

In homage to those who provide us with food to us all, especially during the pandemic. This poem first appeared on the *Poetry X Hunger* website (PoetryXHunger.com) and then in my 2021 collection, *Mud Ajar*.

Bread in Hand

Hiram Larew

But even after all of this
 farmers keep farming
 for every one of us --
They bend the sun
 and raise the earth
 each day for us
They round each rough
 and tamp down these fears
 for each of us
Yes after all of this
 They're the hope of life for us

And even after all of this
 the baggers stackers sorters drivers checkers
 field workers and grocery store sweepers too
 are here for us
Like bowls of life
 they give us each our every day
 and so renew that sense of trust for us

And even after all of this
 and just as much
 are those who volunteer to serve the soup --
The ones who help and give and care
 on our behalf
Their hands and hearts
 shape our thanks --
No matter what else happens
 they are life itself for us

And yes even after all of this
These days seem like furrowed fields to us --
 with darkest shadows across the view
 but also with
 rows on rows of green
 that grin wide and new
 just like those who stand and wave
 with bread in hand
 for each of us
 through all of this