

# Orleans County Farm Bureau

March 2024



To Serve and Strengthen Agriculture

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Fellow Orleans County Farm Bureau members,

Spring will be here before we know it as planting season will get 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 recently went 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 was 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](http://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.

*Chad Kirby*

Orleans County Farm Bureau Board President

## ORLEANS COUNTY FARM BUREAU SCHOLARSHIP

The Members of Orleans County Farm Bureau are committed to encouraging and supporting the next generation of citizens who will support and advocate for agriculture and agri-business through our scholarship program. There will be two awards given of \$1,000 each.

- 2024 graduating high school seniors who will continue their education to prepare for a career **connected** to the agricultural industry.
  - ◆ This includes advancing their education through college or pursuing advanced training in agriculture technology, Agri business support fields, or skilled trades.
- Have a strong interest and/or connection and/or support and/or advocate and/or involvement in Agriculture/ Agri-business
- Family Farm Bureau membership or Student Farm Bureau membership is required.
- Applicants under the age of 18 must also include the signature of a parent or legal guardian.

**Application deadline is May 1, 2024.** For application information go to:

[NYFB.org>About>County-Farm-Bureau>Orleans-County](http://NYFB.org>About>County-Farm-Bureau>Orleans-County)  
Application information is at the bottom of the page.

## 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.

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### 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](https://www.ny.gov) 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](https://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.

## ORLEANS COUNTY FARM BUREAU ATTENDS LOBBY DAY

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



**Photo top:** Assemblyman Stephen Hawley meets with members from Orleans, Monroe & Genesee County Farm Bureaus to discuss New York Farm Bureau's 2024 Legislative Priority Issues during Lobby Day



**Photo left:** Orleans County members meet with Senator Simcha Felder an Adopted Legislator from Brooklyn during New York Farm Bureau Lobby Day on March 5.

## ORLEANS 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

**Orleans** 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.

Orleans County Farm Bureau is 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.



New York Farm Bureau  
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Orleans County Farm Bureau



\*Must be a New York Farm Bureau member for 30 consecutive days prior to purchase. Proof of membership is required. A valid member email address is required for eligibility. Discounts are subject to change without notice. Check out the savings on the following equipment categories: commercial mowing, residential mowing, utility vehicles, tractors, and compact construction. <https://www.deere.com/en/rewards/equipment-discounts/>

**ORLEANS COUNTY FARM BUREAU  
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Orleans County Farm Bureau meets on the 2nd Thursday of the month at the Orleans CCE.