



# The National Agricultural Law Center

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## Farm Ownership & Corporate Farming Laws:

*Louisiana*



This material is based upon work supported by the National Agricultural Library, Agricultural Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture

# A National Agricultural Law Center Research Publication

## Farm Ownership & Corporate Farming Laws: Louisiana

### Fast Find:

- 1) Prohibition: None
- 2) Permission: La. Const. Ann. art. I, § 4
- 3) Prohibition: None
- 4) Corporate Farming: None

### La. Const. Ann. art. I, § 4

*Current through laws passed by the Regular Session and Veto Session of the 2021 Louisiana State Legislature.*

#### § 4. Right to Property

Section 4. (A) Every person has the right to acquire, own, control, use, enjoy, protect, and dispose of private property. This right is subject to reasonable statutory restrictions and the reasonable exercise of the police power.

(B)(1) Property shall not be taken or damaged by the state or its political subdivisions except for public purposes and with just compensation paid to the owner or into court for his benefit. Except as specifically authorized by Article VI, Section 21 of this Constitution property shall not be taken or damaged by the state or its political subdivisions: (a) for predominant use by any private person or entity; or (b) for transfer of ownership to any private person or entity.

(2) As used in Subparagraph (1) of this Paragraph and in Article VI, Section 23 of this Constitution, “public purpose” shall be limited to the following:

(a) A general public right to a definite use of the property.

(b) Continuous public ownership of property dedicated to one or more of the following objectives and uses:

(i) Public buildings in which publicly funded services are administered, rendered, or provided.

(ii) Roads, bridges, waterways, access to public waters and lands, and other public transportation, access, and navigational systems available to the general public.

(iii) Drainage, flood control, levees, coastal and navigational protection and reclamation for the benefit of the public generally.

(iv) Parks, convention centers, museums, historical buildings and recreational facilities generally open to the public.



- (v) Public utilities for the benefit of the public generally.
  - (vi) Public ports and public airports to facilitate the transport of goods or persons in domestic or international commerce.
- (c) The removal of a threat to public health or safety caused by the existing use or disuse of the property.
- (3) Neither economic development, enhancement of tax revenue, or any incidental benefit to the public shall be considered in determining whether the taking or damaging of property is for a public purpose pursuant to Subparagraph (1) of this Paragraph or Article VI, Section 23 of this Constitution.
- (4) Property shall not be taken or damaged by any private entity authorized by law to expropriate, except for a public and necessary purpose and with just compensation paid to the owner; in such proceedings, whether the purpose is public and necessary shall be a judicial question.
- (5) In every expropriation or action to take property pursuant to the provisions of this Section, a party has the right to trial by jury to determine whether the compensation is just, and the owner shall be compensated to the full extent of his loss. Except as otherwise provided in this Constitution, the full extent of loss shall include, but not be limited to, the appraised value of the property and all costs of relocation, inconvenience, and any other damages actually incurred by the owner because of the expropriation.
- (6) No business enterprise or any of its assets shall be taken for the purpose of operating that enterprise or halting competition with a government enterprise. However, a municipality may expropriate a utility within its jurisdiction.
- (C) Personal effects, other than contraband, shall never be taken.
- (D) The following property may be forfeited and disposed of in a civil proceeding, as provided by law: contraband drugs; property derived in whole or in part from contraband drugs; property used in the distribution, transfer, sale, felony possession, manufacture, or transportation of contraband drugs; property furnished or intended to be furnished in exchange for contraband drugs; property used or intended to be used to facilitate any of the above conduct; or other property because the above-described property has been rendered unavailable.
- (E) This Section shall not apply to appropriation of property necessary for levee and levee drainage purposes.
- (F) Further, the legislature may place limitations on the extent of recovery for the taking of, or loss or damage to, property rights affected by coastal wetlands conservation, management, preservation, enhancement, creation, or restoration activities.
- (G) Compensation paid for the taking of, or loss or damage to, property rights for the construction, enlargement, improvement, or modification of federal or non-federal hurricane protection projects, including mitigation



related thereto, shall not exceed the compensation required by the Fifth Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America. However, this Paragraph shall not apply to compensation paid for a building or structure that was destroyed or damaged by an event for which a presidential declaration of major disaster or emergency was issued, if the taking occurs within three years of such event. The legislature by law may provide procedures and definitions for the provisions of this Paragraph.

(H)(1) Except for the removal of a threat to public health or safety caused by the existing use or disuse of the property, and except for leases or operation agreements for port facilities, highways, qualified transportation facilities or airports, the state or its political subdivisions shall not sell or lease property which has been expropriated and held for not more than thirty years without first offering the property to the original owner or his heir, or, if there is no heir, to the successor in title to the owner at the time of expropriation at the current fair market value, after which the property can be transferred only by competitive bid open to the general public. After thirty years have passed from the date the property was expropriated, the state or political subdivision may sell or otherwise transfer the property as provided by law.

(2) Within one year after the completion of the project for which the property was expropriated, the state or its political subdivision which expropriated the property shall identify all property which is not necessary for the public purpose of the project and declare the property as surplus property.

(3) All expropriated property identified as surplus property shall be offered for sale to the original owner or his heir, or, if there is no heir, to the successor in title to the owner at the time of expropriation at the current fair market value, within two years after completion of the project. If the original owner, heir, or other successor in title refuses or fails to purchase the surplus property within three years from completion of the project, then the surplus property may be offered for sale to the general public by competitive bid.

(4) After one year from the completion of the project for which property was expropriated, the original owner or his heir, or, if there is no heir, the successor in title to the owner at the time of expropriation may petition the state or its political subdivision which expropriated the property to have all or any portion of his property declared surplus. If the state or its political subdivision refuses or fails to identify all or any portion of the expropriated property as surplus, the original owner or the successor in title may petition any court of competent jurisdiction to have the property declared surplus.

