

# New York Farm Bureau

## *2019 Legislative Priorities*

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### **Support critical funding for current agricultural, animal health, promotion, research and environmental programs in the final FY 19/20 state budget**

*Farmers across New York State rely on critical research and promotion dollars to help them remain competitive, adapt to changing environment, and stay on the cutting edge of production.*

### **Strong opposition to unworkable employer mandates in New York State**

*Farms have strict and often unpredictable schedules to care for animals or harvest crops that farm owners do not dictate, Mother Nature does. Due to this unpredictable nature rigid laws mandating hours worked, inflexible overtime requirements and fear of strikes could cause a farm to lose an entire crop or see their livestock put in harm's way.*

### **Ensure staff funding for critical positions at the Department of Agriculture and Markets**

*Recently the Department has seen the retirement of some key staff and others are set to retire in the near future. We strongly support working on a succession plan, and additional funding if needed, to address the loss of policy expertise and institutional knowledge.*

### **Fund farm tire cost-share disposal (from DEC Part 360 regulations) through the Environmental Protection Fund**

*Recent changes in DEC Part 360 regulations have required farmers to dispose of their current tires used to hold down tarps on their bunk silos that stores livestock feed and purchase new tires that have been drilled so that water does not collect in them. Not only is it cost prohibitive to dispose of the many tires currently on farms, is it difficult and expensive to get drilled tires that do not contain radial wires.*



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# New York Farm Bureau

## *2019 Legislative Priorities* continued

### **Expand the Farm Workforce Retention Tax Credit to Christmas trees, maple, farm wineries and cideries and increase overall funding**

*The Farm Workforce Retention Tax Credit that was signed into law left out several types of farms common in New York State. It is NYFB's belief that this was an unintentional drafting error and the issue should be corrected.*

### **Remove Unemployment Insurance requirements for H-2A workers**

*H-2A workers are ineligible for unemployment insurance benefits as they return to their home country when their contract term is over. NYFB believes that employers should not have to pay unemployment insurance on these employees who are ineligible, by virtue of their federal status, for the benefit.*

### **Amend General Municipal Law 247 to allow farms with conservation easements to construct necessary farm buildings and structures**

*Farmland preservation easements are an important tool to ensure that future generations have land available to farm. As part of these easements, farms should continue to be able to make improvements and add structures to ensure the success of the farm businesses that are on the land.*

### **Support training for police and district attorneys on animal cruelty laws pursuant to current law**

*In 2015, New York State passed a law to help train law enforcement on animal cruelty laws already on the books, unfortunately resources have not been made to implement this training*

### **Funding for research and eradication of tick-borne illnesses**

*Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses continue to be an issue in New York State. Farmers spend a lot of time outdoors and are especially susceptible to these illnesses.*



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