

The Fourth Annual
ND HPSTV Graduate Conference
March 31st – April 1st, 2023

Invited Speaker: Catherine Kendig | Michigan State University
“A case for normative agricultural metaphysics: How food and production standards operate as ontology-making practices”

Associate Professor in Philosophy



April 1st, 2:30 – 3:15 PM



322 Jordan Hall of Science



Agriculture is defined normatively and as such, is an area of research and practice where values are constituent of research, where facts and values elide, and normative constraints generate new categories. I suggest that areas of agricultural philosophy such as agricultural ontology present valuable case studies for integrated history and philosophy of science. Three case studies illustrate how products are classified, graded, and measured to illustrate conceptions of existence, causal relationships, and practice-oriented notions of category-making. I show how agricultural products like eggs, peanut butter, and canola oil are constituted by prescribed standards that define the product and the activities of its production. While many ontological and epistemic objects are discussed within integrated HPS, I show how agricultural standards and standardization offer exemplars of ontological objects of assessment whose parameterization is normatively defined.

Organized by the History and Philosophy of Science Program, University of Notre Dame
For more information, visit bit.ly/ndhpsv2023

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