

# Seneca County Farm Bureau

April 2025



## PRESIDENTS MESSAGE



I've been thinking a lot about change, which seems to be occurring daily – and quickly – on both state and national levels. The NYFB public policy team is hard at work as they follow ever-evolving issues critical to agriculture and meet with elected representatives in New York and in Washington, D.C. With the new administration in place, it is more important than ever to make our voice heard. And, as recent headlines show, issues like tariffs mean it is also critical to maintain a close working relationship with American Farm Bureau, which fights tirelessly for New York farmers and farmers across the nation.

With change comes uncertainty and, sometimes, fear. While I can't speculate how long the new tariffs will be in place nor exactly how they will affect various agricultural commodities across New York, it's fair to say that higher tariffs are a significant concern for farmers everywhere. NYFB President David Fisher shares this concern and has been

discussing the topic regularly with AFBF and fellow Farm Bureaus. Recently, NYFB released this statement:

"The enactment of higher federal tariffs with Canada, Mexico and China is an issue of great concern to the agricultural community in New York. Our farmers are already dealing with razor-thin margins. If these tariffs persist, they may be faced with rising costs of products like potash, a key ingredient in fertilizer, as nearly all of it is imported from Canada. Meanwhile, New York State is number two in the nation for apple production. If Washington State, the number-one producer, cannot export apples, they may sell them in New York at a fraction of the normal cost, which would undercut our farmers' profit margin even further. These, along with retaliatory tariffs, are just a few examples illustrating the trickle-down effects of higher tariffs. U.S. dairy farmers exported nearly \$9 billion globally in 2024, with the largest portion of these exports going to Canada, Mexico and China. While we support fair trade, our goal is always to provide affordable and accessible food for all New Yorkers while protecting our agricultural markets and lowering input costs for our farmers."

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## NYFB TASTE OF NY RECEPTION

New York Farm Bureau hosted its popular Taste of NY Reception at the Empire State Plaza Convention Center the evening of March 3. The event brings together county Farm Bureau members, public officials and staff, and agricultural partners to showcase the diversity of New York State agriculture.

**Photo (l-r):** Seneca County Farm Bureau President Kaylee Borden (l) and board member Bruce Murray (r) chat with our adopted Senator Roxanne Persaud (c) from Brooklyn at the New York Farm Bureau Taste of NY Reception in Albany. Senator Persaud has voted for Farm Bureau supported legislation. Thank you Senator!!!



## SENECA COUNTY FARM BUREAU DISASTER RELIEF FUND: DONATIONS STILL BEING ACCEPTED

The Seneca County Farm Bureau has established the Disaster Relief Fund in response to the January 21 fire in Ovid, N.Y., which destroyed a city block and left the community without its only grocery store. Donations to the relief fund will be used to purchase gift certificates from Schrader Farms in Romulus, N.Y., to support the Ovid Food Pantry.

If you haven't had the chance to donate yet, it's not too late! We are still collecting donations from members and the public to support the relief efforts.

Please note, **donations are not tax deductible.**

Thank you to everyone who has contributed so far! Your support is crucial to helping us achieve our goals, and every contribution makes a difference.

### HOW TO DONATE TO THE SENECA COUNTY FARM BUREAU DISASTER RELIEF FUND

- Checks: Mail to Tim Freier, Treasurer, Seneca County Farm Bureau, 3792 Post Road, Geneva, NY 14456.
- Online: Funds can be electronically deposited at [bit.ly/SenecaFireRelief](https://bit.ly/SenecaFireRelief).
- Payment methods: Donations are accepted via personal check, PayPal, Venmo, and credit/debit cards.

## SENECA COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT PROJECT SPOTLIGHT



### WATER AND SEDIMENT CONTROL BASINS

Due to continued erosion since the 2018 flood event in the Town of Lodi, erosion control structures were installed to eliminate serious gully erosion through agricultural crop fields.

Starting at the top of the watershed, a combination of Water and Sediment Control Basins (WASCoBs) and Diversions were installed to shorten the slope length and capture the surface water, detain it and outlet it at a reduced non-erosive rate in a more appropriate location. WASCoBs also have the additional benefit of storing stormwater and releasing it at a slower rate to reduce the impacts of downstream flooding.

Working in partnership with Seneca Lake Pure Waters and FLOWPA, allowed Soil & Water to: prevent erosion; reduce sediments and nutrients from entering Seneca Lake; and promote sound agricultural decisions that relieve impacts of extreme storm events and associated flooding.

In total, it is estimated that 300 pounds of phosphorous and 700 pounds of nitrogen have been lost due to soil erosion since the original storm event in 2018. With the implementation of various erosion control Best Management Practices, Soil & Water has reduced continued erosion and significant inputs to Seneca Lake.

Installation of a Diversion and two Water and Sediment Control Basins (WASCoBs) helped reduce erosion in fields adjacent to Canoga Creek in the Town of Fayette. These practices aid in reducing erosion

but also assist in reducing associated nutrient loads to Cayuga Lake. These practices break slope length, ultimately slowing water and its erosiveness. As they capture and store surface stormwater, sediment and associated nutrients such as phosphorous and nitrogen to settle out. After the stormwater is detained it is released at a slower rate through an underground outlet, reducing the risk of flooding in downstream areas.

### EROSION CONTROL

Soil and Water worked with a local vineyard in the Town of Lodi to stabilize an eroding gully that was likely the result of a deviation from the natural drainage path sometime in the 1960s. The gully flows into an unnamed tributary of Seneca Lake and has lost approximately 1,000 tons of soils to the lake due to erosion. Utilizing a US Fish and Wildlife Service design, hardwood logs from the property were used to construct three "log drop" grade control structures in the eroded channel. The structures slow stormwater velocities and promote centerline flow, minimizing bank erosion while also trapping incoming sediments, ultimately reducing sediment and nutrient loading into Seneca Lake.

### IRRIGATION

Due to more frequent drought occurrences, an irrigation system was implemented using buried mainline, multiple valve boxes and above ground drip irrigation hose on a farm in the Town of Covert. The irrigation system will aid in controlling the rate, amount, placement and timing of irrigation water which will help in meeting the State's Climate Resilient Farming goals.

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## NRCS-NY OFFERS INCENTIVES TO ELECTRIFY FARM EQUIPMENT

USDA's Natural Resource and Conservation Service in New York (NRCS) has adopted a FY25 NRCS Climate-Smart Activity which will help producers across the state improve air quality and energy efficiency.

Conservation Practice Standard 372 "Combustion System Improvement" is now available to New York producers interested in defraying the costs associated with the replacement of in use, high-emission tractors and other off road mobile agricultural equipment with new and highly efficient equipment. Replacement can be in the form of electric powered motor or lower emitting diesel powered motors.

The primary goal of this practice is to help farmers and ranchers improve energy efficiency and improve air quality across New York. The conservation practice targets oxides of nitrogen emissions and energy savings. Any equipment purchased prior to contract execution is ineligible. Any contracted equipment replaced must be with new equipment that has a minimum performance lifespan of 10 years. The in-use equipment must be disabled and properly disposed of when the new equipment is put into use. Contracted payments will not be

issued until the new equipment is received and proof of proper disposal of the old equipment is documented.

The practice is available in New York through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). NRCS accepts applications for these programs year-round. Submission of a program application does not guarantee funding. EQIP and CSP are voluntary, technical, and financial assistance programs designed to help farmers, ranchers, forestland owners, and Tribes with the application of conservation measures. These programs focus strongly on conservation planning, conservation implementation, and solving natural resource concerns. Each applicant must establish themselves as a USDA customer and obtain all Farm Service Agency (FSA) eligibility requirements. Please note, Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) determination takes an average three weeks to be processed by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

To learn more, go to <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/>, visit your local USDA Service Center or visit the Ag Energy NY website at <https://agenergyny.org/>.

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### *Seneca County Soil & Water Spotlight Cont.*

#### **SILAGE LEACHATE COLLECTION SYSTEM**

While working through the Agricultural Environmental Management Program process with a farm in the Canal Watershed, it was identified that there was a silage leachate issue that needed to be addressed. Runoff from corn silage stored in bunk silos can produce leachate with high biological demand loading that can negatively impact water quality. A leachate control and treatment system was implemented by installing concrete curbing and aprons to collect low flow runoff from the bunk and direct it to an existing manure storage. High flows, which are sufficiently diluted, are directed to a vegetated treatment area where nutrients will be utilized by the growing **vegetation**.

#### **HEAVY USE AREA PROTECTION & MANURE COMPOST FACILITY**

An existing barnyard in the Canal Watershed was located approximately 25 feet from a stream; with no roof it was difficult to keep the barnyard area clean resulting in poor conditions for the herd, a management challenge for the farmer and a water quality issue resulting in polluted runoff. While working through the Agricultural Environmental Management Program, it was determined that a typical vegetated treatment area was not feasible due to site limitations. Therefore, a concrete pad was installed with a roof to isolate the barnyard from precipitation, preventing manure laden

runoff to the Canal.

In addition, a compost facility was also installed adjacent to the roofed barnyard. As the barnyard and barn is cleaned, manure and bedding can be stored and actively composted, reducing the nutrient losses to ground and surface waters. When weather conditions are conducive for spreading, the farmer will spread the composted manure as a nutrient additive to the crops which will take up the nutrients, ultimately producing a high-quality crop that can either be sold or fed to the on-farm herd.

#### ***Presidents Message continued***

But tariffs are just one of many challenges farmers face daily. We continue to fight for a fair Farm Bill, ag labor and disaster relief. And, with several tax provisions critical to farmers expiring at the end of the year, we are joining AFBF to urge Congress to renew provisions like Section 199A, which allows families to deduct part of their business income.

We must be vigilant, and we must speak to our elected officials with an authentic voice. Share your stories with me and with NYFB, who will in turn share your stories with legislators. Support Farm Bureau in any way you can – because together, we are stronger.

*Kaylee Borden*

Seneca County Farm Bureau President



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## SENECA COUNTY FARM BUREAU BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Seneca County Farm Bureau Board meetings are held the first Monday of every month at 7:00 p.m. at CCE Seneca County, 369 East Main Street, Waterloo, NY.

