


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



Orleans County
Farm Bureau News




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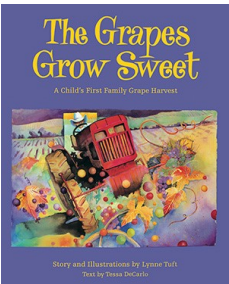
1.800.342.4143

Agriculture Literacy Week March 20-24

This is the 11th year that Agriculture Literacy Week has helped bring agriculturally themed books and resources into thousands of classrooms and libraries throughout New York State. Volunteers throughout the state will help in this endeavor by reading to elementary students and assisting in a hands-on lesson. This years book is titled The Grapes Grow Sweet by Lynne Tuft. With the advent of New York's booming grape industries it is exciting to feature a book that so wonderfully captures this way of life for over 1,600 family-owned vineyards in our state.

STEM careers and post secondary opportunities related to the grape industry are growing in our state. It will be essential for our students to understand the importance of grapes as an economic driver in communities across New York, and develop an awareness for future career possibilities.

Orleans County Farm Bureau has purchased books this year which will be distributed to volunteer readers throughout the county school system.



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President’s Message

Orleans County Farm Bureau has been busy with many activities the past few months. We had a great turnout at our solar meeting back in September. It was a very informative and well attended. Dennis Vacco from Lippes, Mathias, Wexler Friedman and Mike Saviola from NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets gave presentations on how the proposed solar leasing agreements might impact our area.



I was able to attend the NYFB State Annual Meeting in December and see how our local resolutions impact New York Farm Bureau’s policies for the upcoming year.

We set-up a meeting with NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, NRCS, FSA and Soil and Water. We hope to clear up some questions and concerns, and learn the do’s and dont’s of clearing hedgerows, woods and maintaining our ditches and water ways.

We were lucky to have Matt Toussaint and David Bittner represent Orleans County Farm Bureau at lobby days in Albany the first week of March. Five members of Albion FFA attended along with our members. Its great to see young members showing interest in agriculture and the politics that go with it.

We also just had a very successful farmer to neighbor dinner held at the White Birch in Lyndonville. It was very well attended and was a nice community event to bring our county’s farmers and neighbors together.

We look forward to an early warm spring and a prosperous growing season. Thank you for your continued support.

Alan Panek

Orleans County Farm Bureau
Board of Directors

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Amanda Krenning-Muoio, Field Advisor	749-9508
Orleans County Farm Bureau.....	343-3489
Or toll free.....	1-877-383-7663
Pat McCormick, District 2 Director	716-984-0085
NYFB, Albany.....	1-800-342-4143

Celebrate Agriculture Conference
“Meeting the Challenge of Change”
March 31, Syracuse, NY

The Celebration of Agriculture Conference will be held on Friday, March 31 at the DoubleTree by Hilton in Syracuse. An extended Young Farmer program will begin Friday evening with an event at the Syracuse Crunch Hockey Game with agricultural tours planned for Saturday, Apr. 1.

Hotel Reservation Deadline: March 15
Conference Registration: March 17
For detailed agenda please visit: http://www.nyfb.org/news_and_events/

Board Meetings: All members are welcome to attend board meetings, normally held on the second Thursday of the month (subject to change).
Call our office at 585-343-3489 for details if you would like to attend.

New Rules For Fruit Tree Depreciation

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On December 18, 2015, President Obama signed the Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes (PATH) Act. One of the main provisions that the agricultural community was keeping an eye on was bonus depreciation. Bonus depreciation has permitted farmers in the past to immediately depreciate 50% of farm property placed into service. In addition to having the traditional bonus depreciation extended for an additional five years, Congressman Tom Rooney of Florida drafted language that now permits farmers to immediately depreciate the costs of planting new trees. Prior to this, farmers were unable to depreciate trees until they were used in production. The main motivating factor for Congressman Rooney was to assist Florida's citrus industry that has been hampered with citrus greening disease for several years, leading to over 130,000 of abandoned commercial citrus growers. However, the added legislation will benefit more than just citrus growers. In particular, the New York State apple and grape industries will find Congressman Rooney's legislation tremendously beneficial.

The New Bonus Depreciation:

Any specified plant that is planted or grafted after December 31, 2015 in the ordinary course of a taxpayer's farming business may receive a 50% depreciation deduction of the adjusted basis of the specified plant for the year in which the specified plant is planted or grafted. This amount is phased down to 40% in 2018 and 30% for 2019. A farming business is defined as "the trade or business of farming" and includes "operating a nursery or sod farm, or the raising or harvesting of trees bearing fruit, nuts, or other crops, or ornamental trees. . . . [However,] an evergreen tree which is more than 6 years old at the time severed from the roots shall not be treated as an ornamental tree." Specified plants are defined as (1) "any tree or vine which bears fruits or nuts, and (2) any other plant which will have more than one yield of fruits or nuts and which generally has a preproductive period of more than 2 years from the time of planting or grafting to the time at which such plant begins bearing fruits or nuts." However, nothing planted or grafted outside of the United States qualifies for this new provision.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this further, please contact Dario G. Arezzo at (585)815-1900 or by email at Dario.Arezzo@FarmCreditEast.com.

Orleans County Soil and Water Conservation District

Orleans County Soil and Water Conservation District will be co-hosting a Rain Barrel Workshop with Orleans County CCE Master Gardeners on April 1 from 10am to 12pm. The workshop will be held in the Trolley Building at the CCE Fairgrounds. Cost is \$15/barrel and includes all materials, as well as hands-on help building your barrel. The workshop will also host demonstrations on rain barrel installation, a watershed simulator, and presentations on how your rain barrel can help protect our watershed, and on how you can further help conserve water by growing a more eco-friendly garden. Please register with Orleans County SWCD by March 24 by calling 585-589-5959 x 5 or by emailing Jena Buckwell at jrbuckwell@gmail.com. Workshop is limited to 25 participants. All ages are welcome!



New York Farm Bureau Lobby Days

Orleans County Farm Bureau and Albion FFA members attended NYFB's annual Reception and Lobby Days in Albany on March 6 and 7. Matt Toussaint and David Bittner volunteered for Orleans County Farm Bureau. Adam Krenning brought FFA members Ben Restivo, Rylie Lear, Clara Stilwell, Garrett Derisley, and Emilie Barleben. Once in Albany they attended the "Taste of New York Reception & Issues Forum" which gives the members an opportunity to network with elected officials in a casual setting. The group hosted a table with fudge from Watts and pumpkin seeds from Partykas.

The next day everyone attended a breakfast briefing. Orleans County Farm Bureau members then spent the day visiting state assembly and senators members to promote NYFB's priority issues for the year. They also advocated for important state budget items relative to agriculture. The FFA members were able to sit in on these meetings. This is a great educational experience for the students to see Farm Bureau members at work as the voice of agriculture.



Albion FFA members posing with Richard Ball, NYS Dept. of Ag & Markets Commissioner at the "Taste of NY Reception" on March 6.

Orleans County Farm Bureau Offers Scholarships

Orleans County Farm Bureau is awarding two scholarships to qualified graduating seniors in Orleans County. First place will be awarded a \$1,500 scholarship and the second place applicant will receive a \$1,000 scholarship. These awards will go to a student member or to the son or daughter of a regular or associate member of Orleans County Farm Bureau.

Eligibility consists of students that will be continuing their education beyond high school into an agriculturally related field, two-year or four-year program. Or the student applying must be entering into the agriculture industry and should have a completed budget for one year.

Scholarship application forms are available from the Orleans County Farm Bureau office at 585-343-3489 or email us at wny@nyfb.org

The forms must be returned to the Farm Bureau office no later than May 1, 2017. The award decision will be based on scholastic achievements, extracurricular activities, an essay contest and interest in agricultural or agricultural-related fields.

The award will be given in two segments: The first half will be awarded in June, 2017 and the second half at the successful completion of the first semester. Grades must be sent to the Orleans County Farm Bureau office for evaluation. The student shall obtain a GPA of 2.5 or higher to receive the remainder of the award. Or the student will receive the funds once a financial plan for the students agriculture business or how the student plans to better the family farm is presented to the scholarship committee.

