

What is the Labeling for Lent Campaign About?

Labeling for Lent is a national initiative of the Coalition of Catholic Organizations against Human Trafficking (CCOAH) to urge seafood producers, distributors, and retailers to make public, through product labeling or other means, their efforts to fight human trafficking in their product supply chains. Through transparency, consumers and customers can make informed, labor-friendly seafood purchases and help combat labor trafficking in the seafood industry.



By the Coalition of Catholic Organizations Against Human Trafficking (CCOAH)

What Company Will We Contact This Lenten Season?

This year the Labeling for Lent Campaign seeks to encourage the wholesale company Sysco to better inform its customers about efforts they are making to ensure their supply chains are free of forced labor.



Sysco is a global leader in selling, marketing, and distributing food products to restaurants, health care, and educational facilities. With over 650,000 customer locations, the company operates more than 320 distribution facilities globally. **In the United States, many of the schools and hospitals who purchase from Sysco are Catholic.**

It is important to acknowledge Sysco's efforts to begin addressing seafarers and fishers' labor rights. Per Sysco's 2019 social responsibility report, top priorities include "*responsible sourcing to ensure fair treatment of workers and communities*" and "*fair treatment of workers engaged in growing, harvesting, and processing products...with extensive programs in place to monitor performance of suppliers.*" **The next step is to make these efforts widely known to Sysco customers so they can make informed and ethical selections when deciding which seafood products to purchase.**

Why Did We Choose Sysco?

As Catholics, and people of good will, we have both the right and responsibility to demand that the seafood we consume is not tainted by slave labor. One way to press for change is to encourage wholesale companies, such as Sysco, to provide institutions that purchase their products with the knowledge needed to buy ethically sourced seafood options from producers that care for their workers' wellbeing and ensure that their supply chains are slave-free.

CCOAH encompasses over 35 national and international Catholic agencies working together to end human trafficking.

Why Conduct the Campaign During Lent?

Pope Francis has encouraged the Catholic Church to increase its global efforts to end modern slavery, and to build constructive relationships with businesses and government leaders to fight the scourge of human trafficking together.

For Catholics, the season of Lent is a time of reflection and renewal, when many of us abstain from meat and eat more fish to be in greater solidarity with those in need. It is in that spirit of solidarity and collaboration that many Catholic organizations and individuals across the country will be sending postcards to Sysco asking them to better inform their customers about their efforts to ensure that their supply chain is free of forced labor.



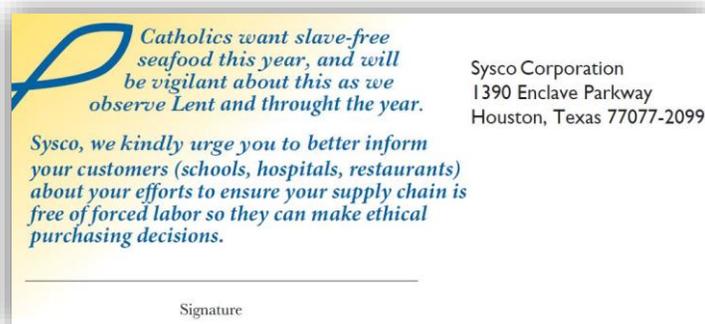
Is Human Trafficking at Sea Really That Big of a Problem?

Yes, it is! The United States imports approximately 80% of the seafood we eat. Yet studies have found severe cases of forced labor and human trafficking in the fisheries sector. Victims often suffer from illness, physical injury, physical and sexual abuse, and even death aboard fishing boats. Many are forced to work under horrendous conditions aboard vessels for months, years, or even their lifetimes.

How Can I Help?

Order free postcards for your networks [here](#):

Help us demonstrate to Sysco how much Catholics care about the supply chains of the products we buy. Let's demonstrate to Sysco that given the opportunity, we will choose to patronize businesses that are committed to buying seafood from wholesalers who are leaders in ensuring that the seafood Americans eat is not harvested by slave labor. It's easy! Just grab a postcard, sign, add a stamp, and drop in your nearest mailbox today. Thank you!



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