

## NYFB'S TASTE OF NEW YORK RECEPTION AND LOBBY DAY

Farm Bureau members from Onondaga County spent two days in Albany visiting with lawmakers on March 4-5 to highlight NYFB's public policy priorities for the year. They kicked things off by attending the popular NYFB Taste of New York Reception for state lawmakers, commissioners and staff.

Following the evening event, members participated in the annual Lobby Day on Tues., March 5, where they met with both their local Senators and Assembly members to discuss NYFB 2019 priorities.

*Onondaga County Farm Bureau representatives at NYFB Lobby Days and Taste of NY Reception.  
(l-r) Dan Palladino, Danielle Volles and Brian Reeves*



### NEW YORK FARM BUREAU 2019 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

- ◆ **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 EPF**

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, it is difficult and expensive to get drilled tires that do not contain radial wires.

- ◆ **Expand the Farm Workforce Retention Tax Credit to Christmas tree, 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 H2a 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 illness.



## BE A LOCAL LEADER BY CONNECTING WITH THEM

Contacting your local legislative leaders and informing them about the state of your operation can bridge the gap between economic downfalls and local legislation. These representatives are also aware of a larger network and up and coming programs that farms can take advantage of.

Making the contact and making them “your leader” can make you their “go-to” for questions they may have on specific issues in the future. Break the barrier and bridge the gap to make the local and state leaders informed. Elected officials representing Onondaga County are:

### **NYS Senate, 50th District**

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315-428-7632

### **NYS Senator, 53rd District**

Senator Rachel May  
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Syracuse, NY 13202  
315-478-8745

### **NYS Assembly, 120th District**

Assemblyman William A. Barclay  
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Fulton, NY 13069  
315-598-5185

### **NYS Assembly, 126th District**

Assemblyman Gary D. Finch  
69 South Street  
Auburn, NY 13021  
315-255-3045

### **NYS Assembly, 127th District**

Assemblyman Albert A. Stirpe  
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### **NYS Assembly, 128th District**

Assemblywoman Pamela J. Hunter  
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### **NYS Assembly, 129th District**

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Onondaga County  
Farm Bureau News



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# Onondaga County Farm Bureau News Spring 2019



*To Serve And Strengthen Agriculture*

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Onondaga County Farm Bureau's board of directors held the first of many listening sessions at Willow Rock Brewery in Syracuse connecting Farm Bureau members and non-members alike on the issues that are most important to them. The focus at Willow Rock Brewery was on the craft beverage industry where representatives from breweries, distilleries, hop growers and malt houses came together. A common concern among many in attendance was the need for a strong, well-funded hop breeding program similar to the apple and grape industry programs. A special thank you goes out to Paul Leone, Executive Director of the New York State Brewers Association, as well as hosts, Rocky and Kevin at Willow Rock Brewing.

The second Onondaga County Farm Bureau board of directors listening session was held at Venture Farms in Fabius and focused on CAFO dairies. There were 20 Onondaga County dairy farmers in attendance. Thank you to Dale and team for being such great hosts and to all the farmers and guests who took the time to join us and share. A special thank you to the Dairy Princess and ambassadors for serving delicious milk. Be on the lookout for more Onondaga County Farm Bureau listening sessions so that you can stand up and have your voice heard.

**Dan Palladino**  
President



*At Willow Rock Brewing Company discussing issues and opportunities.*



*The Dairy Princess and ambassadors serving ice cold milk at the second listening session held at Venture Farms.*

## **A MESSAGE FROM CONGRESSMAN JOHN KATKO**



As Representative for New York's 24<sup>th</sup> Congressional District in Washington, it is my honor to advocate on behalf of farmers in Onondaga, Cayuga, Wayne, and Oswego Counties. I'd like to take a moment now to update you on some of the recent accomplishments that impact our local agricultural community.

At the end of the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress, legislation that improves the New York farming industry was signed into law. The 2018 Farm Bill addresses critical agricultural issues facing Central New York farmers. Importantly, the new Farm Bill protects crops and boosts trading opportunities.

The new Farm Bill expands insurance for a wide variety of crops produced in Central New York. In particular, dairy farmers will benefit tremendously from the implementation of the Dairy Margin Coverage Program. This updated insurance policy provides dairy farmers more efficient coverage and an increased list of options, allowing farmers to be compensated when margins are low or products are spoiled by disaster. It also presents the opportunity to choose the insurance policy that best suits their particular needs as a farmer. Traditional crop insurance for farmers of all backgrounds is also provided,

doubling the disaster assistance coverage options for crops not eligible for insurance. Additionally, \$2.4 billion will be invested in pest research and management, supporting Central New York vegetable and fruit growers, especially apple growers. The application of these various programs will give our farms the ability to better protect their goods in the future.

Next, our local farms receive much needed trade relief under this version of the Farm Bill. Over the next decade, \$500 million will be allocated to help farmers across the country connect with foreign consumers. This will boost export opportunities for Central New York farmers of all kinds and increase sales. I am hopeful this policy, along with the establishment of the new United States-Mexico-Canada trade agreement and the rollback of unfair Canadian dairy tariffs, will bring financial success to Central New York farmers.

Central New York will be greatly impacted by all these new policies in the 2018 Farm Bill. Since coming to Congress, I have made it a priority of mine to support Central New York's agricultural economy in Congress. It was important to me that the policies outlined above were included in this legislation. I firmly believe Central New York will thrive in many ways as a result of this Farm Bill and I look forward to continue legislating in Central New York's best interests in 2019.