

Oneida County Farm Bureau News

April 2024



To Serve and Strengthen Agriculture

President's Message



Spring is here and planting season will soon get underway. But first, we have another important season to cultivate, New York State budget season.

Having already missed the April 1st deadline, with an extension enacted now through April 11th, lawmakers are continuing to negotiate the spending the spending plan for the next fiscal year, and this includes critical funding for agriculture. There is more than \$160 million earmarked for animal health and environmental programs, promotion of farm products, and research support among other needed funding.

Our county Farm Bureau traveled to Albany for the annual New York Farm Bureau Taste of New York Reception and Lobby Day. This is essential to the work of our organization. We met with our local Senators and Assembly Members along with adopted lawmakers from New York City. This is our opportunity to advocate for the budget and discuss the impacts of other proposed legislation that we either support or oppose.

Some of the other priorities this session includes full funding for Nourish New York and the Healthy School Meals for All programs to increase access to locally produced food. NYFB is also prioritizing legislation allowing for direct-to-consumer shipping for all New York-produced farm beverages, including beer, cider, and spirits.

Farm Bureau also has serious concerns about the statewide push for electrification before farms can successfully adopt it or the rural power grid can properly handle the expected surge in use. The state cannot afford to go too far, too fast. We also are pushing back on plans to shift recycling costs onto the backs of producers that include dairy processors and wine makers. For a full look at the state priority issues, you can click under legislative affairs on the

New York Farm Bureau website at nyfb.org.

I would encourage you to make your voice heard as well on these issues, by sending an e-lobby message through the website or by participating in the monthly calls to action that come through your email. It takes all of us getting involved to make things happen.

I wish all of you a good spring season, and may this year be fruitful for us all.

John Collins

Oneida County Farm Bureau President

A MESSAGE FROM NY FARMNET

With springs arrival, it's a time when farmers all across the state are gearing up for the year ahead. With so much planning underway, problems, questions, stress, and even opportunities are popping up everywhere.

We would like to take this moment to remind everyone that we are a free, confidential service available to all farmers in NYS. Most of our clients are referred to us by others and we assist with all kinds of issues. Whether you or someone you know has problems, questions, or just needs an extra pair of eyes on something - please give us a call!

For free support 24/7, NY FarmNet can be contacted at 1-800-547-3276 or by email at nyfarmnet@cornell.edu. You can also visit our website at NYFARMNET.org and submit a request for services by filling out a simple electronic form.



ONEIDA COUNTY CELEBRATES AGRICULTURAL LITERACY WEEK

Each year in March, a Celebration of Agriculture is brought into classrooms throughout New York State with Agricultural Literacy Week. Agricultural Literacy Week, designated as March 18 thru 22 this year, helps children kindergarten through third grade have an awareness of where their food comes from by introducing them to a pre-selected agriculture themed book that is read to classrooms

Oneida County school children had the celebration brought to them this year with volunteers helping to introduce them to the importance of agriculture by reading this year's book titled *I Love Strawberries!* Written by Shannon Anderson with artwork by Jaclyn Sinquett. The book features Jolie and her love of strawberries. Jolie is on an unstoppable mission to grow her own food from seedling to table in this colorful introduction to the joy of growing



the popular perennial.

Through Jolie's comical scrapbook-style journal entries, young readers will learn how she convinces the "old people" (aka her parents) to let her grow her own strawberries. Growing strawberries is a lot of work and responsibility, but Jolie is ready with the help of her faithful rabbit

Munchy! Together they find out just how delicious, rewarding, and sometimes complicated it can be to grow your own food.

Oneida County Farm Bureau is pleased to be able to purchase the books that were read to our local students. The books are then distributed throughout classrooms, school libraries and community libraries so that all children in the county can continue to experience and join in Jolie's mission to grow her own strawberries.



Photo Left: Anne Debraggio of the Kirkland Town Library with Oneida County Farm Bureau County Manager John Wagner. As part of Ag Literacy Week, the Oneida County Farm Bureau donates books to all public libraries in Oneida County.

Photo Right: Kathy Gregory-Salvo, Oneida County Farm Bureau Vice-President (I) donating *I Love Strawberries* to an employee of the New Hartford Public Library.



AGRICULTURAL LITERACY WEEK BREAKS RECORD!

New York Agriculture in the Classroom announced on March 21st that a record-breaking number of more than 103,000 students across the state were reached during Agricultural Literacy Week 2024.

NYFB Promotion and Education Chair Bill Zalakar said, "Agricultural Literacy Week is a wonderful opportunity to share agriculture's story with students across the state. It opens the door for them to learn about where their food comes from and the hardworking people who farm every day. We encourage everyone to share the story of our family farms that provide so much to their communities."



ONEIDA COUNTY FARM BUREAU ATTENDS TASTE NY & LOBBY DAY

New York Farm Bureau's Lobby Day and Taste of NY Reception was held on March 4 & 5 in Albany with Oneida members in attendance. The Taste of NY Reception (March 4) showcased products from around New York State. Lobby Day (March 5) was an opportunity for Farm Bureau members to meet with and give a rural production perspective to elected legislators. Oneida County Farm Bureau also met with urban "Adopted Legislators," for some of these legislators, it may have been the first contact with an agricultural producer.

Photo Top Right: Governor Hochul (2nd from right) along with Commissioner of Agriculture Richard Ball (2nd from left) toured the New York Farm Bureau Taste of NY Reception and stopped at the Oneida County Farm Bureau booth. Pictured with them are Oneida County Farm Bureau members Ben Simons (l) and John Collins (r).

Photo Bottom Left: Adopted Legislator from Manhattan, Deborah Glick (c) met with the Oneida County Farm Bureau members and New York Farm Bureau President David Fisher to discuss the 2024 Legislative Priority Issues during Lobby Day.

Photo Bottom Right: Oneida County Farm Bureau had a visit from local representatives as well. L-R: Assemblyman Ken Blankenbush, Oneida member Ben Simons, Assemblyman Brian Miller, Oneida members Pat Van Lieshout and John Collins.



FARMWORKER OVERTIME TAX CREDIT PORTAL NOW OPEN

Governor Kathy Hochul recently announced the launch of the State's new Farm Employer Overtime Credit advance portal, which is now open for farmers to register and begin preparing the documents they will need to apply for reimbursement. Later this year, eligible farm employers may apply to the Department of Agriculture and Markets for a certificate of advance payment of eligible overtime paid to their employees between January 1 and July 31, 2024.

The Farm Employer Overtime Credit is a refundable tax credit available for eligible farm employers who pay overtime wages after January 1, 2024, based on the gradual phase-in of the overtime threshold in New York State.

Farm employers are encouraged to prepare to apply this year by taking the following steps:

- Ensuring that they are registered for a [NY.gov](https://www.ny.gov) ID through [My.NY.gov](https://my.ny.gov).
- Taking the [farm employer eligibility assessment](#)
- Discussing the program with their tax and payroll advisors to ensure they are keeping necessary records during the January 1 – July 31 period this year.
- Registering their farm in the online portal now if they plan to apply for the advance payment in 2024. The application portal can be accessed by visiting taxcredit.agriculture.ny.gov.
- Optionally, choosing to delegate authority to a representative (e.g., a tax preparer), who may complete and submit the application on the farm employer's behalf later in the year.


New York Farm Bureau
 159 Wolf Road, Suite 300
 Albany, NY 12205




Oneida County Farm Bureau

MEMBER BENEFITS IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD!

As a Member of Oneida County Farm Bureau, you can take advantage of local offers through the *New York Farm Bureau County Value Program* with these generous sponsors! Please be sure to thank these businesses for supporting local farmers.



Prospect Falls Winery Oneida County's first licensed winery, situated at the threshold of the Adirondacks, but less than 30 minutes from Herkimer, Utica, and Rome. Visit us online at <https://www.prospectfallswinery.com/> - Oneida County members receive 10% off bottle sales only with proof of membership card*.



Yorkville Battery Our product lines include, custom battery cables and terminals, power inverters, portable jump packs, battery chargers, flashlights and portable lighting, dry cell batteries, solar panels, off road LED lighting, power winches, amsoil products and much more. Visit us online at <https://yorkvillebattery.com/> - Oneida County members receive 10% off regular price of batteries, and 10% off most other items in store with proof of membership card*.

*If you don't have a membership card or have misplaced yours, call the New York Farm Bureau Office at 1-800-342-4143 and press "0" to speak with New York Farm Bureau's member service representatives to receive a new one.

**ONEIDA COUNTY FARM BUREAU
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 The board usually meets on the third Monday of the month at the CCE of Oneida in Oriskany.