

CURRICULUM VITAE

Robert (“Andrew”) Branan

Extension Assistant Professor
Agriculture and Resource Economics
4336 Nelson Hall
North Carolina State University
919 515 4670 (o)
919 619 8479 (c)

Early Career - Publishing (1995 – 2001)

After passing the Virginia State Bar, Andrew elected to pursue a career in publishing and joined the monthly political campaign magazine *Campaigns & Elections*, where he wrote articles and served as Advertising Director. He was later recruited to *Roll Call* – a bi-weekly newspaper covering Congress and Capitol Hill – to develop and service national advocacy and corporate messaging campaigns. After meeting his wife (the photo editor of *Roll Call*), Andrew (along with his wife, Laura) moved to Raleigh, NC to become the Advertising Director for *Spectator*, an arts & entertainment weekly covering the Triangle area. At *Spectator*, Andrew was responsible for building and leading a sales team while developing advertising initiatives in a fiercely competitive market. As the decline in print media began to accelerate after 2000, Andrew turned back to law to focus on his growing interest in land conservation.

Beginnings in Agriculture Law – Non-Profit Programming and Education (2002 – 2010)

Andrew began his career in agriculture and law with American Farmland Trust (AFT) in 2002 as a project coordinator. While at AFT, he earned experience in grant-writing and project development. Andrew also began a campaign of public speaking to landowners and public officials on farmland protection topics including farmland protection plans, voluntary agriculture districts, conservation easements and farm estate planning. While working full-time at AFT, Andrew studied for and passed the North Carolina State Bar Exam. Beginning in 2003, Andrew worked with a group of North Carolina agricultural leaders including Farm Bureau, NCDA&CS and Cooperative Extension to organize a new initiative to address the challenges of inter-generational farm transfer: The North Carolina Farm Transition Network (NCFTN).

Andrew left AFT to serve as executive director of NCFTN, organizing it as 501(c)(3) non-profit with a mission to keep agricultural land in production as it passed between generations. In that role he was general manager of the non-profit’s operations and program development. These programs included professional adviser education on farm succession matters (e.g. continuing legal education), referrals of professionals, direct counseling assistance to farmers, and development and coordination of education programs on farm succession throughout North Carolina and Virginia. He consulted directly with numerous farm families across North Carolina, learning much about farm economics and challenges of farming and farm transfer. One achievement during this period was the establishment of a region-wide “campaign” of farmer and landowner education programming on estate planning and business succession, which he sustained with continual grant-writing to private, state, and federal sources. (During this time

Andrew earned a Certificate in Grants Administration from the NC State Auditor) Working with partners from Cooperative Extension, Farm Bureau, NCDA&CS and the conservation community, he personally delivered over 100 presentations on various farm and land legal topics to county extension programs and regional and statewide grower groups, as well as groups in other states in the Southeast and beyond. In 2004, he organized and delivered a semester course titled “Small Farm Legal Issues” at Central Carolina Community College. Andrew also conceived and organized a Continuing Legal Education titled “Rural Lands and Agribusiness Update”, held throughout North Carolina and in Virginia.

While with NCFTN Andrew conceived and wrote *Planning the Future of Your Farm: A Workbook on Farm Transfer Decisions*. First published in 2006, Andrew has updated the workbook several times in North Carolina, and has adapted it to other states including Georgia, Virginia, Pennsylvania and Washington State (where it was translated to Spanish). The most recent update is the Virginia edition, published in 2017. Andrew also wrote – at the invitation of Theodore Feitshans of NCSU – the Model North Carolina Countywide Farmland Protection Plan, which became the basis for numerous such county plans adopted across North Carolina.

Also during his NCFTN time, Andrew served on the International Farm Transition Network Advisory Board, the North Carolina Farmland Preservation and Agricultural Advisory Board (NCDA&CS), and the North Carolina Local Foods System Enhancement Advisory Board.

Private Law Practice – The Branan Law Firm, PLLC (2010 – 2017)

Andrew was recruited by Paul Wright, an experienced Ohio agricultural lawyer, to join his practice serving clients in Ohio while establishing an office North Carolina. While with Paul Wright’s firm, Andrew gained valuable experience in farm estate planning and business organization, contract drafting and review of farm and gas and wind leases. In 2012, Andrew founded his own firm and continued to concentrate on serving farmers and rural landowners across North Carolina and Virginia. He continues to concentrate his practice on designing and implementing farm transfer plans utilizing wills, trusts and limited liability companies. He has experience in litigation and serves landowners on various real estate transfer transactions, including land purchase loan closings with Farm Credit and other private banks. He has drafted numerous trusts, operating agreements, contracts and leases (including hunting, farm production, and solar). His practice also addresses heir property cases, advising mostly African-American extended families on strategies of communication and land titling to keep legacy lands under family ownership. Andrew has also developed a part of his practice serving families with special needs children.

Even in private law practice, Andrew has remained active in education campaigning across North Carolina and Virginia and elsewhere, participating in numerous presentation programs on various topics (see below) at county Extension offices and state and local growers associations. He has accepted invitations to guest lecture for agriculture, land use and environmental law undergraduate and graduate classes at NCSU, Elon University,

UNC Law School and Campbell Law School, as well as agriculture programs at Central Carolina Community College and Mount Olive College. Andrew has continued to present at continuing legal education programs for the North Carolina Bar Association and National Business Institute. Andrew has continued his interest in publishing with updates to *Planning the Future of Your Farm*. In 2014 he supervised and co-authored a similar workbook targeted at newer farmers titled *Getting Into Farming*, sponsored by a Beginning Farmer and Ranger Program grant he co-wrote and directed with the National Center for Appropriate Technology and the Center for Environmental Farming Systems.

Andrew lives with his wife Laura and their two children, Caroline and Joe. He is an avid hiker and is active in music and local non-profit service.

Bar Admissions

- Virginia 1992
- North Carolina 2003

Court Admissions

- Middle District North Carolina (Including Bankruptcy) (2012)
- Eastern District North Carolina (Including Bankruptcy) (2011)
- Eastern District Virginia (1994)

Education

Hampden-Sydney College, Virginia, 1989

- BA in History and BA in Management Economics, *Cum Laude*
- Phi Beta Kappa
- Phi Alpha Theta (History honor society)
- Omicron Delta Epsilon (Economics honor society)

Wake Forest University School of Law, North Carolina, 1992

- JD, concentration in land use and conservation
- Environmental Law Society

Employment

- The Branam Law Firm, PLLC, Hillsborough, NC (2012-present)
- Wright Law Company, LPA, Dublin, Ohio (NC office) (2010-2012)
- North Carolina Farm Transition Network, Executive Director/Counsel (2004-2010)
- American Farmland Trust, Project Development Coordinator (2002-2003)

Publications (Partial List)

- “Zoning Limitations and Opportunities for Farm Enterprise Diversification: Searching for New Meaning in Old Definitions” (National Agricultural Law Center, 2004)
- *Planning the Future of Your Farm: A Workbook on Farm Transfer Decisions* (North Carolina editions, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2013) (Virginia edition, 2011 and 2017) (Washington State edition, May 2014) (Pennsylvania edition, June 2013)

(Georgia edition, June 2010)

- *Getting Into Farming* (National Center for Appropriate Technology, August 2013)
- *Franklin County (NC) Farmland Protection Plan*, (September 2010)
- “Farm Business Organizations: Helping Your Client Make the Right Choice” (Continuing Legal Education manuscript, September 2006)
- “Ethical Considerations When Working with Non-Legal Professionals” (Continuing Legal Education manuscript, September 2005)
- Model Countywide Farmland Protection Plan (North Carolina State University, 2003)

Presentation (and Law Practice) Topics (Partial List)

- Farm Business Succession and Estate Planning
- Farm Leases
- Solar Leases
- Business and Cooperative Organizations
- Agritourism Liability
- Farm Labor Laws and Immigration
- Farm Income, Estate and Gift Tax
- Conservation Easements
- Farm Production Contracts
- Farm Program Payment Limitations
- Value-Added Product Liability
- Voluntary Agriculture Districts and Farmland Protection Plans
- Present Use Value Property Tax
- Legal Ethics in Representing Landowners
- Land Access for Beginning Farmers
- Heir Property Issues
- Special Needs Trusts

Advisory Boards/Working Groups

- North Carolina Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund (2008-2010)
- NCDA&CS Voluntary Agricultural Districts Working Group (2008-2010)
- Rural Advancement Foundation International Agricultural Finance Committee (2007)
- SWCD Farmland Preservation Pilot Program Workgroup (2007-2009)
- International Farm Transition Network (2008-2010)
- North Carolina Local Foods System Enhancement Advisory Board (2010)
- Shakori Hills Community Arts Center, Inc. (Silk Hope, NC, 2016-Present)
- The People’s Seed, Inc. (Carrboro, NC, 2017-Present)

Grants as Principal Investigator

- “North Carolina Farm Transition Network” (NCFTN founding project grant), NC Tobacco Trust Fund Commission (2004) (**est. \$120,000**)
- “A Comprehensive Approach to Farm Business Succession Planning” (RME-BXZ01452), Southern Region Risk Management Education Center – Competitive Grants Program (2004 (Author/PI/Administrator) (\$29,656)

- North Carolina Farm Transition Network (NCFTN core program continuation grant), NC Golden Leaf Foundation (2005) **(\$100,000)**
- “Managing the Legal, Financial, and Human Resource Risks to Farm Business Continuity” (04 IE 08310200) USDA Risk Management Agency – Commodity Partnerships for Risk Management Education (2005) (\$149,932)
- “Understanding the Farm Business Planning and Tax Implications of Federal and State Environmental Regulations and Conservation Incentives” (RME-BF501680), Southern Region Risk Management Education Center (2005-2006) (\$40,000)
- “Managing the Legal, Financial, and Human Resource Risks to Farm Business Continuity”, USDA Risk Management Agency – Community Outreach and Assistance Program (2006)
- “Planning the Future of Your Farm – The North Carolina Farm Transition Network” (07 IE 08310268-C) USDA Risk Management Agency (2007-2008) (\$124,956)
- “Outreach Partnership Agreement” (NCFTN Programming support) 08 IE 08310220 USDA Risk Management Agency (2008) **(\$85,000)**
- “Outreach Partnership Agreement” (NCFTN Programming support and sponsorship of Raleigh magnet high school agriculture program) (10 IE 08310041) USDA Risk Management Agency (2009-2010) (\$50,000)
- “Bringing New Farmers to the Table: A Comprehensive Support Program to Meet North Carolina’s Ten Percent Local Food Challenge (NCAT)” (MONW-2010-03068) NIFA Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (2010-2013) (Project Co-Director) **(\$750,000)**