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NEWS FROM NEW YORK FARM BUREAU

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NEW YORK FARM BUREAU STATEMENT ON 2015-2016 NYS BUDGET

“New York Farm Bureau applauds the work of lawmakers for securing an on-time budget that raises the level of support for agriculture in this state. The approved spending plan invests more than \$70 million in important farm programs that touch every farmer. Our members would especially like to thank Governor Andrew Cuomo along with Senator Patty Ritchie and Assemblyman Bill Magee, the respective Agriculture Committee Chairs, for their continued support and recognition of the value of farming.

This plan includes increased support for the Environmental Protection Fund. The program is responsible for enhancing water-quality projects, farmland protection and expanding conservation efforts that are taking place every day on farms across the state. In addition, the budget funds critical research for a variety of commodities including dairy, fruit, vegetables, honeybees and maple. We are also appreciative of money that supports new farmers, promotes the world-class products grown and made by our farms, and makes a substantial investment to upgrade services at the State Fairgrounds

Improving infrastructure and expanding rural broadband have also been top priorities for New York Farm Bureau, and we are pleased to see proper attention is being paid to them in the new budget. Safe roads and bridges are imperative for farmers to move machinery and product in an effective manner. This funding will also go a long way in ensuring that there is reliable internet all across New York. This is important for farms to access timely information and take advantage of new technology that improves efficiency.

It is also important to note that another increase to the minimum wage was not included in the spending plan. New York Farm Bureau members had strongly objected to the proposals because the increased labor costs would have come at a time when New York farms are already at a competitive disadvantage when compared to those in other agricultural states. We urge lawmakers to keep this in mind as the legislative session continues,” said Dean Norton, New York Farm Bureau President.

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New York Farm Bureau is the State’s largest agricultural lobbying/trade organization. Its members and the public know the organization as “The Voice of New York Agriculture.” New York Farm Bureau is dedicated to solving the economic and public policy issues challenging the agricultural community.

