of course, how will existing sanctuaries prepare and respond to the extreme weather events when they arrive? Sanctuaries will continue to face the day-to-day challenges that come with the already substantial tasks of caring for previously farmed

¹¹⁵ Abrell, *Saving animals: Multispecies ecologies of rescue and care*, 191.

¹¹⁶ Irvine, *Filling the ark: animal welfare in disasters*, 54.

¹¹⁷ Nicholas Read, "How 2021's climate catastrophes are still hurting B.C. farm animal sanctuaries," (*Vancouver Sun*, 6 April 2022) <<https://vancouver.sun.com/news/local-news/how-2021s-climate-catastrophes-are-still-hurting-b-c-farm-animal-sanctuaries>> accessed 10 December 2022.

¹¹⁸ Colling, *Animal resistance in the global capitalist era*, 126.

animals, and the extraordinary challenges will become ‘extra-ordinary,’ bringing to the fore exponential levels of difficulties to these multispecies worldbuilding projects.¹¹⁹

5 Conclusion: Towards Multispecies Justice and Institutional Change Beyond the Sanctuary-Gate

In previous sections, we have argued that the domination of animals under a biopolitical human sovereignty is the foundation from which inescapable crises arise. These crises include zoonotic diseases and extreme weather events, which sanctuaries can never fully shield themselves from. While the examples we highlighted demonstrate numerous ways sanctuaries have responded to these disasters to the best of their capacities, whether through various rescue efforts, quarantine protocols, temporary relocations, and adjusting animal intake numbers, the examples also expose the severe limitations of these reactive measures. In light of our analysis, we agree with Jeff Sebo’s argument that “we need to reduce our use of animals as part of our pandemic and climate change mitigation efforts” as we “increase our support for animals as part of our pandemic and climate change adaptation efforts.”¹²⁰ However, institutional changes and transformations at the level of industrial production are necessary in order to effectively enact and achieve the aims of these mitigation and adaptation efforts. Furthermore, given that the animal advocacy movement broadly construed is much smaller relative to other social and ecological justice movements, both in terms of membership and resources, and that single-issue advocacy messaging tends not to resonate as widely with the broader public or particular movements and communities experiencing similar concerns, we propose multispecies justice as a guiding framework for how animal sanctuaries and the animal advocacy movement generally might proceed.

As an emerging field of study and a theoretical approach, multispecies justice expands our conception of which entities, both living and nonliving, fall within our moral, ethical, and political considerability, and qualify as subjects of justice. Some scholars who have mapped out the research terrain and theoretical traditions trace the development of multispecies justice to decolonial and anticolonial theories, Indigenous philosophies, posthumanism, political ecology and environmental justice, as well as animal rights.¹²¹ As such, multispecies justice holistically recognizes that violent institutions and destructive forces in the world often harmfully impact a large number of different species at once, while attempting to theorize strategies that could respond to these harms. Under this framework disasters are not seen as “a natural disaster or tragedy, but injustice.”¹²² Below, we go over some existing examples of approaches to animal sanctuary work that we believe either already embody the values

¹¹⁹ Gretchen Sneegas, "Producing (extra) ordinary death on the farm: unruly encounters and contaminated calves," *Social & Cultural Geography* 23, no. 1 (2022): 63-82.

¹²⁰ Jeff Sebo, *Saving Animals, Saving Ourselves: Why Animals Matter for Pandemics, Climate Change, and Other Catastrophes*, (Oxford University Press, 2022), 197.

¹²¹ Danielle Celermajer, David Schlosberg, Lauren Rickards, Makere Stewart-Harawira, Mathias Thaler, Petra Tschakert, Blanche Verlie, and Christine Winter. "Multispecies Justice: Theories, Challenges, and a Research Agenda for Environmental Politics." *Environmental Politics* 30, no. 1-2 (2021): 119-40.; Petra Tschakert, David Schlosberg, Danielle Celermajer, Lauren Rickards, Christine Winter, Mathias Thaler, Makere Stewart-Harawira, and Blanche Verlie. "Multispecies justice: Climate-just futures with, for and beyond humans." *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change* 12, no. 2 (2021): e699.

¹²² Celermajer, Schlosberg, Rickards, Stewart-Harawira, Thaler, Tschakert, Verlie, and Winter, "Multispecies Justice: Theories, Challenges, and a Research Agenda for Environmental Politics," 120.

of multispecies justice or are moving towards that end to correct the larger systems, such as capitalist industrial animal agriculture that generate the injustices identified in this article.

In 2022, several farmed animal sanctuaries in the United States hosted events that exemplify how sanctuaries could embrace more critical and holistic approaches to their work. “The Reimagining Sanctuary Conference,” co-hosted by VINE Sanctuary, Indraloka Animal Sanctuary, and the Global Coalition of Farm Sanctuaries invited members of farmed animal sanctuaries from around the world to participate in reflecting on four main topics: (1) ethical conduct for farmed animal sanctuaries towards their own human and nonhuman members, (2) how to build supportive communities, (3) intersectionality with other social and ecological justice movements, and (4) reimagining what animal sanctuaries could do and be.¹²³ The discussions encouraged and empowered members of the farmed animal sanctuary movement, whether founders, staff, volunteers, or supporters, to think beyond the traditional educational and animal rescue and rehabilitation work that sanctuaries conduct, to work towards building a stronger network together, form connections with communities beyond the movement, and engage with other anti-oppression struggles.

Similarly, the 2022 Rancher Advocacy Program (RAP) Summit co-hosted by Renee King-Sonen, founder of Rowdy Girl Sanctuary and RAP, was entitled “Evolving Beyond Animal Ag.”¹²⁴ Featured speakers at the summit included farmers who have been transitioning away from animal farming to mushroom farming, and Connie Spence, founder of Agriculture Fairness Alliance, an organization aimed at lobbying federal legislators to shift the food system towards a plant-based economy, as well as Eloisa Trinidad, the Executive Director of Chilis on Wheels, focusing on “making veganism accessible to communities in need through food relief, policy, education, and mentorship.”¹²⁵ Such efforts are aligned with the political messaging of the need for a “just transition in agriculture” that considers the importance of labor issues in these transitions.¹²⁶ By offering a platform to such speakers, Rowdy Girl Sanctuary and King-Sonen demonstrate how sanctuaries could be engaged in more expansive advocacy efforts targeting transformations at institutional scales. RAP is a dedicated program operated through the support of Rowdy Girl Sanctuary, which seeks to help ranchers transition to a range of alternatives, such as sanctuary, plant-based farm, renewable energy farm, veganic agriculture, and rewilding scenarios, among other possibilities.¹²⁷ And given that the creation of Rowdy Girl Sanctuary is itself a ranch-to-sanctuary story, such transformative ideals are embodied throughout their work.¹²⁸

Similarly, joining in the trend of re-imagining and working to transform our food system, sanctuaries are putting forward alternative food systems operated within the traditional sanctuary space. Sweet Farm Sanctuary is self-described as the “first

¹²³ VINE Sanctuary, “Reimagining Sanctuary Conference,” (*Vine Sanctuary*, 2022) <<https://vinesanctuary.org/2022conference>> accessed 10 December 2022.

¹²⁴ Rancher Advocacy Program, “RAP Summit 2022: Evolving Beyond Animal Ag,” (*Rancher Advocacy*, 2020) <<https://rancheradvocacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/RAP-Summit-Program-July-2022.pdf>> accessed 10 December 2022.

¹²⁵ Rancher Advocacy Program, “RAP Summit 2022: Evolving Beyond Animal Ag.”

¹²⁶ Charlotte E. Blattner, “Just transition for agriculture? A critical step in tackling climate change,” *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development* 9, no. 3 (2020): 53-58, 54.

¹²⁷ Rancher Advocacy Program, “Transitional Models,” (*Rancher Advocacy*, n.d.) <<https://rancheradvocacy.org/transition-models/>> accessed 10 December 2022.

¹²⁸ Rowdy Girl Sanctuary, “The Rowdy Girl Story,” (*Rancher Advocacy*, n.d.) <<https://rowdygirlsanctuary.org/rowdygirl-story/>> accessed 10 December 2022.

non-profit sanctuary to address global climate change impacts of factory farming.”¹²⁹ Founded by Nate Salpeter, a nuclear and climate technology engineer, the sanctuary objectives leverage his expertise and connections to operate what he calls the first “climate sanctuary.”¹³⁰ Sweet Farm Sanctuary tackles the injustices of industrial animal agriculture by working in multiple areas including climate education, regenerative agriculture, farmed animal rescue, and supporting innovation and technology that can disrupt the current food system through providing an incubation hub to start-ups and produce alternative, viable systems. Sweet Farm Sanctuary’s ambitious efforts and commitments to seeking justice through technological innovation of the food system are motivated by reconciling with the fact that research has demonstrated 84% of individuals who adopt a plant-based diet do so only temporarily. Sweet Farm Sanctuary’s support of cellular agriculture broaches a tension between sanctuaries’ “opposition to animal exploitation and commodification” as cellular-based agriculture requires “donor animals,” at least for now.¹³¹ Perhaps, sanctuaries like Sweet Farm Sanctuary will develop into the temporary food production model proposed by Jan Dutkiewicz and Elan Abrell, who envision cell donor animals living in sanctuary spaces.

Other sanctuaries such as Sho Farm and Sanctuary in western Vermont are taking a less technologically innovative approach to re-imagining and building alternative models of food systems. By operating around the natural, routine behaviors of sanctuary residents (mostly ducks) and enlisting them as “farm partners” who tend to pests, and fertilize the grounds, Sho Farm and Sanctuary is at the front lines of a burgeoning veganic food production method that puts just, respectful, and mutually beneficial multispecies collaborations into practice.¹³²

This paper is an attempt to bring to the forefront a category of animals called sanctuary residents, distinct in that they are surrounded both discursively and materially by commitments to protection, to see that they grow old in what are called farmed animal sanctuaries. We consider how sanctuary residents and the broader ethical and political projects they are a part of are being slowly, and at times rapidly, foreclosed by the conditions of the Anthropocene, and specifically by the institutions that respond and manage disasters. The conditions of the Anthropocene, such as the biological and ecological disasters we have focused on, could be traced to the animal industrial complex, upheld, and sustained by the reproduction of human sovereignty. By examining how human sovereignty remains buttressed by legal and economic systems through examples of sanctuaries experiencing biological and ecological disasters, we draw attention to how the sanctuary movement and its larger political projects are threatened.

By bringing these unfolding crises into conversation with multispecies justice, we consider the necessity for sanctuaries to take up the labor and responsibility of participating in broader struggles for institutional change. Through a multispecies

¹²⁹ Sweet Farm, “Creating a new kind of sanctuary,” (*Sweet Farm*, n.d.) <<https://www.sweetfarm.org/>> accessed 10 December 2022.

¹³⁰ Spark and Foster Films, “James Stewart and Nate Salpeter at Cultured Meat Symposium 2021,” YouTube, December 28, 2012 <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wZuy9uEnBoY>> accessed 10 December 2022.

¹³¹ Jan Dutkiewicz and Elan Abrell, “Sanctuary to Table Dining: Cellular Agriculture and the Ethics of Cell Donor Animals,” *Politics and Animals* 7 (2020): 1-15.

¹³² Jessica Scott-Reid, “Are sanctuary farms a solution to our broken food system?” (*Planet Friendly News*, 2 March 2022) <https://www.planetfriendlynews.com/blog/are-sanctuary-farms-a-solution-to-our-broken-food-system?fbclid=IwARozXnv4U5A8gAwkaBG5Q2oM1VAyDW71sjkksiDIVgEHDNfd1QMaOq_edXo> accessed 10 December 2022. See: <https://www.sanctuaryatsho.org/>

justice framework, we suggest that disaster events represent key opportunities for sanctuaries to look beyond the sanctuary-gate and engage with the political project of ending animal production at all scales to ensure a safer future for humans and more-than-human alike.