

Ulster County Farm Bureau News

APRIL 2017



To Serve And Strengthen Agriculture

President's Message:

Happy spring fellow Ulster County farmers! As the rush of the season starts we all need to stop and think about a very important topic. That topic is safety.

SAFETY ALWAYS EVERYWHERE

The best way to start the conversation is with three key principles:

1. Do it safely or not at all.
2. There is always time to do it safely.
3. Care for each other's health, safety and security.

Then follow the tenets of operation:

1. Mitigate risk through assessment, planning and execution of controls.
2. Ensure safety devices are in place and functioning.
3. Develop and use written procedures for high risk work.

Cont'd on back:

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NY Farm Bureau Statement on Legislative Approval of One-House Budget Bills

The budget is being finalized just as the newsletter is going to press. Look for additional details in the May issue of Grassroots.

New York Farm Bureau would like to thank the leadership in the Senate and Assembly, especially the Agriculture Committee Chairs, Senator Patty Ritchie and Assemblyman Bill Magee, for making the state's family farms a priority in their respective budgets. Many of the funding lines have been restored to last year's levels, which will make a difference in the support and promotion of the state's diverse agricultural commodities. This includes funding multiple research projects that the agricultural community depends on to confront growing challenges that exist on farms.

The New York State Senate also stepped up to the plate to fund many of the priorities of New York Farm Bureau including a refundable investment tax credit to assist farms looking to reinvest in this down farm economy. The Senate Majority is also supportive of doubling the agricultural minimum wage tax credit which will help farms better manage labor costs while attempting to remain competitive with farms in other states that have significantly lower wage rates.

The Farm to Food Bank Bill also received budgetary support for the first time in both chambers' budgets. This is a big boost to the bill that has seen bi-partisan support the past two years only to have the Governor veto the bill, in part, because it was passed outside of the budget process. There is no excuse for the Governor to pull out his veto stamp again, and we encourage him to negotiate funding in the final budget to support the tax credit, as he promised. It will allow farmers to donate even more fresh food to their regional food banks and pantries.



*Asparagus growing at
Saunderskill Farms in
Accord. Photo by:
Renee Schoonmaker*



Safety Cont'd:

4. Operate equipment within design and environmental limits.
5. Perform work in a safe controlled manner.
6. Take action to address abnormal conditions.
7. Stop work and correct unsafe actions or conditions.
8. Engage persons of expertise in decision making.
9. Follow safe work practices and procedures.
10. Understand and comply with all rules and regulations.

This sounds like a lot to do, but the safety of your farm is in your hands. Every member of the workforce should be authorized and obligated to stop work that is unsafe or does not comply with the key principles and tenets of operation. Good farming and best wishes to a great 2017.

Sincerely, Ray Cullen

Photo: Greenhouses at Saunderskill Farms.

New York Farm Bureau
P.O. Box 5330
Albany, NY 12205



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Farm Bureau News



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