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## Decode the Laws Behind Food Labels

How is “natural” different from “organic”? What exactly is a “superfood”? And where can you learn more about the various claims on that package of plant-based “meat”? Our team at the Center for Agriculture and Food Systems (CAFS) created the new Labels Unwrapped website to break down the laws behind food labels. Visit [labelsunwrapped.org](https://labelsunwrapped.org) to explore interactive labels spanning product categories, learn about how labels are regulated, and dig into policy briefs covering hot topics in food labeling law.



[Explore food labels »](#)



### **New Edition! State Farm to School Policy Handbook: 2002-2020**

In July, CAFS and the National Farm to School Network released the updated State Farm to School Policy Handbook. This publication summarizes and analyzes every proposed farm to school bill and resolution introduced from 2002 to 2020. It enables users to search bills by both jurisdiction and topic, and includes an analysis of trends, case studies, advocacy resources, and more. New this edition: a focus on policies that support universal school meals, support BIPOC producers, and those that supported responses to COVID-19.

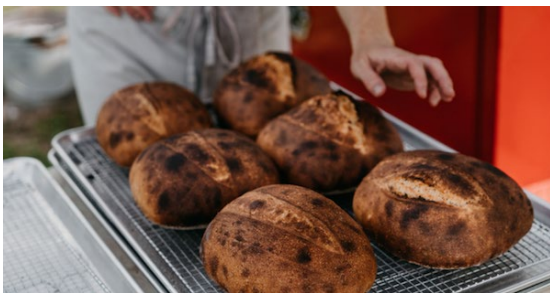
[View the resource »](#)



### **FAQ: Insurance and Liability for Farmers Markets**

COVID-19 has forced many farmers markets to change how they operate—and along with those changes come questions about risks and liability. That's why CAFS and our partners at the Farmers Market Coalition and NOFA-VT created a new insurance and liability FAQ for farmers markets. Available on our [Farmers Market Legal Toolkit](#), the resource was prompted by the pandemic but may be useful to any market facing liability claims, particularly related to a public health crisis. Follow the link below and scroll down to "Additional Resources" to access it.

[View the FAQ »](#)



### **New Food Safety Guide for Grain Businesses**

In partnership with the Artisan Grain Collaborative, we've released a new food safety guide for food-grade grain farmers and processors. "Understanding FSMA's Preventive Controls Rule: A Guide for Grain Businesses" breaks down complicated federal food safety regulations related to the Food Safety Modernization Act's Preventive Controls for Human Food Rule. The goal is to help farmers and



### **From a Legal Standpoint, What's "Local" Food?**

"Local" is frequently used to describe food in both the law and the marketplace—but the term remains largely undefined. And when it comes to local food legislation, that vagueness can make it difficult to meet policy goals and evaluate impacts. For our latest report, we examined the term "local" from a legal perspective and how a lack of definition can result in misconceptions

processors understand which food safety requirements apply to their particular operations and what they need to do to comply.

[View the resource »](#)



### **New Food Safety Factsheets for Produce Operations**

In partnership with the Northeast Center to Advance Food Safety, we recently added three new factsheets for farmers and food producers to our online Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) legal resource. Available at [elsi.necafs.org](https://elsi.necafs.org), the new factsheets address "FSMA Produce Safety Rule (PSR) Implementation and State Laws," "Understanding When a Produce Market Intermediary is Subject to FSMA," and "Interactions Between the FSMA PSR and Other Laws that May Apply to Produce Operations."

[View the factsheets »](#)

and even fraud. The report also explores how states throughout the US are working to establish more clear definitions of the term.

[View the report »](#)



### **Policy Drafting Companion Guide to Promote Equity and Healthy Food**

Law and policy plays an essential role in shaping a community's access to healthy food. The latest resource from our [Healthy Food Policy Project](#) team provides an introduction to common elements of laws and policies, shares examples of how these elements can be used to support local healthy food access, and offers recommended practices for policy drafting. It also highlights the importance of advancing racial and health equity in all policies, and provides examples of racial equity policy tools from across the country.

[View the resource »](#)

## **Events**

### **Land Matters: Understanding Heirs' Property, a Wikipedia Edit-a-Thon**

October 12, 2021  
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
Learn more and register [here](#).

Please join CAFS and our partners at the USDA National Agricultural Library to learn about—and spread awareness around—one of the primary drivers of farmland loss among Black communities and other marginalized groups in the United States: heirs' property. In the morning, we'll hear from heirs' property experts including CAFS's Francine Miller and keynote speaker Mavis Gragg of HeirShares and the



Sustainable Forestry and African American Land Retention Project. Then, following a brief Wikipedia editing training session, we'll work on updating and improving Wikipedia pages related to heirs' property issues.

## Hot Topics in Environmental Law Lecture Series

View all lectures at [livestream.com/vermontlawschool](https://livestream.com/vermontlawschool).

Vermont Law School's summer lecture series, Hot Topics in Environmental Law, was offered virtually this year. The series included food- and agriculture-related lectures from our media fellows, including: "**Algal Blooms and Animal Ag**" with Claire Brown of *The Counter*; "**The Problematic State of Farmed Animal Protection in Canada**" with freelance journalist Jessica Scott-Reid; and "**The Corporate Capture of Agricultural Climate 'Solutions'**" with Lisa Held of *Civil Eats*. All lectures are now available to stream.

## Catch Up With CAFS

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

- ▶ "[Farm to School Programs Are Finally Making Inroads on Capitol Hill.](#)" *Civil Eats* spoke with CAFS associate director **Lihlani Nelson** about the new State Farm to School Policy Handbook.
- ▶ "[A 'Game Changer' Law May Help Black Farmers Secure Threatened Land Legacies.](#)" CAFS senior attorney and adjunct professor **Francine Miller** spoke with *Food Tank* about heirs' property issues and CAFS's Farmland Access Legal Toolkit (August 18).
- ▶ "[Plant Patents, Biodiversity, and 'Public Domain' Seeds.](#)" CAFS professor **Emily Spiegel** and communications specialist **Molly McDonough** were guests on the *Hothouse Earth* podcast (August 6).
- ▶ "[As House focuses on China, farm groups see other land buyers.](#)" **Francine Miller** weighed in for *Roll Call* about farmland grabs by U.S. companies and pension funds (August 5).
- ▶ "[Vermont Law School policy handbook identifies Vermont as leader in farm-to-school legislation.](#)" **Vermont Public Radio** discussed what CAFS and NFSN's State Farm to School Policy Handbook reveals about Vermont farm to school policy.
- ▶ "[Farming Collaborative Plan Looks to Keep Land Accessible, Open.](#)" Published in *Valley News* and *VTDigger*, this piece covered **Francine Miller's** work developing a local agricultural collaborative and saving historic farmland (July 18).

▶ [“Website ‘Unwraps’ Food Labeling.”](#) LLM fellow **Cydnee Bence** and associate director **Lihlani Nelson** discussed CAFS's new Labels Unwrapped website with *The Herald* (July 8).

▶ [“Vermont Law School Launches New Website to Demystify Food Labels.”](#) *Valley News* interviewed CAFS director **Laurie Beyranevand** and **Cydnee Bence** about the new Labels Unwrapped website (June 28).

▶ [“As the Climate Emergency Grows, Farmworkers Lack Protection from Deadly Heat.”](#) *Civil Eats* spoke with **Laurie Beyranevand** about her recent report on farmworker health and the need for a federal heat safety standard (June 14).

▶ [“Perdue Calls Animal Rights Group’s Lawsuit Over Fresh Line Labeling ‘Frivolous.’”](#) **Laurie Beyranevand** spoke to **The Food Institute** about whether a label depicting free-roaming animals could be considered legally misleading for meat from factory farms (June 14).

▶ [“What’s on the Horizon for Federal Food Waste Reduction and Prevention Policy?”](#) **Laurie Beyranevand** weighed in for **Waste360** (June 4).

▶ [“Johnson & Johnson Faces Another Crisis After Supreme Court Decision.”](#) **Laurie Beyranevand** discussed a recent court decision about talcum powder and ovarian cancer with *Forbes* (June 2).

## Meet the Honors Interns



*Clockwise, from top left: Amanda di Dio of VLS, Katie Moreland of Oregon Law, Sierra Tillery of Oregon Law, Rebecca Bermudez of Catholic University of America School of Law, and Jackie Cuellar of Minnesota Law.*

Our annual summer internship program brings together law students from across the country, and we're so fortunate to have spent the summer working alongside these superstars. Follow the link below to learn more about the program and what the students worked on this summer. Thanks to our amazing interns; we can't wait to see what great things you'll go on to do!

[Read more »](#)



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