



May 2015

Living here in Silicon Valley you don't have to travel very far to find yourself in the middle of some of the most fertile and productive farm land in the world. So it's not surprising to see investors and entrepreneurs, as well as large agricultural companies, looking for opportunities at the intersection of agriculture and tech.

Sustainable agricultural technology or "AgTech" is a rapidly growing sector here in California and around the world. I spent a day at the University of California, Davis last month as a mentor at [The Ag Innovation Entrepreneurship Academy](#) – helping participants learn what it takes to commercialize their ideas and take them to market.

It's exciting times at Davis and other regional hubs for agriculture. A recent article in TechCrunch, "[AgTech is the New Queen of Green](#)," provides some compelling statistics about the growth of the sector and its promise for the future. According to the article, investment in AgTech grew from just \$860 million across 119 deals in 2013 to \$2.36 billion across 264 deals in 2014. There is lots of great info in the article, which is well worth a read for anyone interested in the sector.

Back here in the Valley, all of us at Womble Carlyle are very pleased to welcome two great additions to our intellectual property team. [Reginald Ratliff](#), a former patent examiner with the USPTO, focuses his practice on technology patents. [Bill Yee](#), previously Director of Legal and Chief IP Counsel at Cardica Inc., develops and manages tech patent portfolios. Welcome Bill and Reg!

Finally, we're looking forward to attending the [Churchill Club's 17th Annual Top Ten Tech Trends](#) on May 21, 2015 at the Fairmont Hotel in San Jose. We'll see if any of the experts has AgTech on their list. I'll report back next month.

Best regards,
Steve



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Upcoming Event

ACC WEBCAST: "[Lessons Learned from the \[INSERT COMPANY HERE\] Data Breach](#)" on June 3, 2015 with Womble Carlyle privacy attorney [Ted Claypoole](#).

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