



## ARTICLES

### Key Developments In Ag, Food Law Highlight Barnes & Thornburg's Annual Fall Harvest Conference

October 3, 2023

Barnes & Thornburg's [Agriculture and Food](#) practice group welcomed attendees of the Fall Harvest Conference to hear perspectives and commentary from several leaders of emerging and established companies, investment banks, universities and government agencies about key agriculture and food industry developments. The Oct. 3 event included speakers from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service and the National Agricultural Law Center at the University of Arkansas.

Following are some highlights from the daylong seminar.

#### Compliance, Regulation Highlight In-House Counsel Hot Topics Session

[Kenneth Isley](#), who was recently named co-chair of Barnes & Thornburg's Agriculture and Food practice group, moderated a panel discussion about the various issues facing in-house counsel, including compliance and governance.

The panelists, representatives from Corteva Agriscience, GDM, and AgReliant Genetics LLC, discussed the important role compliance programs have on a company's success, product development through the regulatory process, as well as data and machine learning (AI), risk mitigation, workforce management in a post-COVID-19 world, and transgenic technology.

#### Pittman Reviews State and Federal Legislative Updates,

## RELATED PEOPLE



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## RELATED INDUSTRIES

Agriculture and Food

## Foreign Ownership of Ag Land

The director of the National Agricultural Law Center at the University of Arkansas, Harrison Pittman, was a return leadoff guest of Barnes & Thornburg's Fall Harvest Conference, discussing several legislative updates. Pittman also touched on numerous measures in the 118th Congress that would further control, prohibit, restrict, or increase oversight on foreign investments in U.S. agriculture.

## Emerging Ag Technologies a Focus in Corporate, M&A Worlds

Barnes & Thornburg corporate partner [Josh Hollingsworth](#) moderated a panel discussion about several issues related to mergers and acquisitions (M&A).

The discussion, which featured Eric Steele of Elevate Ventures, Agrinovus Indiana's Mitch Frazier, and Periculum Capital's Fritz Schutte, began with prevailing macroeconomic conditions affecting M&A markets, the current environment for entrepreneurs, and the opportunity for venture capital.

The group also assessed the impact of rising interest rates and inflation on M&A and addressed the cost of capital being higher and venture capital firms becoming more cautious.

The panelists ended the discussion with comments on M&A trends affecting agtech deals and venture capital, information related to private companies looking to sell and strategists looking to buy in the middle market, as well as regulatory, global compliance, food security, and labor unrest.

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