

# Washington County Farm Bureau

March 2024



## President's Message



Fellow Washington County Farm Bureau members, Spring will be here before we know it as planting season will get underway. But first, we have another important season to cultivate, New York State budget season.

Lawmakers are currently negotiating the spending

plan for the next fiscal year, and this includes critical funding for agriculture. There is more than \$160 million earmarked for animal health and environmental programs, promotion of farm products, and research support among other needed funding.

Our county Farm Bureau recently went to Albany for the annual New York Farm Bureau Taste of New York Reception and Lobby Day. This is essential to the work of our organization. We met with our local Senators and Assembly Members along with adopted lawmakers from New York City.

*Cont'd on the back:*

## Lobby Day "Hot" Topics

*Below are some of the items that were discussed at this year's Lobby Day.*

### Equine Industry Issue

Request that the One-House Budgets include additional funding and tax opportunities for the equine industry.

**Xylazine:** Part U of the Health and Mental Hygiene section of the executive budget proposal commonly used for sedation for a variety of procedures in both cattle and horses, including prior to administering euthanasia, to calm the animal and make it easier to perform the procedure, leg or hoof injuries, and handling horses or cattle in times of emergency. There are currently no practical alternatives for sedation in cattle and limited and less effective alternatives for horses that are more costly.

### Add Farm Housing Construction in Renewable ITC

A renewable investment tax credit (ITC) for agriculture was included in the final FY 23-24 State budget. Making farmworker housing eligible for the refundable ITC is the right thing to do for farmworkers and farmers.

### CDL Bills

A new bill to direct the DOT to institute a program to reduce time spent at multiple DOT checkpoints. Bill to grant farm owners and employees an exemption from CDL requirements when hauling farm equipment or produce within 150 miles of a farm.

### Direct to Consumer Shipping (DTC)

This proposal would allow craft beverage producers to ship their product directly to consumers. This would allow New York craft beverage producers to expand their markets and potentially make up revenue that was lost during the pandemic.

## Washington County Farm Bureau Board of Directors ~ Dial 518 first.

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**JOIN THE  
WASHINGTON COUNTY  
FARM BUREAU  
FOR THE  
LAST NIGHT OUT  
BEFORE SPRING**



MARCH  
**28th**  
6 - 8 P M

ARGYLE MAIN  
STREET VARIETY  
95 MAIN STREET  
ARGYLE, NEW YORK

A GOOD EXCUSE TO GET OFF  
THE FARM FOR ONE LAST  
TIME SPRING!  
STOP BY AND ENJOY A DRINK  
ON US. BRING A  
PROSPECTIVE MEMBER & WE  
WILL BUY THEM A DRINK  
TOO!

**MEMBER  
DRINK  
TICKET**

**PROSPECTIVE  
MEMBER  
DRINK TICKET**

No need to cut out the drink tickets.  
Upon arrival, check in at the counter and enjoy the evening!





Washington Co. FB Shows Presence at Lobby Days



*Ghost Light Farm in Cambridge. Photo: NYFB member Erin Perkins*

New York Farm Bureau's Lobby Day and Taste of NY Reception was held on March 4 & 5 in Albany with Washington County members in attendance. The Taste of NY Reception (March 4) showcased products from around New York State. Lobby Day (March 5) was an opportunity for members to meet with and give a rural production perspective to elected legislators.



***President's Message: Cont'd:***

This was our opportunity to advocate for the budget and discuss the impacts of other proposed legislation that we either support or oppose.

Some of the other priorities this session includes full funding for Nourish New York and the Healthy School Meals for All programs to increase access to locally produced food. NYFB is also prioritizing legislation allowing for direct-to-consumer shipping for all New York-produced farm beverages, including beer, cider, and spirits.

Farm Bureau also has serious concerns about the statewide push for electrification before farms can successfully adopt it or the rural power grid can properly handle the expected surge in use. The state

cannot afford to go too far, too fast. We also are pushing back on plans to shift recycling costs onto the backs of producers that include dairy processors and wine makers. For a full look at the state priority issues, you can click under legislative affairs on the New York Farm Bureau website at nyfb.org.

I would encourage you to make your voice heard as well on these issues, by sending an e-lobby message through the website or by participating in the monthly calls to action that come through your email. It takes all of us getting involved to make things happen. I wish all of you a good spring season, and may this year be fruitful for us all.

*Brian Ziehm*

President



When you scan the QR code it will bring you directly to the Homesteading Festival main page, with all the information on speakers, schedule, becoming a vendor, or a sponsor. From there, you can also buy tickets in advance if you want to.