



Acts Affecting Animals & Agriculture

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Notice to Readers

This report provides summaries of new laws (public acts and special acts) significantly affecting animals and agriculture enacted during the 2019 regular session. OLR's other Acts Affecting reports, including Acts Affecting Environment, are, or will soon be, available on OLR's website: <https://www.cga.ct.gov/olr/actsaffecting.asp>.

Each summary indicates the public act (PA) or special act (SA) number. Not all provisions of the acts are included. The report does not include vetoed acts unless the veto was overridden. Complete summaries of public acts are, or will soon be, available on OLR's website: <https://www.cga.ct.gov/olr/olrsums.asp>.

Readers are encouraged to obtain the full text of acts that interest them from the Connecticut State Library, House Clerk's Office, or General Assembly's website: <http://www.cga.ct.gov>.

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Animals

Animal Quarantine

The legislature passed a new law updating the state's rabies quarantine requirements. Among other things, the new law requires, rather than authorizes, an animal control officer (ACO) to quarantine, for 10 days, a dog, cat, or ferret that bit or attacked a person or other animal. It allows the dog, cat, or ferret to be quarantined on its owner's or keeper's premises under certain conditions. During the quarantine, the animal must be observed for signs of rabies, and on the 10th day, the state veterinarian or her designee must examine the animal to determine whether to continue the quarantine. The animal's owner or keeper must pay all associated costs, including veterinary costs. The act also addresses how ACOs will handle the quarantine of other animals ([PA 19-197](#), effective July 1, 2019).

Commercial Kennel License Exemption

Under a new law, people who board up to three dogs or cats in their residence are exempt from having to obtain a commercial kennel license from the Department of Agriculture (DoAg) ([PA 19-156](#), effective upon passage).

Pet Leasing

A new law, with limited exceptions, bans pet leasing by voiding any contract entered into on or after October 1, 2019, that (1) transfers ownership of a dog or cat contingent on the buyer making periodic payments after taking possession of the animal, other than payments to repay an unsecured loan to buy the animal, or (2) provides for the lease of a dog or cat with the option to buy the animal at the end of the lease term. Anyone taking possession of a dog or cat under such a contract is deemed the animal's owner and entitled to the return of all amounts paid under the contract ([PA 19-82](#), effective upon passage).

Regional Animal Shelters

The legislature passed a law allowing more municipalities to open regional animal shelters (i.e., dog pound facilities). Under prior law, any two or more contiguous towns, each with a population of less than 25,000, could agree to be served by a regional animal control officer and facility. The new law (1) removes the contiguity requirement and (2) increases the towns' population threshold to those with a population of less than 50,000 ([PA 19-8](#), effective October 1, 2019).

Veterinary Licensure Exemptions

A new law clarifies the scope of the existing exemption from veterinarian licensure for educational institutions and their employees, students, and other associated people engaged in related

research or studies. Among other things, it exempts from the veterinary licensure laws faculty members, residents, students, and interns employed by an American Veterinary Medical Association-accredited school of veterinary medicine, surgery, or dentistry while they are engaged in clinical practice, research, or studies within a hospital, clinic, or laboratory that the school owns ([PA 19-118](#), § 76, effective July 1, 2019).

Agriculture

Alcohol Designations and Advertisements

Beginning July 1, 2020, a new law allows qualified manufacturer permittees using a certain amount of Connecticut farm products (1) who are on a farm to use the words “Connecticut Farm Winery,” “Connecticut Farm Brewery,” “Connecticut Farm Cidery,” or substantially similar words, or (2) to advertise or promote their product as “Connecticut Grown.” Before using such words in its advertising or promotions, and then annually, the permittee must apply to the DoAg commissioner with a \$25 registration fee for each designation ([PA 19-24](#), § 23, effective July 1, 2020).

Anaerobic Digestion at Animal Feeding Operations

A new law exempts certain anaerobic digestion facilities from Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) solid waste facility permit requirements. To be exempt, the facility must, among other things, (1) be collocated with an animal feeding operation, (2) use feed stock that meets certain requirements, and (3) beneficially use any discharge that is not an energy end product.

This new law also allows the DEEP commissioner to conduct solicitations for up to 10 megawatts of energy derived from anaerobic digestion and requires solicitation bidders to submit at least one proposal for facilities on animal feeding operations and located on land used for farming ([PA 19-35](#), §§ 15-17, effective upon passage).

Biogas Interconnection Standard

Under a new law, the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority must initiate a docket, by October 1, 2019, to define and adopt a gas quality interconnection standard for biogas derived from the decomposition of farm-generated organic waste or source separated organic material processed through gas conditioning systems to remove impurities (e.g., carbon dioxide, hydrogen sulfide). The standard must (1) make the biogas of a quality suitable for injection in the state’s natural gas distribution system and (2) include cleanliness standards and a process by which biogas producers may request and be approved for interconnection to the distribution system. A final decision in the docket is due September 1, 2021 ([PA 19-35](#), § 18, effective upon passage).

Environmental Agricultural Program Feasibility Study

A new law requires the Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR) and the UConn Board of Trustees to each study the feasibility of establishing an environmental agricultural program at the constituent units within each board's jurisdiction, including certificate or degree programs related to environmental agriculture, organic agriculture, or greenhouse construction. The presidents of BOR and UConn must report each study's findings to the Higher Education committee by January 1, 2020 ([SA 19-7](#), effective July 1, 2019).

Hemp Production

The legislature passed a new law requiring the DoAg commissioner to (1) establish and operate a hemp research pilot program in Connecticut and (2) prepare a hemp production state plan in accordance with federal law. The new law establishes licensing requirements, qualifications, and fees for hemp growers, processors, and manufacturers. It also establishes inspection and testing requirements for growers and processors, as well as independent testing requirements for manufacturers, to ensure that hemp plants and products comply with state and federal requirements. It imposes penalties for violations ([PA 19-3](#), as amended by [PA 19-117](#), §§ 152-154, effective upon passage).

Honey & Maple Syrup

A new law exempts all in-state honey and maple syrup production from regulation under the state's Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act and cottage food law, which the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) oversees. It also exempts the producers from needing to obtain a DCP food manufacturing license. The new law instead subjects producers to oversight by DoAg and requires DoAg's commissioner to adopt associated regulations ([PA 19-18](#), effective October 1, 2019).