CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

**Governing Territorial Food Systems: Legal Obstacles and Opportunities**

5th Annual Canadian Food Law and Policy Conference

**Food systems in Canada** are facing a multiplicity of legal and regulatory challenges. These challenges include balancing interests such as: ensuring food system sustainability; promoting economic viability; respecting Indigenous (food) sovereignty; ensuring access to land- and sea-based country foods; minimizing the impacts of industrial development on Indigenous trapline territories; incentivizing land use for food production or for alternative crops (cannabis, wine, agrofuels etc.); addressing the climate crisis; supporting industrial or agroecological food production; ensuring food security; promoting informed consumer choice; enhancing agribusinesses’ competitiveness and access to markets; and so on. These examples highlight potentially competing demands and pressures, as well as conflicting views of how and for whom food systems should be governed and along what geographic and political divides.

The concept of territorial food systems offers one way to understand these challenges. Territorial food systems locate food production, processing, distribution, consumption and disposal at the scale of a particular territory. They represent a place-based vision in which food systems reflect local circumstances and priorities, share economic benefits equitably throughout value chains, support innovative and community-based business models, promote human health and ecological sustainability, and improve democratic governance and local autonomy.

Territorial food systems have obvious legal implications, but lawyers have been slow to the table, and the regulatory dimensions of territorial food systems are under-explored. This conference will examine the legal obstacles and opportunities of building and governing territorial food systems as a means of addressing these concerns, and shaping food system futures to ensure they are not only more sustainable and climate-friendly, but more just, healthful, democratic, vibrant and tailored to the landscapes people inhabit. We will ask: How can law and policy be used to build territorial food systems that balance competing interests (while questioning to the extent to which these interests are or need to be in competition with each other)? What can we learn from the experiences of British Columbia in regulating local food systems, preserving agricultural land and promoting a bioregional approach?
For the first time, the CAFLP conference will take place on the West Coast. In addition to addressing a variety of pressing issues in food law and policy, our fifth conference offers a unique opportunity to explore BC as a case study in territorial food system governance. This includes Indigenous food sovereignty and food systems governance models, the regulation of ocean foods and the ocean economy, and the challenges and opportunities of local food systems governance, among many other issues.

Lawyers, researchers, policymakers, Indigenous leaders and community members, agri-food industry actors, activists, students and other thought leaders are invited to submit proposals for individual presentations or panels on any topic related to the conference theme or broader questions of food law and policy by April 20, 2020.

Potential topics include but are not limited to:
- Indigenous food systems and Indigenous food sovereignty, including the intersection of Indigenous and provincial/federal laws and regulations;
- Regulating ocean food systems, including wild aquatic plant harvesting, wild fish, traceability and seafood labelling, food safety and workers’ rights standards, as well as shellfish and finfish aquaculture;
- Municipal food governance and local food movements, farmers’ markets and urban farms;
- Laws and policies to support sustainable food systems, including pesticide reduction, farmworkers rights, organic food production and agricultural land preservation;
- The impact of climate policies and laws, such as BC’s Greenhouse Carbon Tax Relief Grant, on agricultural production and food consumption;
- How policy and law influence consumer food choices and food waste reduction (e.g. the National Food Policy, Canada Food Guide, the Safe food for Canadians Act and Regulations, and other provincial and local actions);
- Geographical indications from craft wine and breweries to cannabis, maple syrup, cheese, and other agri-food products;
- Regulatory impediments to building local or territorial markets, including the challenges for new food enterprises to enter markets; and
- Impacts of trade deals (and regulations of inter-provincial trade) on Canadian farmers, fishermen, brewers, processors, industry players and consumers.

Proposals may be in French or English, or both. Please visit http://foodlaw.ca/conference-2020 for detailed instructions and to submit a proposal. Any questions may be sent to conference@foodlaw.ca. We look forward to working with our partners, including our local host, the Centre for Law and the Environment at the Allard School of Law, in developing this exciting event, and to welcoming participants to Vancouver in November 2020.

The conference will be held on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Nation. We are grateful to be guests on this land.