

Wyoming County Farm Bureau

April 2024



To Serve and Strengthen Agriculture

President's Message



Springtime is here, despite old man winter hanging on in recent weeks. Soon enough, planting season will be underway. But first, we have another important season to cultivate, New York State budget season.

Lawmakers are currently negotiating 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.

Brian Parker

Wyoming County Farm Bureau President

A MESSAGE FROM NY FARMNET

Spring has arrived and the weather has started to change. 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.



2024 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Below are the New York Farm Bureau 2024 legislative priorities. These priorities are a culmination of the grassroots efforts which began last fall at county annual meetings and culminated at the State Annual Meeting held in December. These priorities reflect the collective interest of our members and rural communities and will determine the focus of our advocacy discussion and action for the year ahead.

- Support critical funding for current agricultural animal health (such as the Avian Disease Program), promotion, research, and environmental programs in the final FY 24/25 state budget.
- Support renewable energy policies that incorporate common sense time frames for adoption based upon grid capacity and the practical realities of electrification of New York State.
- Continue funding support for the Nourish-NY program to help farmers provide local, healthy food to underserved and food-insecure communities in the state.
- Oppose legislation that prohibits the use of agricultural chemical protectants and support DEC's regulatory authority over pesticide registration in accordance with sound science.
- Support legislation allowing direct to consumer shipping for all New York-produced farm beverages, including beer, cider, and distillates.
- Oppose Extended Producer Responsibility legislation that doesn't require consumer responsibility for packaging they receive and doesn't unduly burden New York's food and wine manufacturing businesses. We support establishing an infrastructure and market for recycled plastics that is incentive based and economically viable, especially in rural areas. To address these issues we support exploring an expansion of the current bottle bill statute.
- Incentivize more locally produced food purchases by public entities without values-based purchasing requirements.
- We support addressing transportation issues to facilitate the shipment of food products and farm equipment in New York State, including:
 - ◆ A limit on how many times commercial vehicles have to stop at a DOT inspection checkpoint in a certain time period, especially if that vehicle is carrying livestock, fish, bees, or other perishable commodities.
 - ◆ An exemption from CDL for farm owners and employees hauling farm equipment or produce within 150 miles of a farm without an F or G endorsement, similar to exemptions in other states.
- Target federal and state infrastructure funding for rural roads, bridges and broadband.
- Ensure that the Departments of Environmental Conservation and Health continue to regulate water quality standards in accordance with federal law.
- Support full funding of the Healthy School Meals For All program.

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 ID through My.NY.gov](https://www.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.

WYOMING 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 Wyoming Farm Bureau members and Warsaw FFA 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. Wyoming 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: Senator George Borrello (c) takes a moment for a picture with Wyoming County Farm Bureau President Brian Parker (l) and Genesee County Farm Bureau President Bryan Lord (r) at New York Farm Bureau's Taste of NY Reception.

Photo Bottom Right: Assembly woman Marjorie Byrnes met with Wyoming County Farm Bureau members and Warsaw FFA where the 2024 Legislative Priority Issues were discussed during New York Farm Bureau's Lobby Day.

Photo Bottom Left: Assembly member David DiPietro (2nd from Left) and Senator George Borrello (3rd from left) stopped by the Wyoming County Farm Bureau Taste of NY table to sample Wyoming County products Buried Barrel Hard Cider, East Hill Creamery Raclette Cheese and Marquart Farms New York Chips.



WYOMING 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

Wyoming 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 Jaelyn Sinnett. 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.

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



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Wyoming County Farm Bureau

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The Wyoming County Board of Directors usually meet on the third Tuesday of every month (except May, June & July) at the Wyoming County Ag Center, Warsaw, NY.



NYFB members can save up to 35% off Avis base rates with PAY NOW for max savings with Avis Worldwide Discount (AWD) number. Discount rates may vary between 10 and 35%, depending on time of year, availability, selection of PAY NOW™, and other factors. FB discount may NOT be stacked with other AWD corporate or membership discounts. Visit <https://nyfb.org/member-benefits/travel> and login to get your discount code.