



# The National Agricultural Law Center Quarterly Newsletter

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## Second Quarter 2025



The Nation's Leading Source of  
Agricultural and Food Law  
Research and Information

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the NALC?  
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Greetings,

Summer is in full swing, and we're still riding the momentum from a fantastic quarter. Whether you have been keeping up with the NALC for a long time or have just learned about us recently, thanks for subscribing!

Both our **12th Annual Mid-South Agricultural & Environmental Law Conference** in Memphis, Tennessee and the **3rd Annual Western Water, Agricultural, & Environmental Law Conference** in Reno, Nevada were tremendous successes. For both in person and online attendees, each event brought together a wide range of professionals from across the country - producers, attorneys, students, policymakers, and more - to dive into some of the most pressing legal and policy issues impacting agriculture today.

A special thank you to the **National Association of State Departments of Agriculture ("NASDA") Foundation** for co-hosting both conferences with us. Their ongoing collaboration continues to elevate the reach and quality of our work, and we deeply value their partnership. Thanks also to **Wes Ward**, Arkansas Secretary of Agriculture and current NASDA President, for leading the Mid-South keynote address during our online "Early Bird" program, as well as moderating a fantastic panel on state departments of agriculture at the Western.

If you weren't able to attend, you can still check out the **Educational Opportunities & Conferences** page on our website for agendas, presentation materials, and photos from the events. Planning is already underway for the 2026 conferences - make sure to save the date for the **13th Annual Mid-South**, which will be held June 4-5, 2026 back in Memphis. Stay tuned to our website and social media for more details.

Looking ahead, the "Western Water" Webinar Series continues on Wednesday, July 16, with "**Western Water Markets: Overview of Legal & Policy Considerations**." This session will feature Brett Bovee of **WestWater Research** and Brian Hamilton of **Downey Brand**, who will explore the legal and policy frameworks that shape how water rights are bought, sold, and managed across the West. It's a timely and important topic, and as always, registration is free. As a reminder, our webinars are always recorded and available on our **Webinar Series** page.

We're also looking forward to the **Cultivating Connections Conference**, which returns August 4-5 in Ankeny, Iowa, with a virtual attendance option available. Led by our partners at the **Center for Agricultural Law and Taxation at Iowa State University** and **The Ohio State University Extension's Agricultural & Resource Law Program**, this one-of-a-kind program focuses on farm transition planning, an area of growing importance across all sectors of agriculture. If this topic is on your radar, this conference is a must.

As always, we're grateful for your interest in and support of the NALC. Reach out to us anytime if there is anything we can assist with. If you haven't already, be sure to sign up for **The Feed**, and follow us on **X**, **Facebook**, and **LinkedIn** to stay up to date on everything happening with us.

Respectfully,

Harrison M. Pittman, NALC Director



## 2025 NALC and NASDA Foundation Conferences

The **12th Annual Mid-South Agricultural & Environmental Law Conference** and the **3rd Annual Western Water, Agricultural, and Environmental Law Conference** were held last month and co-hosted with our friends at the **NASDA Foundation**. Both conferences offered in-person and livestream options, networking opportunities, as well as continuing legal education credit and credit from the **American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers**. For information on all NALC

educational opportunities and past conferences, click [here](#). For additional details on the 2025 programs, click [here](#).

### 12th Annual Mid-South Ag & Environmental Law Conference



The 12th Annual Mid-South Ag & Environmental Law Conference was on June 5-6 in Memphis, Tennessee. The main program, held at the **University of Memphis Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law**, featured a variety of presentations on a range of issues impacting the Mid-South and beyond. On June 5, we kicked off the annual conference with the "Beer & BBQ" networking dinner at **Charlie Vergos Rendezvous**. Before heading to Memphis, we also held an online bonus CLE "Early Bird" event on May 14. Arkansas Secretary of Agriculture and current NASDA President **Wes Ward** presented the conference

**keynote address** as part of the "Early Bird."

**"Every issue touches my community."  
-Mid-South attendee review**

Session topics for the Mid-South included **agricultural lands and transactions**, an update from Washington, D.C., featuring Fitzhugh Elder IV, Senate Ag Committee, and Clark Ogilvie, House Ag Committee, **solar leasing, groundwater competition, state and federal agency authority post-Chevron**, and handling **agricultural debt and bankruptcy**. Former Arkansas Governor **Asa Hutchinson** presented the **legal ethics session**.

**Save the date** for **next year's Mid-South**: June 4-5, 2026, back in Memphis (and on livestream)!

To see more photos from this year's Mid-South, click [here](#).

### 3rd Annual Western Water, Agricultural, & Environmental Law Conference

On June 19-20, the 3rd Annual Western Water, Agricultural, and Environmental Law Conference was held at the **Peppermill Resort Spa Casino** in Reno, Nevada (as well as on livestream). The Western is designed for attorneys and non-attorney agricultural professionals involved in varying public and private aspects of the Western agricultural industry. Thanks to all of our excellent speakers and everyone who attended either in person or online! Stay tuned to our website and social media for information on next year's conference.



**"Truly an excellent program — great lawyers. I plan to come next year."  
-Western attendee review**

The two-day conference featured a strong lineup of speakers discussing topics central to Western agriculture and beyond. Topics included the **Fourth Amendment and warrantless search of ag land** (pictured above), **insights from state departments of agriculture** (in a panel moderated by Wes Ward), **waters of the U.S.** in a post-*Sackett* world, an update from Washington, D.C. featuring Kristin Sleeper, Deputy Under Secretary, Natural Resources and Environment, U.S. Department of Agriculture, **federal-private split estates, water banking and leasing**, and more.

To see more photos from this year's Western, click [here](#).

### Harrison Pittman attends Governor's Association meeting in Washington, D.C.



NALC Director Harrison Pittman presented on foreign ownership of and investment in agricultural and non-agricultural land at the Federal Bureau of Investigation Headquarters during a meeting of the Governors Homeland Security Advisor Council ("GHSAC"), the Department of Homeland Security ("DHS"), and the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices ("NGA Center"). These groups convened the newly appointed governors' homeland security advisors to provide an overview of the GHSAC network, as well as best practices to support them in their roles.

For resources on foreign ownership, visit our **Foreign Ownership of Agricultural Land: FAQs & Resource Library**.

### Rusty Rumley speaks at Frontline to Farm in North Carolina



In June, Senior Staff Attorney Rusty Rumley returned to Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina to present as part of its **Frontline to Farm** program. The program helps military veterans and beginning farmers get started in sustainable farming as livelihood.

"No matter how many times I get to see Rusty Rumley work with our beginner trainees, he never fails to impress with his breadth and depth of knowledge and his ability to make what is often the most foreign and daunting aspect of farming as a business — ag law," the organization said in a **Facebook post**. "We are so thankful that he has given his time and expertise to our training!"



## Cultivating Connections Conference on Aug. 4–5



This year's Cultivating Connections conference will be held Aug. 4-5 in Ankeny, Iowa, as well as online via livestream. The program offers valuable information to farm transition planners, and is hosted by our partners the **Center for Agricultural Law and Taxation at Iowa State University** and **The Ohio State University Extension's Agricultural & Resource Law Program**.

Register

## Webinar Series

Our webinar series offers a variety of presentations relating to agricultural law and policy. All webinars are recorded and archived on **our website**. See below for a list of recent and upcoming webinars.

### Recent Webinars

#### Distressed Loan Servicing and Borrower Rights in the Farm Credit System

**Bob Mikell**, Executive Vice President and General Counsel at AgSouth Farm Credit, presented our April 16 webinar. He discussed critical aspects of Farm Credit System borrower rights, including the right to restructuring, related notices, least cost analysis, credit review hearings, and the right of first refusal.

Watch the Recording



#### Navigating ADA Compliance for Agritourism Guests

During our May 21 webinar, **Jackie Schweichler**, Staff Attorney at Penn State Center for Agricultural and Shale Law, provided an overview of the Americans with Disabilities Act within the context of agritourism operations and on-farm guests.

Watch the Recording

#### An Overview of State Grain Dealer Statutes in the United States

On June 18, **Ross Pifer**, Director of the Penn State Center for Agricultural and Shale Law, discussed grain dealer statutes and reviewed the specific provisions included within many of these statutes such as bonding, indemnity funds, licensing, auditing, failure, liens, and penalties. He also provide an overview of grain warehouse statutes.

Watch the Recording



Upcoming Webinars



Western Water Markets: Overview of Legal & Policy Considerations

During our July "Western Water" webinar, **Brett Bovee**, Intermountain Regional Director at WestWater Research, and **Brian Hamilton**, water rights attorney at Downey Brand, will provide an introductory understanding of Western water markets, with a focus on legal and policy considerations of these markets.

Register

Publication Highlights

As part of its mission, the NALC continues to deliver webinars, articles, fact sheets, and state compilations on numerous agricultural and food law topics. These resources are free to the public and serve as a research tool for both attorneys and non-attorneys.

The NALC publishes weekly posts about current issues in agricultural and environmental law. Posts from the past quarter are outlined below.

April 2025

- **Restricting Investments "On Behalf Of" Foreign Entities: Utah Amends State Foreign Ownership Law**
- **Food Law in the States — 2025 Update**
- **Cottage Food state compilation (update)**
- **Congress Seeks to Strengthen Oversight: Proposed Amendments to AFIDA**
- **Foreign Ownership of Agricultural Land: FAQs & Resource Library (update)**
- **Update on State Pesticide Liability Limitation Bills**
- **Soil for Sale? State Legislative Efforts to Restrict Foreign Investments — Part Seven**
- **Foreign Food Labeling Updates: EU Court of Justice Decisions**
- **Fish and Wildlife Service Proposes Rescinding Definition of "Harm" Under ESA**

May 2025

- **FDA Announces Plan to "Phase Out" Synthetic Dyes**
- **Whistleblowers, Divestment, and Disclosure: Idaho Enacts Amendment to State's Foreign Ownership Law**
- **EPA Releases Final Insecticide Strategy**
- **Recent State Updates to Grain Indemnity**
- **FWS Seeks Voluntary Vacatur in Lesser Prairie-Chicken Case**

June 2025

- **New Addition to Foreign Ownership Law Trend: West Virginia Enacts Restriction on Foreign-Controlled Entities**
- **Federal Court Finds Swampbuster Constitutional**
- **FDA Updates: June 2025**
- **Who Gets to Say? Agency Deference in a Post-Chevron World: Auer v. Robbins**

Outreach

NALC attorneys speak and present at events in order to provide agricultural and food law research and information to the public. If you are interested in having an attorney from the NALC speak to a group, either in person or virtually, please do not hesitate to contact us. Learn more about the NALC staff and find our contact information [here](#).

Below are some outreach activities from the past quarter.

April 2025

Harrison Pittman, NALC Director

- April 15 – Joint in-person presentation on Farm Bill: Formation and Food System Implications for Kristen Gibson’s Savoring Discourse class at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR
- April 16 – Online presentation to LUPRE Real Estate Committee on Foreign Ownership Laws & Developments via Zoom
- April 17 – In-person presentation on “Potential National Security Implications of Foreign Land/Business Ownership of and Around Critical Facilities” for Governors’ Homeland Security Advisors Council (GHSAC) Winter Meeting at FBI Headquarters, Washington, D.C.
- April 28 – In-person presentation on “History, Overview, & Discussion of Soybean Checkoff” at the State Soybean Executive Meeting in Oklahoma City, OK

Elizabeth Rumley, Senior Staff Attorney

- April 1 – Participated in television interview over zoom on Iowa’s ag-gag law for RFD-TV
- April 15 – Joint in-person presentation on Farm Bill: Formation and Food System Implications for Kristen Gibson’s Savoring Discourse class at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR
- April 16 – In-person presentation on Hot Topics in Food Law for Kristen Gibson’s Poultry Science 0133 class at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR

Rusty Rumley, Senior Staff Attorney

- April 1 – Online presentation on NALC resources, estate planning, bankruptcy and more for Southern Risk Management Education Center via Zoom.
- April 1 – In-person presentation on estate planning for Polk County Extension Service in Mena, AR
- April 14 – Online presentation on estate planning for the White County Extension Service in Searcy, AR via Zoom
- April 15 – Online presentation on the Farm Bill and where it could be going at Harvard University via Zoom

**Brigit Rollins, Staff Attorney**

- April 15 – Joint in-person presentation on Farm Bill: Formation and Food System Implications for Kristen Gibson’s Savoring Discourse class at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR

For the full April Monthly Roundup, click [here](#).

**May 2025**

**Harrison Pittman, NALC Director**

- May 8 – In-person presentation on ‘The Latest on DOGE, MAHA, Tariffs, & Farm Programs’ for the Agricultural Council of Arkansas Spring Meeting of the Board of Directors in Pickens, Arkansas
- May 14 – Joint online presentation on “Halfway There: Mid-Year Mid-South Review of Legal Developments” for Mid-South Agricultural and Environmental Law Conference Early Bird session
- May 21 – Attended Senate Ag Committee confirmation hearing for Scott Hutchins, nominee for USDA Deputy Undersecretary, Research, Education, and Economics; and Dudley W. Hoskins, nominee for USDA Deputy Secretary, Marketing and Regulatory Programs, Washington, D.C.
- May 28-29 – In-person presentation on Federal and State Judicial and Legislative Update at the 18th Annual John Huffaker Agricultural Law Symposium, Lubbock, TX

**Elizabeth Rumley, Senior Staff Attorney**

- May 14 – Joint online presentation on “Halfway There: Mid-Year Mid-South Review of Legal Developments” for Mid-South Agricultural and Environmental Law Conference Early Bird session

**Brigit Rollins, Staff Attorney**

- May 14 – Joint online presentation on “Halfway There: Mid-Year Mid-South Review of Legal Developments” for Mid-South Agricultural and Environmental Law Conference Early Bird session

For the full May Monthly Roundup, click [here](#).

**June 2025**

**NALC Staff**

- June 5-6 – Hosted the 12th Annual Mid-South Agricultural & Environmental Law Conference at the University of Memphis in Memphis, TN
- June 19-20 – Hosted the 3rd Annual Western Water, Agricultural & Environmental Law Conference at the Peppermill Resort & Casino in Reno, NV

**Harrison Pittman, NALC Director**

- June 20 – In-person joint presentation on “Update from the Potomac: Farm Bill, Public Lands, and Related Issues” at the 3rd Annual Western Water, Agricultural & Environmental Law Conference in Reno, NV
- June 26 – Online presentation on agricultural contracts for the Indiana Farm Bureau’s Agricultural Contracting Program via Zoom

**Rusty Rumley, Senior Staff Attorney**

- June 2 – Online presentation on leasing and heirs’ property with the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff
- June 2 – In-person presentation on state-by-state policies related to solar development to the policy development committee at the Missouri Farm Bureau in Jefferson City, MO
- June 10-11 – In person presentation on agritourism at Frontline to Farm event in Boone, NC
- June 24 – In-person presentation on Carbon Credits for the Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts Northwest Area Annual Meeting in Harrison, AR

**Brigit Rollins, Staff Attorney**

- June 19 – In-person joint presentation on “Ag, Food, & Federal and State Agency Deference in a Post-Chevron World” at the 3rd Annual Western Water, Agricultural & Environmental Law Conference in Reno, NV

For the full June Monthly Roundup, click [here](#).

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