

Chautauqua County Farm Bureau
29 Liberty St., Suite 212
Batavia, NY 14020



Chautauqua County
Farm Bureau News

The New York Animal Agriculture Coalition (NYAAC) is a farmer founded and funded organization whose mission is to enhance the public’s understanding of and appreciation for animal agriculture by fostering a dialogue with consumers, engagement with farmers and cooperation among members of the industry.

Their work is critical since farmers make up less than one percent of the population in New York. At the same time, consumers have become further removed from the farm, both geographically and generationally speaking.

This divide presents the agricultural industry an opportunity and a need to educate and inform the public. NYAAC is doing its part by offering programs and services to aid in conversations with consumers and enhance transparency on farms, allowing the public to be more knowledgeable and aware of the truth of modern animal agriculture. They focus their efforts primarily on dairy farms, as they are the most prominent type of livestock farm in New York State.

NYAAC is committed to being a proactive voice and source of factual, credible information about New York dairy farms and their role in today’s food system. Through their website and the various projects NYAAC is involved with, they hope to strengthen the public’s trust and support for our family farms that contribute to a safe, wholesome, affordable and sustainable food supply.

Visit their website at:
<http://www.nyanimalag.org/>



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NYFB.ORG
1.800.342.4143

Chautauqua County Farm Bureau News

July 2017



President’s Message

I hope everyone is finally catching up on field work, it has been a challenging spring.



Here’s a few dates for some upcoming events. August 15 is the second annual Chautauqua Farmer Neighbor dinner which will be held at the Grandview in Ellington. This event is designed so you can bring a neighbor and show them what agriculture is about in Chautauqua County! This event is sponsored by Cornell Cooperative Extension, Chautauqua County Soil and Water, Farm Credit East, Western New York Crop Management and Chautauqua County Farm Bureau, with many of our support people as sponsors. Contact Deb at Soil and Water for tickets and more information at 664-2351.

Visit the farm day event is planned for August 26 at Oakview Dairy, 837 Shady Side Rd., Jamestown. The event is open to the public. Cooperative Extension has asked for volunteers to help with the tours and Farm Bureau members have always pitched in to help with this event.

The New York State Assembly and Senate have passed an inherent risk bill to help mitigate some of the liabilities on farms that do business directly with the public and it is on the Governor’s desk and he is expected to sign it.

Enjoy the rest of your summer.

Sincerely,
Dick Kimball

New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health (NYCAMH)

The mission of NYCAMH is “Enhancing agricultural and rural health by preventing and treating occupational injury and illness”.

The New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health (NYCAMH) receives grant funding to provide farm safety services at little or no cost. These services are available to any type of agricultural operation in New York. Experienced NYCAMH educators and trainers promote safe and healthy farming by teaching safe work practices to audiences including youth, agribusiness professionals and farm workers of all backgrounds through a variety of programs.

Contact them to learn more at 800.343.7527 or by email: info@nycamh.org
Or visit their website at: <http://www.nycamh.org/>

**Let Farm Bureau
Know your Concerns**

Is there something that is happening locally affecting how you farm, such as local town ordinances? Farm Bureau directors and representatives can help work with local town governments to strengthen your voice.

Board Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of every month. All members are welcome to attend. Please contact the office at 877-383-7663 for meeting locations and time.



Chautauqua County Farm Bureau

Dick Kimball, President.....	508-965-6400
Evan Schiedel, Vice President	716-223-0030
Eric Vanstrom, Exe Comm.	716-664-0415
John Knight	716-499-9424
Adrienne Ploss	716-789-9427
Joanna Sommers.....	716-338-2700
Dan Steward.....	716-499-2946
Glen Moss Jr.	716-640-7517
Brian Carlson.....	716-499-4644
Kaitlyn Whalen.....	716-499-9262
Samantha Vanstrom	716-338-6151
Evan Schiedel, YF&R Chair.....	716-223-0030
Ginny Carlberg, Pro Ed Chair.....	716-483-2621
Tim Bigham, Field Advisor.....	716-474-6585
Chautauqua Co Farm Bureau.....	877-383-7663
Dick Kimball, District 1 Director	508-965-6400
NYFB, Albany.....	1-800-342-4143

Policy Development

During the month of May, the Chautauqua County Farm Bureau Policy Development committee asked our members for responses to a policy development survey using a Survey Monkey on-line survey. The questions and responses are summarized below.

WPS – Are there portions of the new Worker Protection Standards that you find to be particularly burdensome?

Members responded, by and large, that standards without information or training was the biggest burden. More clarification is needed. (*Editor’s note: AFBF and NYFB are working to delay implementation of the standards until these clarification and training issues are addressed*)

Commodity pricing – What policy should Farm Bureau support in pricing of farm products?

Of the 18 respondents, four were dairy farmers, 10 were grape farmers, six produced other products and two produced no products at all. All but three farmers chose “Let free market prevail” to describe their preference, one chose “subsidize prices that fall below a minimum”, one chose “control supply”, one chose incentivize good management.

Farm Bill - Should Farm Bureau propose Farm Bill language for commodity specific programs or wait for commodity groups to make proposals?

Only one respondent said that Farm Bureau should get ahead of commodity groups, seven said that we should support or suggest modifications to proposals by commodity groups, five said we should just let the commodity groups handle it and four chose a modified response.

Immigration Reform – All respondents feel that we should stay with current policy

Education – Overwhelmingly respondents felt that Farm Bureau should get involved in starting ag programs in schools that don’t have one (14 yes, two no, two IDK or need more info). If adding a program were to increase property taxes by 5% however, the results were as follows (seven yes, four no and seven IDK or need more info).

Property taxes – Which following aspect of property taxes most frustrates you?

Property taxes are not reflective of the ability of farms to pay them – two responses
Assessors seem unable to accurately apply agricultural assessment – zero responses
Property taxes growing out of control because public entities pass on costs – 11 responses
Purchases of farms are overvalued causing values to unreasonably increase – four responses
Other – tax rate needs to be lowered, more than assessments; too much going to pensions

County Executive race – We received a number of excellent, agricultural questions we will be able to pose to the county executive candidates in this fall’s race.

We also received a number of excellent general responses that will help guide our county Farm Bureau.

A big thank you to all of those who responded online. If you’d like to add your two cents, give us additional comments or suggest a resolution that should be included in this fall’s policy development, please contact one of our committee:

Evan Schiedel evan24@rochester.rr.com
Adrienne Ploss hickoryhurst@gmail.com
John Knight jknight22661@gmail.com
or call our Regional Office at (877) 383-7663

A Call to Community With Farm Bureau

One of the hardest things we as board members get challenged with every year is the task of recruiting new members or trying to retain current members. Especially now given the terrible state of all commodities, people place membership dues at the very bottom of the list of bills to pay. Fortunately it is a voluntary bill unlike your property tax bill. What I’d like to do in this editorial is make the case for you the importance of being a part of the Farm Bureau community and making your voice heard through the channel of like-minded men and women.

The most important part about this organization is its “grassroots” approach. All policy development comes from the members in each individual county. In his book “*Democracy in America*”, Alexis de Tocqueville said, “Yet it is at the local level that the strength of a free people lies. Local institutions are to liberty what elementary schools are to knowledge; they bring it within reach of the people, allow them to savor its peaceful use, and accustom them to rely on it. Without local institutions, a nation may give itself a free government, but it will not have a free spirit. Fleeting passions, momentary interests, or chance circumstances may give it the outward forms of independence, but despotism repressed within the body of society will eventually resurface.”

What he is saying is that if citizens join together at the local level, in free associations, they will be able to keep a political system from becoming tyrannical. That is especially important today with media and social media often portraying farms in a negative light. Which if not for Farm Bureau could have or could yet lead to damaging political and economic consequences to all farmers.

What has separated America from almost every other country is the fact that its people are the source of the power. And it is only through these free men and women that laws can be carried out. In Farm Bureau all policy comes from the people in each individual county. Then once a year the counties come together at the State Annual Meeting to debate and vote on which policies to adopt. From there it becomes NYFB policy which is what guides the leaders in Farm Bureau to lobby the state government on our behalf.

While many farmers can take issue with one another on any number of ideas, there is plenty of common ground. Unity does not have to mean uniformity. So if you like being able to exercise your entrepreneurial skills with land and animals may I implore you to be *or stay* a member of Farm Bureau. A local community of farmers can assume responsibility for tending their own interests rather than letting the ignorant dictate them for us. Exercise your freedom and volunteer to be a part of a community in Farm Bureau.

Eric Vanstrom

2nd Annual Chautauqua County Farmer Neighbor Dinner Tuesday, August 15, 2017

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Chautauqua County’s Agriculture Program is excited to announce that the 2nd Annual Chautauqua County Farmer Neighbor Dinner is planned for Tuesday, Aug. 15, 2017. The Farmer Neighbor Dinner will be held at The Grandview of Ellington, 1116 West Hill Road, Ellington.

This event is a collaboration between Farm Credit East, Chautauqua County Soil and Water Conservation District, Chautauqua County Farm Bureau, Western New York Crop Management Association, and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Chautauqua County. Tickets for the Farmer Neighbor Dinner are available for \$20 per person. To purchase tickets for this event please contact Debra Kelley, Chautauqua County Soil and Water, at 716-664-2351 ext. 102 or dkelley@soilwater.org. If you or your business is interested in assisting with this event in the form of sponsorship or food donation, please contact Lindsay Eckman, Farm Credit East, at 716-753-2144 or Lindsay.eckman@farmcrediteast.com.