

Madison County Advocates for Agriculture in Albany

Members of Madison County Farm Bureau recently spent time in Albany meeting with lawmakers to discuss public policy priorities on behalf of the county's farm families. They spent two days advocating for funding and legislation important to growing, strengthening and preserving agriculture, joining farmers from across the state as part of New York Farm Bureau's Lobby Day. They kicked off the two-day trip with the annual Taste of New York, a popular event attended by elected officials and decision makers that highlights the diversity of New York agriculture.



From left to right: Rebecca Werbela, Allison Austin, Senator Dave Valesky, Dr. Karin Bump and Assemblyman Bill Magee (seated).

Madison County Farm Bureau President Darrell Griff, Rebecca Werbela, Dr. Karin Bump, Scott O'Mara, Bret Bossard, Mike Marshfield and Allison Austin spent a full day meeting with Senators and Assembly members, not only from Madison County, but also with urban legislators whose districts are not comprised of farmland. They discussed the need for critical funding for agricultural research, farm safety and educational programs; proper investment in infrastructure and the Environmental Protection Fund; and enacting meaningful legislation that help farmers better compete and help offset detrimental costs associated with the minimum wage increase.

New York Farm Bureau's E-Lobby Center allows you to *take action* and *be heard*.

You don't have to travel to Albany or Washington to affect agricultural policy. Visit NYFB.org, click on the Legislative Affairs tab and select the E-Lobby Center. Here you will find a host of issues that *need* your voice along with simple instructions that allow you to become an advocate for change.

Ag Literacy Week Activities Make a Difference

In its 13th year, Agricultural Literacy Week (March 20-24) introduced elementary students to New York's booming grape industry. Local volunteers spent time in classrooms reading *The Grapes Grow Sweet* by Lynne Tuft, a wonderful story that captures the way of life for over 1,600 family owned vineyards in our state. After they read the book, students took part in hands-on activities that kept them engaged and learning. Each school then received a copy of the book to keep in their library. The opportunity to foster awareness, understanding and appreciation for local farmers has been an invaluable and welcome resource. Thank you to Cornell Cooperative Extension and the countless volunteers that help bring ag into our classrooms.



Second graders at Stockbridge Valley Central School listen to Lynne Tuft's *The Grapes Grow Sweet*.

Dawn Schmidt reads to first graders from DeRuyter Central School.



A Great Night for Friendly Competition

Madison County Farm Bureau's 3rd Annual Ag Trivia Night raised over \$3,100 to support youth programming in Madison County. All this would not be possible without the support of our local farmers, farm service companies, donors and sponsors. This year, a record 29 teams put their ag knowledge to the test in a fun evening filled with great food and drinks, great company and friendly competition. **THANK YOU** to everyone who came out, our sponsors, our donors, our volunteers and to Empire Tractor for hosting this memorable event. We are grateful to provide quality opportunities and education for our next generation and this outpouring of support makes it all possible. We look forward to next year!



FFA Blue Jacket Applications



Madison County Farm Bureau is proud to once again gift local students with their very own FFA Blue Jacket. Applications have gone out to ag advisors and teachers and must be returned by **Monday, April 17**. If you would like more information, please contact Johanna Bossard at 315-440-1044.

The FFA Blue Jacket unifies members in a long-standing tradition and reminds them that they are part of something larger than themselves. It is an honor to be able to gift jackets to members who would not otherwise be able to own their own jacket.

The New York Farm Bureau Foundation Fundraising Feast North

Friday, May 19

Tailwater Lodge, Altmar

6:30 p.m. reception with dinner at 7:15 p.m.

\$100 per person or \$750 for table of 8

For more information, call Sandra Prokop

1-800-342-4143 or email sprokop@nyfb.org



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Madison County
Farm Bureau News

Madison County Farm Bureau



EVERY FARMER

April 2017

President's Report



Happy Spring! I know many of you are ready to put the unpredictable winter behind you and get back outside for the start of another busy, yet productive season.

As I write this, lawmakers in Albany are in the final stretch of budget negotiations and I am hopeful that it will be positive for

agriculture. We recently met with lawmakers to voice our concerns during New York Farm Bureau's annual Lobby Day. It was refreshing to see agriculture take center stage at the Capitol as farmer members from across the state met with almost every Senator and Member of Assembly. We had productive meetings with Senator Valesky and Assemblyman Magee and also had the opportunity to sit down with representatives from New York City and give them an honest, thoughtful farmer's perspective. These invaluable interactions are what they remember when they vote on agricultural policy. For the most up-to-date information on what is happening in Albany or Washington, visit NYFB.org.

Our 3rd Annual Ag Trivia Challenge Night was a great success. Thank you to Bailey Coon, our entire Board of Directors, volunteers, our community partners and everyone who came out. We pride ourselves on the ability to provide our youth with quality opportunities, experiences and programs and because of the hard-work and dedication of our board and our supporters we can continue to do so.

Darrell Griff



Madison County Farm Bureau Vice-President Greg Coon (left) and Madison County Farm Bureau Young Farmer Chair Bailey Coon (center) had the opportunity to travel to Pittsburgh for the American Farm Bureau Federation Fusion Conference. They attended several workshops and general sessions to strengthen their leadership skills while networking with Young Farmers and Ranchers from across the country. Here they are (above) after a nice visit with AFBF President Zippy Duvall.

The Madison County Farm Bureau sponsored series **Grown in New York** is back! Last year from April to November, 4.6 million households tuned in to Spectrum (formerly Time Warner Cable) programming featuring a farmer and their farm operation - each month's story highlighting a different commodity. Madison County is pleased to continue the collaboration with 11 county Farm Bureaus to promote the diversity of New York agriculture while also giving the non-farm public a peek into the realities and issues facing local farmers. The March 2017 edition puts the spotlight on maple featuring Moser's Maple in Croghan. If you are not a Spectrum subscriber, visit www.twcnews.com to view the videos.

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Madison County Farm Bureau meetings are normally held on the second Wednesday of every month at the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Madison County Farm & Home Center, 100 Eaton Street, Morrisville, NY at 7:30 p.m.