

# DIRECT ACTION *DA* EVERYWHERE

Contact: Cassie King, [cassie@directactioneverywhere.com](mailto:cassie@directactioneverywhere.com), 760.707.8084

## Activists Lay 333 Flowers at Farmer John Slaughterhouse, One for Each Infected Worker

*Activists with Direct Action Everywhere are calling for a statewide moratorium on factory farms and slaughterhouses, citing animal and worker abuse*

[\(PHOTO/VIDEO\)](#)



*Workers entering Farmer John slaughterhouse cross a line of flowers placed by activists.*

*December 11, Vernon, CA* – As seen on [Facebook livestream](#), earlier this afternoon, activists with the animal rights network [Direct Action Everywhere \(DxE\)](#) lay 333 roses down the street outside Smithfield's Farmer John slaughterhouse in Vernon, LA, one flower for each worker who has been infected with COVID-19 at the facility. Last month, OSHA issued over \$100,000 in fines against the company for failing to protect workers. 18 more workers have been infected with the virus since then.

Smithfield has not halted operations at its Vernon slaughterhouse during the pandemic, except for several hours during a DxE protest in September, where [26 people were arrested](#) after chaining themselves to the entrance of the slaughterhouse. Days earlier, [seven DxE activists were arrested](#) at the same facility after attempting to rescue a pig from inside the slaughterhouse.

"We are going to continue protesting Farmer John until the day it shuts down," said Brittany Drake, an organizer with DxE's LA chapter which hosted the protest.

While slaughterhouses nationwide have been hotspots for spreading the current pandemic, scientists say that factory farms create an ideal breeding ground for the next one. DxE investigated a Farmer John factory pig farm in rural Tulare County, CA this April and took fecal samples which [tested positive](#) for Porcine Respiratory Coronavirus (PRCv), which has the potential to mutate and become deadly to humans. [INVESTIGATION VIDEO HERE](#)

DxE says bold action is the only action that makes sense to address the current crisis, so it's leading a coalition of dozens of organizations [calling on California Governor Gavin Newsom](#) to issue an immediate moratorium on the construction of new factory farms and slaughterhouses in the state.