

## MESSAGE TO READERS

David S. Walker\*

It is a pleasure to welcome readers to the *Drake Journal of Agricultural Law* and this inaugural issue in particular. This new journal will offer students, scholars, practicing lawyers, and those active in the formulation of agricultural law and policy a forum for the analysis and discussion of issues of agricultural law and other issues arising in the agricultural sector that imply or suggest legal solution. As such, the *Journal* reflects our commitment at Drake to the study of Agricultural Law as a distinct field of law of huge significance to the United States and even the world, and it also reflects the Law School's disposition for practical outreach to people affected by law, to members of the Bar, and to decision-makers in every arena.

Professor Neil Harl, in his introduction, refers to agricultural law as a "relatively young field,"<sup>1</sup> which did not secure "undeniable visibility in the pantheon of disciplines"<sup>2</sup> until 1980 with the formation of the American Agricultural Law Association. Certainly there would have been many who would have agreed with Professor Neil D. Hamilton when he wrote, "One aspect of agricultural law that makes it conceptually difficult to perceive the area as a separate field of study is the number and variety of legal subjects that are involved in agricultural matters."<sup>3</sup> The field is indeed broad. It possesses both public and private spheres, which are distinct yet constantly interacting. It ranges from contract and commercial law, to environmental and property law, to tax and antitrust. It is at once local, regional, national, and international. Yet there is a unifying focus that not only merits but demands recognition as a distinct field and makes highly appropriate the launching of a professional and scholarly journal devoted to its study and evolution. Professor Harl expresses it well when he suggests "that the basic polestar [of the *Drake Journal of Agricultural Law*] be pursuit of ideas with the capacity to improve the condition of the human family everywhere."<sup>4</sup>

Thanks are due to many in making this new journal possible. I particularly want to compliment Editor-in-Chief Mark Reisinger, Chief Executive Editor Aaron Oliver, and other members of the *Journal's* Editorial Board, along with Brad Mason, L'95, and Matt Benda, L'96, who have shown great initiative, ability, and perseverance in developing the concept of this new journal, securing student support and participation, and launching the *Journal* in impressive fashion. Ronja Butler, L'95, as President of the Student Bar Association, facilitated discussions leading to development of the *Journal*; and members of the Editorial Board of the *Drake Law Review* have graciously and effectively provided assistance and

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1. Neil E. Harl, *Introduction*, 1 *DRAKE J. AGRIC. L.* iii (Spring 1996).

2. *Id.*

3. Neil D. Hamilton, *The Importance of Agricultural Law in the Law School Curriculum*, 2 *AGRIC. L.J.* 31, 32 (1980)

4. Harl, *supra* note 1, at vi.

technical training to the Editorial Board of the *Drake Journal of Agricultural Law* in publishing the *Journal*. This cooperation and support reflect the collegial and professional atmosphere at the Law School which we at Drake treasure. I would be remiss if I did not recognize and give credit to members of the Law School Task Force who participated in National Commission II on the Future of Drake University. They recommended development of a second journal and helped generate momentum for it. The Faculty Advisors, Professor Neil D. Hamilton and Professor Hunter R. Clark have been very helpful in guiding the birth of this new journal. Professor Hamilton, in particular, deserves recognition for establishing the Agricultural Law Center at Drake Law School; developing an Agricultural Law Curriculum; working with students to form the Student Agricultural Law Association and produce the Iowa Agricultural Law Reporter; and working tirelessly to enhance awareness and understanding nationally and internationally of agricultural law and the significant issues raised and addressed by it.

Finally, let me gratefully acknowledge our Founding Sponsors, whose financial support has enabled us to obtain the equipment and other materials and cover the costs in publishing the first volume of the *Drake Journal of Agricultural Law*. Founding Sponsors of the *Journal* are:

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