

# 2022 NYFB Congressional Candidate Questionnaire

New York Farm Bureau • 159 Wolf Rd., Suite 300, Albany, NY 12205 • 1-800-342-4143 • <http://www.nyfb.org>

Election Day is rapidly approaching, and as New York's largest farm advocacy organization, New York Farm Bureau invites you to complete the enclosed agricultural issues survey and share your opinions regarding a number of farm and rural issues impacting the New York agricultural industry. As you are well aware, there are a number of important public policy issues confronting farmers and our members need a clear understanding of how candidates plan to address these issues.

Your responses to the survey questions will be printed in the October 2022 edition of our newspaper, *Grassroots*, a Farm Bureau publication sent to our membership, industry leaders, and local libraries, with a circulation of close to 21,000. In order to ensure that your survey response is included in the October issue, please respond by Friday, **September 9, 2022** and please keep your responses to a maximum of 150 words per question as space is limited. Anything beyond the 150-word limit will not be printed. As always, it should be noted that a failure to respond, by any of the candidates, will be noted in *Grassroots* as well.

Please return your responses along with a headshot to: [lwilliams@nyfb.org](mailto:lwilliams@nyfb.org)

Should you have any questions regarding the survey or farm issues in general, please do not hesitate to contact Lauren Williams at (518) 588-6338 or [lwilliams@nyfb.org](mailto:lwilliams@nyfb.org).

1. What do you think is the largest issue facing farmers in this district? What solutions would you seek?

I think the biggest issues facing farmers is ensuring they can remain competitive with large, consolidated, corporate farms. To do this, Congress needs to ensure they can continue to access capital, that crop insurance is accessible and affordable, and that they have the labor they need to operate.

2. One of the biggest challenges for New York agriculture is having access to reliable, skilled labor when domestic workers cannot meet this need. Delays in the H-2A program have frustrated farmers and led to loss of crops and unknown legal status of current workers are all concerns that farmers have when it comes to a dependable workforce. How do you see Congress moving forward to address agricultural immigration in a bipartisan manner?

Our immigration system is an area where DC has failed and shows our politics at its worst. Politicians on both sides have used this issue to score political points while our immigration

system languishes, and one area this has really caused harm is with our farmers. We need to ensure that we have an efficient system for processing H-2A visas and so that farmers can have access to the workers they need and workers can come here and earn a good wage. We also need to ensure we are not overburdening our family farms with compliance costs that large companies can more readily comply with.

3. Despite growing and raising diverse agricultural products in New York, farmers still face challenges in getting food from the rural areas of our farms to the suburban and urban locations of so many consumers. What would you do to help bridge this divide? What efforts would you take to ensure farmers are able to have reliable markets for their goods?

With changing consumer preferences, I believe there are real opportunities emerging for our farmers, especially our family farms in Central New York. As a member of Congress I would be a big supporter and cheerleader for Central New York farmers and agricultural products. A key factor in branching into new markets is to ensure reliable harvests and output so we need to do everything we can so our farmers can make that happen, mainly making sure our farmers are secure on their land, and have access to credit and quality crop insurance.

4. Farmers are known as stewards of the land, and agriculture plays a critical role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions through conservation practices and renewable energy. As Congress works to address climate change, how will you ensure that agriculture is part of the conversation?

We need to ensure that our farmers are not being lost or harmed in the transition to a zero-carbon future. Many family farms are much more environmentally friendly than their larger corporate counterparts. Ensuring that our family farms are able to continue to survive and thrive is crucial to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. I will always have an open door policy to the agricultural community to ensure they will have a seat at the table in the discussions.