

Jefferson County Farm Bureau

January 2025



To Serve and Strengthen Agriculture



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Farm Bureau members,

Happy New Year! I hope you and your family enjoyed being together over the holidays. As we enter into 2025, it's a good time to reflect on that togetherness – not just in our personal lives, but togetherness in our agricultural communities as well.

Jefferson County Farm Bureau was pleased to attend NYFB's State Annual Convention last month in Verona, NY, where a record crowd enthusiastically shared fellowship, education and new ideas. Most importantly, delegates from across the state came together in a spirited session on State Annual Meeting Day to vote on our 2025 public policy positions.

Some of our top legislative priorities include supporting critical funding for agricultural animal health; increasing funding for the state Farmworker Housing Program revolving loan fund; increasing and extending the farm workforce retention credit; supporting renewable energy policies that incorporate common sense timeframes; addressing transportation issues to facilitate the shipment of food products and farm equipment in New York State; establishing a New York State Equine Advisory Board; opposing the Temperature Extreme Mitigation (TEMP) act unless there is an exemption for agriculture; opposing legislation that prohibits the use of agricultural chemical protectants; and opposing Extended Producer Responsibility legislation that unduly burdens New York's food and wine manufacturing businesses.

As we get updates on state and federal legislation affecting NYS agriculture, we will update you in email

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NYFB TASTE OF NY RECEPTION

March 3, 2025 * 5-7 p.m.

Empire State Plaza Convention Center in Albany

New York Farm Bureau will host its popular Taste of NY Reception at the Empire State Plaza Convention Center. The event brings together county Farm Bureau members, public officials and staff, and agricultural partners to showcase the diversity of New York State agriculture. The event is followed the next day with NYFB's Lobby Day at the Capitol in Albany on March 4.

Anyone interested in participating in Lobby Day or donating a product for the Taste of NY Reception should contact John Wagner at 315-761-9770 or email jwagner@nyfb.org.

Photo (l-r): Governor Hochul and Commissioner of Agriculture & Markets Richard Ball stop to visit with Michael Kiechle at the Jefferson County Farm Bureau's booth at the 2024 NYFB Taste of NY Reception.



2025 NEW YORK FARM BUREAU LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Below are the New York Farm Bureau 2025 Legislative Priorities. These priorities are a culmination of the grassroots efforts which began last fall at county annual meetings and culminated at the State Convention held in December. These priorities reflect the collective interest of our members and rural communities and will determine the focus of our advocacy discussion and action for the year ahead.

- Support critical funding for agricultural animal health (such as the Avian Disease Program), promotion, research and environmental programs in the final FY 25/26 state budget.
- Support a significant funding investment in the Cornell University College of Agriculture and Life Science to forward its mission of collegiate agricultural education, research, and extension. This includes necessary funding to replace teaching resources, capital investment across the college, Cornell University Research Center, the Agricultural Experiment Station and other research facilities across the state.
- Increase funding for the NYS Homes and Community Renewal's Farmworker Housing Program revolving loan fund and increase the per-project cap from \$200,000 to \$400,000.
- Allow construction costs for farmworker housing to be included in the ongoing refundable investment tax credit for agriculture and provide reimbursement for all incurred expenses in a timelier manner.
- Increase and extend the farm workforce retention credit.
- Expand the state's 10-year real property tax exemption for farm buildings to include farm buildings used for the processing or marketing of agricultural products.
- Support funding for the NY Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health to do research and promote education on temperature-related working conditions before any legislation (such as the Temperature Extreme Mitigation Program Act) is passed.
- Allow farm breweries, cideries and distilleries to sell products at roadside farm markets, like farm wineries.
- Support legislation that would define agribusiness in New York State law.
- Support renewable energy policies that incorporate common-sense timeframes for adoption based upon grid capacity and the practical realities of electrification of New York State.
- Support legislation that would develop a Low Carbon Fuel Standard.
- Support addressing transportation issues to facilitate the shipment of food products and farm equipment in New York State, including addressing issues related to workforce development.
- Establish a New York State Equine Advisory Board to promote the horse industry in New York State.
- Support DEC's regulatory authority over pesticide registration in accordance with sound science and oppose legislation that prohibits the use of agricultural chemical protectants.
- Oppose Extended Producer Responsibility legislation that does not require consumer responsibility for packaging they receive and that unduly burdens New York's food and farm beverage manufacturing businesses.

President's Message Continued

communications, on our social media channels and in Grassroots.

As always, New York Farm Bureau is committed to promoting and defending agriculture. A recent example of that commitment is the passage of the Direct to Consumer bill, which offers distilleries and cideries the same shipping privileges as wineries. We fought long and hard for that bill, and our efforts ultimately proved successful.

However, we can't do it alone. Our members are a critical part of our legislative efforts. Please take part in e-lobbying, which only takes a few minutes and is easily found on our website, and monthly calls to action. We also encourage you to join us for the Taste of New York Reception and Lobby Day on March 3 and 4 in Albany, one of the most important lobbying events of the year. Lawmakers from across the state must hear from us if we are to be successful.

Jefferson Farm Bureau is here to support our members and help with any local issues that may arise. Please reach out to me or to our board members if you need anything.

I wish you all the best in the year ahead.

Regards,

Kyle Hafemann

Jefferson County Farm Bureau President

JEFFERSON COUNTY FARM BUREAU ATTENDS STATE ANNUAL MEETING

Jefferson County Farm Bureau helped chart the course for agriculture's future at the New York Farm Bureau 2024 State Convention (StaCon) December 3-5 at Turning Stone Resort Casino in Verona. This year's theme was "Farming Forward: Leadership, Innovation, Diversification." Workshops and an engaging program were offered to help NYFB members, farmers and agricultural professionals better plan for the future. Member delegates also voted on public policy positions that the state organization will advocate for this year in Albany and in Washington, D.C.



Photo above: Jefferson County Farm Bureau member Doug Shelmidine on the delegate floor during policy discussion at New York Farm Bureau's State Convention.



Photo left: Jefferson County Farm Bureau delegates at New York Farm Bureau 2024 State Convention.

NYFB AGRICULTURAL YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION AVAILABLE

New York high school seniors who are graduating and interested in pursuing a career related to agriculture can apply for New York Farm Bureau's Agricultural Youth Scholarship. Eligible students can use the financial award for college or advanced training in the skilled trades.

Visit the link to apply: bit.ly/NYFB-scholarship.

Application deadline: April 1, 2025, 11:59 p.m.

Eligibility requirements:

- 2025 graduating high school seniors who will continue their education to prepare for a career connected to the agricultural industry. This includes advancing their education through college or pursuing advanced training in the skilled trades.
- Must live or work on a farm or be involved with agriculture via any avenue.
- Family Farm Bureau membership or Student Farm Bureau membership is required. Students can join for free as student members by using this link: www.nyfb.org/membership.
- Applicants under the age of 18 must also include the signature of a parent or legal guardian.

Process and Procedure:

Students are required to complete an application, which is on the Reviewr online platform. After creating an account in Reviewr, the student will log in and begin the application. The student can stop, restart, and edit their application any time before the submission is due by logging into their Reviewr account. The responses to the questions and essay sections have character count limits. Before applying, a summary page will be shown. This page can be printed to review the application answers.

A district-level competition will be held. If applications do not meet the criteria to be a district winner, no district award will be given. Each district winner will receive \$250 plus a memento of their selection.

State winner selection will be made from district winners, based solely on the submitted applications. District winners and two state winners will be announced by the end of May. The first-place state winner will receive a \$3,000 scholarship and the second-place state winner will receive a \$2,000 scholarship.



For more information, email proed@nyfb.org or call 1-800-342-4143.

**EXCITING NEW MEMBER BENEFIT
FOR JEFFERSON COUNTY FARM
BUREAU MEMBERS**



As part of your *PAID 2025 membership*, we're pleased to be sending along a discount card to Texas Roadhouse. It's included in this mailing! When using your discount card at our local Texas Roadhouse, you'll receive 10% off all food purchases through 12/31/25.

If there are any other local businesses you would like to see a member benefit at, let us know.

If a card is not included with this newsletter, your membership has lapsed. Please call today and renew to continue enjoying all the great benefits we have to offer. To renew your membership, call **800-342-4143** and press "0."

*Thank you to our members.
We are grateful for you all!*



**SUNY JEFFERSON
SCHOLARSHIP AVAILABLE**

The Jefferson County Farm Bureau Scholarship is awarded to a member or family member of Jefferson, Lewis, Oswego or St. Lawrence County Farm Bureau, with preference given to Jefferson County. The scholarship is awarded to a freshman or second-year student at JCC who has financial need and has shown citizenship and leadership through community involvement and/or extracurricular school activities. In order to maintain the award throughout the academic year, the student must maintain a 3.0 GPA.

To apply online, go to www.sunyjefferson.edu, click on menu, select "Costs & Aid" and then click on "Apply For Scholarships" and search for Jefferson County Farm Bureau Scholarship in the "Search for Foundation Scholarships" tab.

**JEFFERSON COUNTY FARM BUREAU
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

- PRESIDENT:** Kyle Hafemann..... 315-778-6457
- VICE PRESIDENT:** Michael Kiechle.... 315-778-8110
- 2nd Vice PRESIDENT:** Fred Matthews 315-658-2351
- PAST PRESIDENT:** Devon Shelmidine 315-486-8959
- PRO-ED CHAIR:** Tedra Bean..... 315-783-7067
- Jay Canzonier 315-523-0760
- Kirby Klock 315-405-9723
- Jay Matteson 315-783-2251
- Adam Miner..... 315-775-3774
- Austin Weaver 607-592-3149
- COUNTY MANAGER:** John Wagner... 315-761-9770
- NYFB COUNTY SUPPORT OFFICES:**
- Felicia Dougherty 518-431-5650
- Jill Williamson..... 518-431-5670

Jefferson County Farm Bureau meets on the first Wednesday of each month (except June and December) at Cazenovia Equipment in Watertown.



*Must be a New York Farm Bureau member for 30 consecutive days prior to purchase. Proof of membership is required. A valid member email address is required for eligibility. Discounts are subject to change without notice. Check out the savings on the following equipment categories; commercial mowing, residential mowing, utility vehicles, tractors, and compact construction. <https://www.deere.com/jcn/rewards/equipment-discounts/>