

Yates County Farm Bureau Attends State Annual Meeting

Yates County Farm Bureau joined farmer members from across the state at New York Farm Bureau's State Annual Meeting in Albany in December to set the public policy priorities for 2018. The grassroots process was filled with thoughtful discussion and debate on a wide variety of issues ranging from tax policy to music at New York's wineries.

"I believe we put together a sound agenda that addresses the needs and concerns of our diverse membership," said county Farm Bureau President Larry Lewis. "I look forward to working with NYFB President David Fisher, staff and the many dedicated volunteers to enact legislation and ensure investments that will help our farm families grow and thrive."

Delegates from the county Farm Bureau were recognized for their achievements on behalf of the more than 340 families they represent with nine Silver Key Awards. Silver Keys are awarded to counties that attain outstanding achievements by involving leaders and members in programs serving agriculture. The awards were given for excellence in the categories of Membership, Agricultural Education & Promotion, County Financial Management, Information & Public Relations, Leadership Development, Policy Implementation-State & National, Young Farmer and Distinguished President. The county Farm Bureau was presented with a check for \$1,090 for its achievements.



Yates County Farm Bureau delegates at the 2017 State Annual Meeting in Albany. From left to right: Paul Enos, YF&R Chair Eileen Jensen and YCFB President Larry Lewis.

Major Legislative Victory

Inherent Risk Reform Becomes Law

New York Farm Bureau achieved a major victory for farms across the state with passage and signing of inherent risk reform (Chapter 338 of 2017) for agritourism and equine businesses. The new law will amend the general obligations law to clarify responsibilities for both farm operators and visitors alike. Agricultural tourism and outdoor recreation activities that include horseback riding, u-pick Christmas trees and fruit orchards, along with tours of wineries and maple operations, all now have a new line of defense against frivolous lawsuits because of the new law. Until now, New York's litigious environment had diminished the number of carriers willing to cover these businesses, while dramatically increasing the cost of liability coverage. Many farmers have had to turn down opportunities to invite the public onto their farms because they could not find or afford the liability insurance necessary to host these opportunities in the state. Under the new law, farms must have proper signage to delineate pathways and buildings open to the public, adequately train employees involved in agritourism, take reasonable care to prevent foreseeable risks and post warning to visitors about the inherent risks of participating in activities on working farms.

Congratulations to Yates County Farm Bureau member and retired president of the New York Wine and Grape Foundation, **Jim Trezise**, for receiving Farm Bureau's Distinguished Service to Agriculture Award.



Jim (left) receives this well deserved award from NYFB President David Fisher.

Hundreds of farmers from across the state will visit Albany in March as part of NYFB's annual Lobby Day to advocate on behalf of New York's farm families. Here are a few of the priority issues they will be fighting for in 2018:

- Double the minimum wage tax credit for farmers starting in 2018.
- Oppose unworkable farm labor mandates and make much needed updates and reforms to NYS labor laws and regulations.
- Increase school meal reimbursements to incentivize the purchase of fresh and minimally processed local food.
- Support the removal of an acreage requirement for farms in the agricultural assessment program as long as they meet income eligibility requirements.

Visit NYFB.org to learn how you can add your voice.

How to E-Lobby—It's fast and easy:

- Go to www.nyfb.org and click on the green "eLobby-Take Action!" button on the left side of the page under the banner photos, or by clicking the green "Take Action! Advocacy" button.
- Find the letter you want to send and click "Take Action!"
- The action alert description will appear followed by the recipients and the letter text. Type in your name and address and press "Send Message" at the bottom of the page.
- Your letter is sent directly to lawmakers and you are helping to impact farm public policy! Encourage your friends to E-Lobby by typing in their e-mail addresses.

If you have any problems using the E-Lobby feature, call the NYFB office at 1-800-342-4143.

LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

New York Farm Bureau
Young Farmers & Ranchers

**YOUNG FARMERS -
AGRICULTURE'S LINK TO THE FUTURE**

MARCH 16-17, 2018
HOLIDAY INN, AUBURN

SESSIONS INCLUDE:

- Keynote Speaker - Matt Lohr, Lifting the Limits, The Strongest Link
- Know Your Beef Beyond the Label
- YF&R Competitive Events 101
- How an Idea gets from the Kitchen Table to the Delegate floor

Registration Costs	Hotel Costs:
NYFB Members: Young Farmer Package = \$125	\$100.57 per room [includes taxes] Call Holiday Inn, 315-255-4531 for your hotel reservation

REGISTRATION DEADLINE | **To Register:**
MARCH 7, 2018 | **800-342-4143 • NYFB.org**

Help Bring Ag into the Classroom

In celebration of agriculture, we are once again taking an active role in Ag Literacy Week. It is such a rewarding program to be involved in and we hope you will join us this year. During the week of **March 19-23** we are looking for volunteers to read *Before We Eat: From Farm to Table*, by Pat Brisson, to elementary school children. The book displays the vast opportunities and diversity that New York agriculture encompasses. Students will be taken on a journey from farm to table to understand the different aspects of agriculture and the many possible careers involved. There are also fun, hands-on related activities to keep them learning and engaged. If you are interested in participating, please contact CCE of Yates County at 315-536-5123.



Yates County
Farm Bureau News

Yates County Farm Bureau News

February 2018



President's Report



Larry Lewis

Yates County Farm Bureau ended 2017 on a high note with a well attended and productive County Annual Meeting and an energizing State Annual Meeting that set a sound agenda for 2018. It was

also a time to reflect on the strength of this organization and how important each of you, our members, are to advancing legislation, influencing policy, ensuring critical investments in our industry and changing public perception about who a farmer is and why we do what we do. Through the strength of our membership, Farm Bureau was able to prevail on pushing forward much needed inherent risk reform and successfully defended our family farms from New York Civil Liberties Union's baseless lawsuit that sought to create collective bargaining rights for farm workers. These two major victories could not have happened without our members.

We need to continue to grow our organization to ensure our future is strong. I encourage you to ask your friends and neighbors to join us today. Farm Bureau needs every farmer and every farmer needs Farm Bureau. There is still much more work to be done to keep agriculture on a positive path and give our future generations the tools they need to carry on our hard work and legacies. If you are interested in learning more about how you can help expand our county Farm Bureau, please feel free to contact me or any board member. We welcome your thoughts, ideas and concerns.

Upcoming Events

NYFB Mid-Winter Regional Meeting

Feb. 20 from 11 a.m.— 2 p.m.

NYFB Central NY Office

7413 County House Road • Auburn

Come hear important updates from NYFB's management team including 2018 priority issues, NYS budget update, membership, NYFB SG 486 Workers' Compensation Program and more.

To register, visit NYFB.org or call 315-252-1367.

New York Farm Show

Feb. 22-24 from 8:30 a.m.— 4 p.m.

NYS Fairgrounds

\$5 at the door, under 18 free

Free tickets are available by sending a request along with a self-addressed stamped envelope by Feb. 15 to NY Farm Show • PO Box 3470 • Syracuse, NY 13220

nyfarmshow.org

NYFB Taste of NY Reception and Lobby Day

Mar. 5-6 • Albany

Farmers will visit the Capitol to meet with legislators to advocate for 2018 public policy priorities.

NYFB.org

Young Farmers Leadership Conference

Mar. 16-17 • Holiday Inn, Auburn

Keynote Speaker: Matt Lohr

All young farmers are invited to attend.

1-800-342-4143 or NYFB.org

NYFB Foundation Feast West

Apr. 20 • Club 86, Geneva

Remarkable food accompanied by superb NY wines, great company in a great location to benefit agriculture.

1-800-342-4143 or NYFB.org



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- Farm Insurance*
- Automobile Insurance*
- Pet & Travel Insurance*
- Commercial & Home Insurance
- Powersports Insurance
- Life Insurance
- Farm Transition Planning

* Select savings may apply

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1.800.342.4143
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Yates County Board Meetings are usually held on the third Tuesday of the month, 7:30 p.m. at 1459 Milo Center Road in Penn Yan