



Climate Change Statutes

STATE OF VERMONT

This project was undertaken in partnership with the USDA Office of the Chief Economist, The Office of Energy Policy and New Uses. For information on the full project, visit [Climate Change Statutes](#).

Current through the 2009 Legislative Session of the Vermont General Assembly.

§ 1. General powers of agency; secretary of agriculture, food and markets

(a) The agency of agriculture, food and markets shall be administered by a secretary of agriculture, food and markets. The secretary shall supervise and be responsible for the execution and enforcement of all laws relating to agriculture and standards of weight and measure. The secretary may:

- (1) delegate any authority, power or duty as necessary for the proper execution of the laws;
- (2) conduct examinations and pass upon the qualifications of applicants for licenses;
- (3) conduct routine inspections and investigate suspected violations of any law administered by the secretary;
- (4) conduct hearings;
- (5) issue subpoenas and administer oaths in connection with an authorized investigation or hearing;
- (6) enter into contracts on behalf of the agency;
- (7) seek and obtain temporary or permanent injunctions to restrain a violation of any law administered by the secretary, whenever there are reasonable grounds to believe that a law has been or will be violated;
- (8) institute appropriate proceedings in the name of the agency to enforce any law administered by the secretary;
- (9) apply for and accept grants of money or other gifts on behalf of the agency, subject to [32 V.S.A. § 5](#);
- (10) adopt and enforce rules to implement the laws administered by the secretary;
- (11) accept an assurance of discontinuance in lieu of instituting an action or proceeding for violation of a law administered by the secretary;
- (12) exercise any other power or authority granted by common law or statute.

(b) The following entities shall exist and operate within the agency of agriculture, food and markets under the general supervision of the secretary:

- (1) The Vermont milk commission.
- (2) The state dairy council.
- (3) The Vermont dairy industry council.
- (4) The agricultural development commission.

(c) The secretary shall provide data and funding recommendations to the Vermont climate change oversight committee with regard to:

- (1) Funding and implementing state conservation programs in order to increase carbon sequestration.
- (2) Providing cost-share assistance for farmers to purchase manure injection equipment to retrofit existing manure spreaders or purchase new equipment.
- (3) Providing cost-share assistance for farms to develop and implement nutrient management plans for smaller dairy farms and continuing to provide annual assistance so that existing plans on medium-sized farms continue to be implemented.
- (4) Providing cost-share assistance under the farm agronomic practices program so that farms implement cover crops and other soil erosion and land cover practices.
- (5) Other ways to create incentives for carbon sequestration on farm and forest land, Vermont's "green bank."

(d) The secretary shall continue the agency's methane capture program and shall collaborate with the Vermont climate change oversight committee with regard to the availability of additional funds for these purposes. The goal of the methane digester portion of the program shall be to digest and use 15 percent of the state's dairy cattle manure by 2012, and 50 percent by 2028. The goal of a second aspect of this emissions reduction program shall be to increase the percentage of poultry and nondairy livestock manure composted to 25 percent by 2012, and 50 percent by 2028.