



# **Biting the Hands that Feed Us: How Fewer, Smarter Laws Would Make Our Food System More Sustainable**

*Baylen J. Linnekin*

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Food waste, hunger, inhumane livestock conditions, disappearing fish stocks—these are exactly the kind of issues we expect food regulations to combat. Yet, today in the United States, laws exist at all levels of government that actually make these problems worse. Baylen Linnekin argues that, too often, government rules handcuff America’s most sustainable farmers, producers, sellers, and consumers, while rewarding those whose practices are anything but sustainable.

*Biting the Hands that Feed Us* introduces readers to the perverse consequences of many food rules. Some of these rules constrain the sale of “ugly” fruits and vegetables, relegating bushels of tasty but misshapen carrots and strawberries to food waste. Other rules have threatened to treat manure—the lifeblood of organic fertilization—as a toxin. Still other rules prevent sharing food with the homeless and others in need. There are even rules that prohibit people from growing fruits and vegetables in their own yards.

Linnekin also explores what makes for a good food law—often, he explains, these emphasize good outcomes rather than rigid processes. But he urges readers to be wary of efforts to regulate our way to a greener food system, calling instead for empowerment of those working to feed us—and themselves—sustainably.

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