



New York Farm Bureau  
Candidate Questionnaire  
**Colin Schmitt, candidate for NY-18**

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

In my conversations with farmers across the Hudson Valley, I listen to their concerns and the difficulties their industry faces. Just a few short weeks, I hosted a roundtable event with local farmers and was proud to be joined by Congressman Jason Smith (MO-8), a cattle farmer, right here in my district. Of the issues they expressed to me, they mentioned economic and inflation-related impacts are straining their capacity to compete in the global marketplace. Canadian exports into the U.S. create a destabilized industry and a heavily regulated H-2A program holds back our local farmers by penalizing them for not adhering to new rules and regulations that are constantly changing without communication or notice.

One, we need to restore checks and balances in Washington. One-party control of our state and federal government denies debate and compromise. Two, massive government spending has exacerbated the inflationary crisis we are facing which impacts on all industries. Three, over regulation continues to hold back our agricultural industries. We must cut the red tape and allow for our local farmers to expand production without fining and penalizing them for producing domestically.

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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?

Overregulation in the United States hampers our agricultural industry. Our federal government should not be adding additional hurdles for our local farmers, but instead unleashing American production and staying out of the way of our domestic farms. A dependable and accessible workforce is necessary to ensure our agricultural industry thrives, speeding up H-2A program applications are crucial at this time. I will be a voice in Congress for our local farms and work with federal stakeholders to eliminate delay in application processing.

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**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?

I remain committed to bridging the divide between rural and urban regions in our state. The Hudson Valley is home to many rural farming locations and urban cities. We have a little bit of everything here, all industries represented. We need a Member of Congress in the Hudson Valley who will be a voice for all people, I promise to be that voice. Rather than increasing global imports, we should be focused on domestic production and our local economies. American production and American-made products come first.

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**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?

As a conservationist, I believe our local farmers and agricultural community are the greatest advocates for protecting our resources and our land. With growing concerns about our climate, conservation and renewable energy become all the more important. I vow to ensure local farms and those in the industry are included in the conversation. That is why I have begun roundtable conversations across the new New York 18th congressional district to hear directly from our local farm, what their greatest concerns are, how they can influence and assist with state-wide and nationwide conservation efforts, and how I can be a better steward for their needs.

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