

# 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?**

*The recent 2-1 decision of the Farm Laborers Wage Board and the potential implementation of their recommendation to lower the overtime threshold for farm laborers – for the second time in a few short years – would be disastrous for Long Island farms trying to stay afloat. Farms are the backbone of our food supply, simultaneously dealing with fixed prices, high fuel costs, regulations, inflation, and labor shortages. We don't need more government mandates from those who don't understand the industries they are regulating – agricultural policy must be made by those in the field. We must resolve the supply-chain crisis, increase energy exploration to reduce fuel costs, and reverse the policies exacerbating inflation to help keep family farms on Long Island. In Washington, I will work to restore fiscally sound economic and energy policies to unleash the economy from the oppressive conditions holding it back.*

**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?**

*Long Island's agricultural and other labor needs are instrumental to my approach on the immigration issue. I also believe the open border policies of the current administration compromise national security and hurt those who play by the rules. Washington policy makers need to concurrently seal the border and prioritize local and national interests, such as labor needs, in dealing with the people who are here illegally; we all know mass-deportation is not the answer.*

**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?**

*Farms are critical to our food supply - locally and regionally. East End farms demonstrated this when they stepped up during the pandemic's food shortages; transporting goods to Hunts Point when stores couldn't stock their shelves. We need to look at any regulations keeping costs high, energy exploration, like offshore drilling, to reduce fuel prices, and increasing federal transportation infrastructure funding to help bridge the divide between the farm, local and regional market demands. New York taxpayers get a mere 93 cents back on every tax dollar sent to Washington— that is the fifth worst return on investment of any state in the union. Some states get two or three dollars back for every dollar they send to Washington. Bringing infrastructure dollars back to New York is one way to right that wrong. As a Member of Congress, I will fight for Long Island's fair share.*

**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?**

*Farmers, and the realities of the obstacles farmers face, need to be a part of the conversation. The interests of the farming community – farmers on land and fishermen on the water – must be represented as we approach environmental conservation and renewable energy projects, like offshore wind farms. Impacts to the marine ecosystem and the readiness of the infrastructure these projects are connecting to must be considered in any thoughtful plan. As a Member of Congress, I will work to bring farmers, scientists, and environmentalists to the table to discuss best practices, implementation, and potential assistance with costs where there is consensus in moving forward.*