



Northeast  
Agribusiness  
& Feed Alliance

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# Vermont Legislative Overview 2024 Session



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## NEAFA and Vermont Dairy Producers Alliance (VDPA) join forces

- February 2023
- NEAFA shifts lobbying efforts and creates synergy with VDPA
- Vermont dairy advocacy now has a stronger voice along with efforts across state lines



<https://www.vtdpa.com/>



<https://wsavt.com/>



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- The Vermont Dairy Producers Alliance (VDPA) is represented by William Shouldice & Associates LLC.
- This firm began working with the Alliance in 2015 when the Vermont Agricultural community felt their voices were not being heard and wanted to strengthen their voice and collaboration with other agricultural groups. At the time, Vermont was doing a re-write of the Required Agricultural Practices (RAPs).
- The 2024 Legislative Session has continued discussion from 2023 around pesticides, rodenticides, PFAS, and the use of treated seeds. In 2023, VDPA worked hard on Right to Repair, Agritourism, and regulations on agriculture which have carried over to this year.



## **H.706 - An act relating to banning the use of neonicotinoid pesticides**

This bill as written bans the sale, offer for sale or use distribution, or use of any neonicotinoid treated article seeds for any crop in the cereal grains crop group. It also bans the application or treatment of neonicotinoid pesticide for multiple other uses.

The House Committee on Agriculture, Food Resiliency, and Forestry has started testimony on this bill, and they intend to move some sort of treated seed legislation. The advocates for pollinators have been pushing this sort of legislation for many years. The sponsor of the bill has mentioned he is open to amending this language to model it after the recently passed New York bill. The hope is to get the bill in a place where the amended New York language would allow some “off ramps” to reduce the hardship to sellers and users.

VDPA will have members testifying the week of February 6<sup>th</sup>, along with other agriculture groups.



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### **H.626 & S.292 - An Act relating to animal welfare**

Both animal welfare bills are in their respective Government Operations Committee. The Senate has not yet reviewed their bill. The bill stems from several situations where horses were mistreated in the past and this bill looks to correct those issues as well as domestic animals. We remain concerned that dairy producers may be brought into the bill in some fashion.

This bill proposes to set up a division of animal welfare at the department of public safety to develop, implement, and administer a centralized program for investigating and enforcing animal welfare requirements in the State. To fund this new division, there will be a \$10.00 surcharge assessed for each product that is already required to be registered with the Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets. The bill also asks for money from the General Fund, in a time where purse strings are already tight, this could cause a problem.

The bill is written to protect domestic animals, but we are following and will oppose the fee charged on feed and other animal products and ensuring livestock is omitted from the bill.



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**S.286-An act relating to the regulation of accessory on-farm businesses**

This bill looks to make amendments to Act 250 which allow farmers to diversify farm stands and work with neighboring farms to create a product. The bill is gaining momentum in the Senate Natural Resources & Energy Committee. This is a great way for farmers to work with neighbors and provide additional resources to their communities.



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- VDPA is proactively working to strengthen the Vermont “Right to Farm” law, clarify and expand on-farm accessory businesses, “Kick the Carton” in schools, and keep Vermont farmland in farming.
- NEAFA would like to see synergy between Hinman Straub and Shouldice & Assoc. where there is a regional impact like the neonicotinoid bills.

Thank you