

# Onondaga County Farm Bureau

September 2022



## President's Report



We have all just weathered a two-plus-year pandemic and now we've seen some really tough economic times with inflation, farm equipment parts shortages, and labor shortages. Seems like these issues will go on forever. With the tough times we've faced, it can be difficult to see the brighter side.

With the warm days of summer, being able to see friends and neighbors while out and about, and the crop season looking fairly good. Our pessimism can tend to reset to a degree, and we regain some of the eternal optimism that defines a farmer. At least that's what I'd like to think.

With all of this economic uncertainty going on, you've got to find the bright spots where you can. The New York State 2022-2023 budget agreement that passed in June is worth mentioning as it has some significant investments in the agriculture industry that benefit all of us. There is funding for critical research,

marketing and promotion programs aimed at the state's diverse agricultural commodities. Financial resources to expand the positive record of environmental stewardship. Monies to expand the *Farm to School* program with increased access for students to locally produced food. The budget also includes tax credits for farms to help balance the rising cost of labor and will also help with workforce retention and investment. Although it doesn't address all the issues we face, it certainly seems like a win for agriculture in New York and an acknowledgment of the hard work that we, as farmers, do every day.

There was positive news at the end of the legislative session in Albany as well. Farm Bureau was pleased to see passage of the bill establishing the New York State Council on Food Policy. This bill will benefit the market of New York agriculture producers by helping to promote and procure locally grown food products for state  
*Continued on Page 3. . .*



## ONONDAGA COUNTY FARM BUREAU ANNUAL MEETING

### ONONDAGA COUNTY FARM BUREAU ANNUAL MEETING

**Tuesday, October 25**

Held at **Navarino Orchard**

3655 Cherry Valley Turnpike, Syracuse, NY

Dinner at 6 p.m.

Meeting at 7 p.m.

A Thanksgiving style dinner will be available for \$15 per person - **reservations required**, see below.

**Door Prizes and Raffles!**

Join us at Navarino Orchard, 3655 Cherry Valley Turnpike, Syracuse for Onondaga County Farm Bureau's Annual Meeting. A delicious Thanksgiving style dinner will be served and there will be quality discussion and decision-making. We will be electing members to the Onondaga County Farm Bureau Board of Directors and voting on policy resolutions to be heard. Member involvement is the cornerstone of our organization.

Meal is \$15 per person with money collected at the door. *We hope to see you there!*

**RSVP Requested by Thursday, Oct. 13**

Call the NYFB Regional Office at 315-252-1367 or email [jwilliamson@nyfb.org](mailto:jwilliamson@nyfb.org)

Please refer to the *Onondaga County Farm Bureau Annual Meeting* when making your reservation.

**To Serve and Strengthen Agriculture**

## FARM BUREAU TO HAVE BOOTH AT LAFAYETTE APPLE FESTIVAL

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 8 (9 A.M. - 6 P.M.)**

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 9 (9 A.M. - 5 P.M.)**

For the 15<sup>th</sup> year, we plan to fill our booth with a colorful display of local agricultural products at the LaFayette Apple Festival. This is our biggest fundraiser of the year. We will be selling locally grown and produced items, such as vegetables, eggs, milk, maple syrup, honey, chrysanthemums, gourds, and pumpkins. Area farmers have graciously agreed to donate some of their products to aid our fundraising efforts. We will also sell Onondaga County Farm Bureau T-shirts. We will use this opportunity to educate festivalgoers about local agriculture, which they get to take home with them. We will also have a place for kids to play. We fill kiddie pools with dried corn or soybeans. It's just like a sandbox and kids have so much fun that they don't want to leave. The Onondaga County Dairy Ambassadors will be joining us in our booth. They will be promoting the dairy industry and love to hand out stickers and coloring books. They also have games for kids to play.



Festival admission is \$6 per person, kids age 12 and under are free. Parking is free. Our booth will be located near the admission gate in the Tully Farms Road parking lot. To avoid traffic delays, take Route 81 to the Tully exit. Go west on Route 80, then turn right on Tully Farms Road. Parking will be on the right. The festival hours are: Saturday Oct. 8<sup>th</sup> from

9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday Oct. 9<sup>th</sup> from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. So please come see our booth, as well as shop from over 500 crafters, ride the midway, enjoy live music and take home a fresh apple pie!

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED.** In order to make our booth a success, we NEED your help. Your job as a volunteer is selling products, keeping the tables filled with products, refilling ice to keep the milk cold, making sure our booth is clean, and promoting agriculture to the general public. Can you please help us for at least a few hours? Please contact Tricia Bana at (315) 391-4290.

### IN MEMORIAM: HARVEY SKEELE

**SUBMITTED BY:** Tricia Bana

The agricultural community lost one of its biggest supporters this past November with the passing of Harvey Skeele. Harvey served as president of Onondaga County Farm Bureau for several years. He was co-chair and a founding member of Onondaga Grown. Harvey was also involved with the Fabius community, youth basketball and dairy promotion.

We have had several weeks of good hay making weather recently. I'm sure Harvey has been watching over us and very pleased to see all those bales stack up. A farmer told me a story about something that happened while mowing hay. The farmer had finished mowing one field and moved onto the next field. He had gone a little ways, looked back and wondered why the hay wasn't cutting. Then he realized he hadn't turned the PTO back on. He said Harvey would have had a good laugh about that story and would have reminded him about it from time to time.

Harvey always enjoyed a good joke, whether he was telling one or hearing one. He always enjoyed interacting with people, meeting new people and talking about agriculture. Our biggest annual fundraiser, having a booth at the LaFayette Apple Festival, began under Harvey's leadership. Harvey was sad to miss the festival last year due to his health. He always enjoyed talking with people who visited our booth and showing them the

wonderful agricultural products that are produced in Onondaga County. Harvey helped Onondaga Grown's ON Farm Fest get started. The sixth annual ON Farm Fest will be Sep. 17 and has been named Harvey Skeele ON Farm Fest. Harvey would be humbled to have this event named after him. The goal of ON Farm Fest is for the general public to visit farms and learn about where food and agricultural products come from. Promotion and education about agriculture was very near and dear to Harvey. Please consider volunteering for a shift at the Apple Festival or ON Farm Fest to continue Harvey's legacy of promoting agriculture.

Onondaga County Farm Bureau has received \$1,295 in donations in memory of Harvey. We donated \$250 to Fabius-Pompey's FFA chapter. We plan to use the remaining funds to improve the site of our Apple Festival booth. Harvey will be remembered for his kindness, compassion and love for others. He would always find the positives in any situation. We will miss his passion for agriculture.



**ONONDAGA COUNTY FARM BUREAU**  
**POLICY DEVELOPMENT VIRTUAL MEETING SCHEDULED**  
**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2022 BEGINS AT 7 P.M.**

Policy development season is upon us. Policy is the core value the organization brings to its members and agriculture. Policy is what forms lobbying efforts in Albany and Washington, D.C., a push for what the members want and need to help their businesses thrive, and ultimately bring good nutritious food to New York tables, and tables across the country.

Farm Bureau's lobbying efforts rely on the formation of policy to help make this happen. Policy is formed at the grassroots level by individual members, voted on at county annual meetings, and brought to the state meeting for a final vote. Once passed, that policy becomes the platform that Farm Bureau staff utilizes in their efforts on our behalf. Though policy development happens throughout the year, we put an emphasis on

it now as we plan for the County Annual Meeting in October and the State Annual Meeting in December.

If you have policy issues that you want addressed, sign up for this important meeting. Look for an email coming soon so that you can register for this event **OR** contact [jwilliamson@nyfb.org](mailto:jwilliamson@nyfb.org) to have the registration link sent directly to you. **You MUST BE registered to attend this virtual meeting.**

Thank you for being a part of the process that helps make Farm Bureau a unique organization, as well as the leader for the agriculture industry as it comes to policy and lobbying efforts on behalf of agriculture and rural New York.

**ON FARM FEST IS SEPT. 17**

Enjoy a free day of family-friendly fun as local farms open for tours from 10 a.m.- 3 p.m. Learn about life on the farm and discover the latest advances in agriculture. Many farms will have local products and food for sale, live music, and interactive exhibits.



For more information about ON Farm Fest, or to learn more about the 2022 participating ON Farm Fest farms along with directions, go to: <https://onondagagrown.com/onfarmfest/>

**Volunteers Needed:** If you're interested in volunteering for the 2022 On Farm Fest, please call 315-435-2611 for details.

**Presidents Report** *Continued from front page. . .*

agencies and facilities. We also had a little bit of luck with bills that did not move forward such as the Neonics Ban and the Extended Producer Responsibility. These bills may come back again in some way or another in the future, but for now we can be grateful and go about our business of farming without some of these unnecessary restrictions.

The agriculture industry will always face challenges ahead, and there will always be work to do. That is why I must ask you to think about one more item that would go a long way toward supporting agriculture right here in Onondaga County. That is to consider taking on the leadership role of the Onondaga County Farm Bureau board as president. I'll be stepping down as county President at the end of the year so that I can focus on work and family life. I would love for someone to be willing to "take the reins" before that time. Working to improve the family farm life with Farm Bureau has been a rewarding experience and I hope you will consider taking on the leadership role. If you're interested, please contact one of the board members listed on the back page of this newsletter and let them know. Have a safe enjoyable season everyone.

*Danielle Volles, President*

**FFA BLUE JACKETS**

We have had several new FFA chapters form in Onondaga County recently. Fabius-Pompey Central School, Onondaga Central School and OnTech Charter School now have FFA chapters, in addition to Tully Central School's long-standing FFA chapter. Our board feels it is important to support these



programs and has approved a new program named the **Blue Jacket Award**. We will pay for up to one blue jacket per chapter per year. Students or their advisor need to submit an application for the award. The application asks for a description of their involvement in FFA, explain why they joined FFA and explain what winning this award would mean to them. Our intention is for this award to be primarily need-based. If a student cannot afford the jacket on their own, hopefully we can provide the funding for their jacket. We are proud to announce that we will be awarding three jackets this year: one at Tully, one at Fabius-Pompey and one at OnTech.





New York Farm Bureau  
Central New York Office  
7413 County House Rd  
Auburn, NY 13021

## Onondaga County Farm Bureau

### SCHOLARSHIP WINNER CHOSEN

Hunter Bealer of Warners has been chosen as our 2022 Scholarship recipient. Hunter will be attending SUNY Morrisville to study Agricultural Engineering. Hunter has been working at local farms and gaining experience in machinery maintenance, field work and animal care.

**Congratulations Hunter!**



### Workers' Compensation Safety Group 486

SERVING OUR MEMBERS SINCE 1967

Take a look at what NYFB Safety Group 486 has to offer

- Over 9% Average Rate Decrease in 2022
- Cumulative rate decrease of over 60% in the past five years.
- Five year average dividend of 41%\*
- Up front discount up to 25%
- Low Group Managers' Fee
- Licensed, professional staff to serve all your workers' compensation needs and act as your liaison with the New York State Insurance Fund

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

wcinfo@nyfb.org • 1-800-342-4143  
[www.nyfb.org/programs/workers-compensation](http://www.nyfb.org/programs/workers-compensation)

### STARTED BY FARMERS FOR FARMERS

Eligibility for insurance is subject to the New York State Insurance Fund's underwriting requirements. \*Percentage is based on dividends paid 2016 through 2020. Dividends are not guaranteed. Continued membership in NYFB is required to participate in Safety Group 486. NYFB and its subsidiaries have no authority to bind coverage for any member.

### ONONDAGA COUNTY FARM BUREAU BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**PRESIDENT:** Danielle Volles ..... 315-420-3780

**VICE President:** Mark Tucker ..... 315-420-0569

#### **DIRECTORS:**

Kim Allan..... 315-730-7040

Patricia Bana ..... 315-391-4290

Jennifer Cox ..... 315-558-2846

Jeremy Mapstone ..... 315-350-8081

Brian Reeves ..... 315-635-3357

Larry Fleckenstein ..... 315-677-3690

Marcus Richards ..... 315-729-4130

James Smith ..... 315-243-7283

Christina Kohler (Pro-Ed Chair)..... 315-350-8883

Kevin Niles (YF&R Chair)..... 315-715-1072

**FIELD ADVISOR:** Mark James ..... 585-738-0242

**CNY OFFICE:** Jill Williamson..... 315-252-1367

Onondaga County Farm Bureau board meetings are held the second Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at Heritage Hill, 3149 Sweet Road, Pompey.