

# THE POWER LIST

COMMERCIAL LAW

2021

## DON M. DOWNING

GRAY, RITTER & GRAHAM  
ST. LOUIS



In 2020, Don Downing reached a \$400 million settlement for farmers who alleged they suffered crop damage caused by drift from the pesticide dicamba.

It was the latest in long line of high-dollar settlements at the intersection of agriculture and technology. In 2011, Downing led a \$750 million settlement involving genetically modified rice.

He was co-lead counsel (along with fellow POWER honoree Pat Stueve) for farmers who alleged they suffered economic harm when their crops were mixed with genetically modified corn made by Syngenta. A bellwether trial by a class of Kansas farmers resulted in a \$217.7 million verdict, which prompted a \$1.51 billion global settlement that ended the case in 2018.

Downing, who serves as a managing partner of Gray, Ritter & Graham, earned his law degree from the University of Missouri in 1982. From 1993 to 1995 he was the chief deputy attorney general under then-Attorney General Jay Nixon.

Downing is a fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers and a former member and chairman of the MU Board of Curators.