



## NEWS FROM NEW YORK FARM BUREAU

Contact: Steve Ammerman, Manager of Public Affairs  
518-431-5643 (w) 518-573-3617 (cell), sammerman@nyfb.org  
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### **NEW YORK FARM BUREAU WINS BIG AT AFBF ANNUAL CONVENTION IN PHOENIX**

New York Farm Bureau just returned from the 2017 American Farm Bureau Federation Annual Convention and IDEAg Trade Show in Phoenix with several honored recognitions as well as having success in establishing new public policy positions for the organization at the national level.

AFBF awarded New York Farm Bureau last week with the New Horizon Award in its membership category. The award, recognizing innovative programming, honored NYFB for its “Keep the Barn Doors Open” public relations campaign that led the way in pushing back against a \$15 minimum wage in New York State. In addition, NYFB received all six Awards of Excellence that demonstrate outstanding achievements in six program areas: Education and Outreach; Leadership Development; Member Benefits; Membership Initiatives; Policy Development and Implementation; and Public Relations and Communications.

Also during the opening general session of the convention, Judi Whittaker of Broome County Farm Bureau, accepted the first ever Founders Award on behalf of James Quinn. More than a century ago, in 1911, Quinn was elected as the first president of the first Farm Bureau in the country in Broome County, NY. A prominent local dairy farmer, Quinn set an important precedent for Farm Bureau as an organization that was directed by farmers and for farmers. NYFB nominated Quinn to receive the Founders Award. A national Farm Bureau committee selected him as the inaugural winner.

NYFB’s Young Farmers and Ranchers program had four participants in three competitive events at AFBF Annual Convention. Marc Silva from Schoharie County Farm Bureau competed in the Discussion Meet and made it to the sweet 16 following two rounds of competition. Emmaline Long from Genesee County Farm Bureau proudly represented NYFB in the Excellence of Agriculture competition and Bret and Johanna Bossard from Madison County Farm Bureau were wonderful representatives in the Achievement Award event.

Finally, AFBF gave two of the 25 County Activities of Excellence Awards to county Farm Bureau projects in New York. The CAE program acknowledges and shares successful county Farm Bureau programs and activities. The winners in the collaborative category are Broome, Chemung, Cortland, Delaware, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego and Schuyler County Farm Bureaus. Their project, “Grown in Our State,” brought the organizations together to sponsor monthly stories on Time Warner Cable that featured local, diverse family farms. Cortland County

Farm Bureau President Jeff Perry and Onondaga County Farm Bureau President Dan Palladino were interviewed on the IDEAg Trade Show stage about their joint effort to share agriculture's story to a large television audience. Chenango County Farm Bureau also received a CAE Award for its "Farm to Fork A-Fair." This program at the 2016 Chenango County Fair featured fresh produce and product displays and two tasting stations for fair-goers to sample local foods.

The business session where farmer delegates vote on national public policy resolutions is the foundation of AFBF Annual Convention. They approved a host of public policy measures designed to help assure a prosperous future for farmers, ranchers and everyone who depends on them for food, fuel and fiber. These included several positions that originated at the grassroots level at county Farm Bureaus across New York and approved at NYFB's State Annual Meeting in Albany in December. These resolutions include:

- USDA allowing the sale of whole milk in public schools again. The most recent scientific studies of whole milk vs. low fat milk demonstrate higher vitamin D absorption and lower body fat for children that drink whole milk.
- (We support) requiring all manufacturers to make available diagnostic and repair information for all digital electronic parts and machines.
- (We support) changes to the Milk Margin Protection program that provide more flexibility, better coverage and are more reflective of regional margins.
- (We support) amending 7 CFR 614.6 (b) to allow NRCS to notify participants of preliminary technical decisions of the Food Security Act of 1985 to be sent regular mail for non-adverse decisions.
- We strongly support working lands conservation programs over preservation programs.

In addition, American Farm Bureau Federation delegates from all 50 states approved a special resolution urging Congress to enact swift, meaningful and bipartisan regulatory reform.

"New York Farm Bureau was well represented on the national stage in Phoenix. The AFBF Annual Convention highlighted our organization's strong programming, public policy work and most importantly, the efforts of our members who are working hard on the farm and off to improve agriculture for fellow farmers across the state. We are all proud of the quality work of staff and leaders who helped us throughout the year, and our organization is happy that AFBF recognized these ambitious efforts and creative programs. On behalf of our Board of Directors, I would like to congratulate all of the award winners and participants, and we look forward to an energized year for New York Farm Bureau in 2017," said David Fisher, New York Farm Bureau President.