



## New Resource Outlines Legal and Historical Context of Heirs' Property

Last month, the [Center for Agriculture and Food Systems](#) (CAFS) released a new section of our [Farmland Access Legal Toolkit](#) focused on heirs' property: a legal system that has driven devastating land loss among Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and other marginalized communities in the United States. Heirs' property is created when someone dies without a will, leaving land to multiple heirs. The new resource outlines how this system limits access to funding and wealth generation, how the land is often lost through devastating "partition sales," and why it disproportionately affects marginalized communities, particularly Black communities in the South.



In partnership with the [Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Policy Research Center at Alcorn University](#), and in consultation with the [Federation of Southern Cooperatives](#) and other community-based organizations, CAFS is now developing state-specific legal fact sheets to assist practitioners and families in confronting heirs' property issues, starting with 13 Southern states. We will share those resources as they become available.

[View the resource »](#)

## Virtual Food Law and Policy Events



### Embedded Racism on the Farm: Labor Laws, Immigration, and the Fight for Farmworkers' Rights

The next installment in Vermont Law School's Embedded Racism in the Law Panel Series features attorneys and organizers who serve and advocate on behalf of farmworkers. Join us on **Thursday, April 22** from 6 to 7:30 p.m. as we examine how the legacy of discriminatory Jim Crow-era policies persists in farmworkers' exclusion from labor protections, and discuss how farmworkers and advocates are fighting to improve working conditions, immigration status, and access to justice. CAFS Director Laurie Beyranevand will moderate; panelists include Associate Dean Juan Perea of Loyola University Chicago, Iris Figueroa of Farmworker Justice, and advocates from Migrant Justice. The event will be available in both English and Spanish.

[Register here »](#)

### Legal Workshops for Farmers, Food Entrepreneurs, and Related Organizations

Our [Legal Food Hub](#) partners at Conservation Law Foundation just wrapped up a free weekly webinar series addressing topics of legal significance for New England farmers, food entrepreneurs, and food-oriented nonprofits. Topics included "Understanding Purchase and Sale Agreements in Real Estate Transactions," "Resolving Challenging Issues through Agricultural Mediation," "Hiring Your First Farm Employees," "Opening Your Farm to Visitors and Controlling for Liability," and "Options for Forming a Social Enterprise." Watch webinar recordings via the link below—and feel free to reach out to the [Vermont Legal Food Hub](#) if you're a VT-based farm or food business seeking assistance with a specific legal matter.

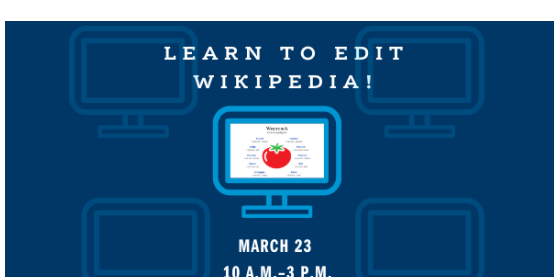
[View recordings »](#)



### Current Issues in Animal Law

The next installment in Vermont Law School's animal law lecture series features Nonhuman Rights Project founder and president Steven Wise. Tune in at [vermontlaw.edu/live](#) on **Friday, April 9**, from 1 to 2 p.m. as Wise discusses the movement to secure fundamental rights for animals. And catch up on recent lectures, including "Animal Law and Environmental Law: Parallels and Synergies," and "Environmental, Public Health, and Other Societal Harms of Extreme Farmed Animal Confinement," [here](#).

[Learn more »](#)



### Wikipedia Edit-a-Thon

We're teaming up with the [USDA National Agricultural Library](#) and the [National Agricultural Law Center](#) to offer a crash course in Wikipedia editing **Tuesday, March 23**, from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. During this "Edit-a-Thon," we'll dive into a hands-on project updating pages related to the Food Safety Modernization Act using some of the [resources](#) students developed in our Food and Agriculture Clinic. No prior knowledge or experience is required, and it's fine to drop in and out of the event. View the schedule and learn more via the link below.

[Learn more and register »](#)



### Join Our Team!

CAFS is currently seeking applicants with a JD for a two-year **Food and Agriculture LLM Fellowship** beginning this August. The fellow will receive a tuition waiver for Vermont Law School's LLM in Food and Agriculture Law and a \$35,000 annual stipend, supplementing their studies with part-time work in our Food and Agriculture Clinic. [Visit our website](#) to learn more.



### Local Nonprofit Taps Master's Students to Combat Food Insecurity

While finishing their Master in Food and Agriculture Law and Policy degrees, Johanna Doren (left) and Emily Whittier surveyed residents of rural mountain communities in Vermont and developed a report evaluating their food security needs. [Visit the Vermont Law School blog](#) to learn how the new report is helping a local nonprofit keep communities fed.



### Centering Community Residents in Policy Change

In consultation with their Advisory Committee members, our [Healthy Food Policy Project](#) team developed a definition and set of working principles for "authentic resident engagement" in food access policy change. Available [online](#), the template can help policymakers design, implement, and evaluate food access policies inclusively, by reaching out to base-building organizations and engaging with residents.

## Catch Up With CAFS

Hear from our faculty and staff via news, podcasts, webinars, and more.

- Director Laurie Beyranevand co-authored an op-ed in *The Hill* (with Emily Broad Leib of the Harvard Law School Food Law and Policy Clinic) [outlining the urgent need for a U.S. national food strategy](#).
- Professor Beyranevand [weighed in](#) for *Food Safety and Quality* about FDA's new actions designed to reduce toxins in baby food.
- Professor Beyranevand moderated the panel "Setting the Table: Digging into Federal Food Laws in Application," presented by Vermont Law School's Food and Agriculture Law Society; watch a recording [here](#).
- Along with Professor Jonathan Rosenbloom, Professor Beyranevand presented "Beyond the Pandemic: Addressing the Silent Crises in Public Health and Food Security Through Planning" at the [2021 Western Places | Western Spaces conference](#).
- Associate Director Lihlani Nelson shared examples of state and local policies that can increase access to healthy food during "Innovations in State Policy and Implications for Local and Regional Food Sectors," part of the Local Food Systems Response to COVID webinar series. Watch a recording [here](#).
- Food and Agriculture Clinic Director Sophia Kruszewski joined a panel on payment for ecosystem services presented by JURIST; a recording is available [here](#).
- Professor Kruszewski also presented a deep-dive into our [Farmers Market Legal Toolkit](#) during InTents: The Farmers Market Conference 2021.
- Senior Legal Fellow Fran Miller was lead author of the brief "[Alternative Land Ownership and Access Models](#)," published by Vermont Farm to Plate and presented to the Vermont legislature in mid-February.



View Vermont Law School's environmental law summer [course catalog](#) to find out what food and agricultural law and policy classes we'll be offering in summer 2021. The annual Summer Session draws students, scholars, practitioners, and lifelong learners from across the country and the world; visit [vermontlaw.edu/summer-session](#) to learn more.

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