



## Agricultural Law<sup>1</sup>

Center for Natural Resources<sup>2</sup>

### Laws as Packages for Policy

Creation of the Environmental Protection Agency in 1970 brought with it a number of new and amended pre-existing environmental laws designed to monitor and regulate agricultural production practices. These laws and their corresponding regulations have implemented environmental policies designed to oversee all aspects of agriculture. The agricultural industry has adapted to this regulatory atmosphere by actively involving itself within the legislative process. Because of this, the industry has a better understanding of critical environmental issues and the importance of addressing these issues through cooperation and compromise.

### UF/IFAS Agricultural Law Center

Symptomatic of this cooperation is the promotion and development of a UF/IFAS-based Agricultural Law Center by Dr. Michael T. Olexa, an agricultural attorney in the Department of Food and Resource Economics. The Agricultural Law Center develops, implements, and maintains teaching and extension service activities on law topics of importance to Florida's agricultural future. The Center combines education in law and science to

prepare undergraduate and graduate students and agriculturists with information for framing and putting into action environmentally sound, socially acceptable and economically feasible agricultural practices in the production of food and fiber.

### Outreach Education (Extension)

Through seminars, workshops, and publications, the Center provides information on a wide range of legal topics related to agricultural production. Particularly popular are publications posted on the World Wide Web via the EDIS (Extension Digital Information Source) system at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>. To address the needs of Florida's culturally diverse agricultural community, publications are also available in Spanish and can be accessed at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/spanishdocuments.html>. Currently, plans are underway for an Agricultural Law Center home page that will provide up-to-date regulatory information for an agricultural clientele.

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2. This fact sheet was written by The Center for Natural Resources (CNR). Established in 1973, CNR, at the University of Florida, plays a major role in the conservation, preservation and restoration of our nation's natural resources by facilitating interdisciplinary collaborations between UF faculty and external stakeholders.

Nancy Peterson, Coordinator.

## **Undergraduate Agricultural Law Minor**

The Agricultural Law Center has launched the nation's first Undergraduate Agricultural Law minor, consisting of a core of several agricultural law courses and listed electives to provide students with foundational understanding of the laws and regulations governing both personal and professional agricultural-related pursuits.

## **Florida Agricultural Mediation Service**

The University of Florida Levin College of Law Institute for Dispute Resolution, with the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences (IFAS), has established the Florida Agricultural Mediation Service to provide to USDA customers an alternative to administrative appeals and litigation. Agricultural producers, their creditors, and other persons directly affected by the actions of the USDA come together in a neutral setting to participate in a problem-solving process led by an impartial mediator. Through this no-cost mediation, Florida agricultural producers have resolved issues concerning wetlands, agricultural credit, crop disputes, and others.

## **Contacts**

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