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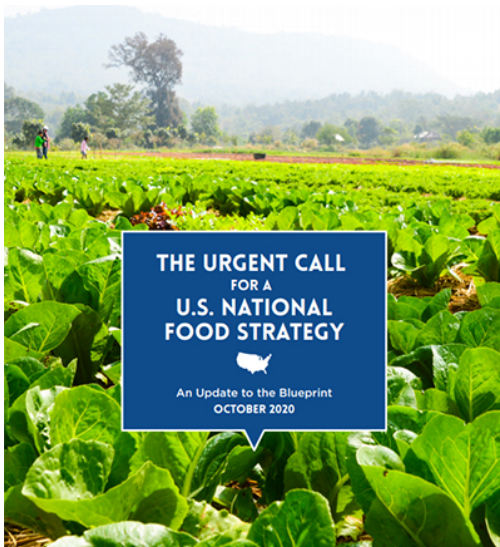
CENTER FOR  
AGRICULTURE &  
FOOD SYSTEMS



## November News

### A National Food Strategy to Address Long-Standing Food System Challenges

Vermont Law School's [Center for Agriculture and Food Systems](#) (CAFS) and the Harvard Law School Food Law and Policy Clinic (FLPC) are pleased to announce the launch of [The Urgent Call for a U.S. National Food Strategy: An Update to the Blueprint](#).



Released in late October, the report renews the call for a coordinated national approach to tackle the problems plaguing our fragmented food system in light of COVID-19 and the ongoing movement to address systemic racial inequality in the United States.

CAFS and FLPC published the original *Blueprint for a National Food Strategy* in 2017. This updated report builds on its recommendations, providing a roadmap for the federal government to ensure its food policies advance, rather than impede, broader policy goals, from public health and social justice to resilience against climate change. And it does so in a new context: The COVID-19 crisis has intensified the need for a national food strategy, and the recent election provides an opportunity for the incoming administration to take action.



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[View or download the report »](#)

### Free Virtual Food Law and Policy Events



## Panel on Chapter 12 Relief for Farms

While bankruptcy is often associated with negative connotations, filing for Chapter 12 relief can present opportunity for farmers. Not only can it help farms avoid or recover from financial distress; it can also help save taxes due when transferring a farm, and greatly expand farmers' options to sell, transfer, or transform their operations. During a recent webinar hosted by our [Vermont Legal Food Hub](#) and the U.S. Bankruptcy Court, a panel of experts explained how the Chapter 12 option works. If you advise, loan to, or work with farmers in any state, follow the link below to learn more about this important yet under-utilized tool.

[View the recording »](#)

## Webinars on Local Food Policy and Energy in Agriculture

Our Food Law Lunch Break series provides a public platform for researchers, policymakers, advocates, attorneys, and others to discuss topical issues related to food and agricultural law and policy. During an October 15 event moderated by CAFS Associate Director [Lihlani Nelson](#), Professor [Jonathan Rosenbloom](#) and CAFS Director [Laurie Beyranevand](#) discussed how local policymakers can build food security and sovereignty through zoning codes. On October 30, Staff Attorney [Genevieve Byrne](#) and Vermont Law School students explained how our [Farm and Energy Initiative](#) promotes sustainable energy use in agriculture.

[See all events »](#)



## Current Issues in Animal Law Lecture Series: A Human Right to Nature

Litigation pending before the Ninth Circuit treats a right to nature, and wilderness in particular, as part of the scope of liberty protected under the Constitution. That case alleges that the climate crisis—and the federal government's response or indifference to it—presents a threat to liberty. How is there such a right? Last week, Vermont Law School's [Environmental Law Center](#) brought together three attorneys working on this key issue in animal law. The first installment in an ongoing animal law lecture series, a recording of the panel is available at the link below. Stay tuned for future animal law lectures next spring.

[View the panel »](#)

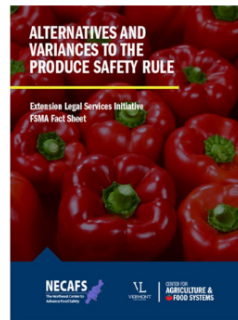
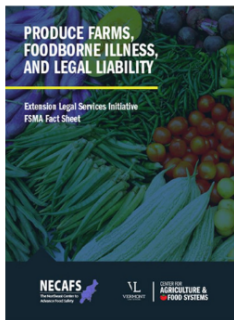
## Seed Commons and Ownership: A Listening Session on Intellectual Property

If you're a farmer, seed grower, seed company, plant breeder, or another stakeholder interested in intellectual property rights (IPR) and seed, we want to hear from you. This **Thursday, November 19, at noon ET**, CAFS will team up with Organic Seed Alliance and the National Center for Appropriate Technology to co-host a listening session on IPR and seed. We want to know: How does IPR affect your work? What resources do you need? Are there opportunities for improving how IPR is used in the seed system? Input gathered will directly inform future educational events and policy recommendations in 2021.

[Register here »](#)



## A New Legal Resource for the Produce Community



Last week the teams at CAFS and UVM Extension's [Northeast Center to Advance Food Safety](#) (NECAFS) [announced the launch](#) of a free online legal resource for farmers, food producers, and technical service providers.

The Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) has resulted in a sweeping overhaul of federal food regulation in recent years. Consequently, farmers and food producers are now navigating new regulations and facing inspections of their operations, many for the very first time.

That raises new legal questions for the produce community—and our new website, available at [elsi.necafs.org](https://elsi.necafs.org), aims to answer them. The site includes an interactive map illustrating the specifics of each U.S. state's produce safety laws, as well as seven fact sheets covering the most pressing legal questions.

[View the resource »](#)



### New Healthy Food Policy Project (HFPP) Case Study

The latest [HFPP](#) case study, written by CAFS Clinical Teaching Fellow [Whitney Shields](#), focuses on Boston's Good Food Purchasing Program. [Visit the site](#) to learn how this game-changing policy is shifting the city's procurement process to account for sustainability, food access, and food justice. And don't forget to visit HFPP's [COVID-19 Policy Index](#) for a sortable list of municipal policies promoting food access during the pandemic.



### Join the CAFS Crew: Now Hiring Summer Interns!

We are currently seeking law students for our Summer Honors Internship program, which runs from from June 1 to August 6, 2021. Interns will receive a \$5,000 stipend to work full-time with CAFS on law and policy projects that span the food system. The application deadline is January 3, 2021; [visit our website](#) to learn more.



## Welcome Gordon Merrick JD'20

We are thrilled to welcome Gordon Merrick JD'20 to the Center for Agriculture and Food Systems as our new Legal Food Hub Fellow. A 2020 graduate of Vermont Law School, Gordon is working with CAFS and [Conservation Law Foundation](#) on our [Legal Food Hub](#) program, which connects farmers, food entrepreneurs, and related organizations with free legal services. Welcome, Gordon!



## Interested in Pursuing a Degree at Vermont Law School?

We offer a [Master of Food and Agriculture Law and Policy](#) (MFALP); an [LLM in Food and Agriculture Law](#); and JD and joint degrees with a [concentration in food and agriculture](#). View Vermont Law School's latest environmental law brochure for all the details.

[Learn more »](#)



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