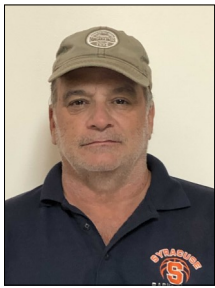


PRESIDENT'S REPORT



The torrential rains this spring caused misery, but relief finally came in July with some dry weather. A little too late for planting windows that were missed, not to mention harvest delays that are now anticipated this fall.

Farmers are under tremendous pressure, especially this year, as we work around Mother Nature to try and pay the bills. Our state government in

Albany has piled on and added even more misery to our already overstretched bank accounts and thin margin lines. They are adding more anxiety to an already stressful situation for us, and that is putting it mildly.

During a recent conference call I was on with other farmers, Farm Bureau staff and New York Farm Bureau's president, one farmer commented, "this is the worst conference call we have ever had." This was in reference to the recently-passed farm labor bill which has marginal benefits for farm employees but adds major distress for farm owners. I won't go into the math and common sense of capitalism 101, but suffice it to say the liberal majority that now controls the state legislature is out of touch with

the farm industry. Armed with an agenda item and a few supporters that were bussed in, they gave us all a gut punch that will have far-reaching effects for the foreseeable future. If you think the farm labor bill that was recently passed is final, you would be wrong. They plan on continuing to focus on the 60-hour overtime threshold that they allowed as a concession and will likely change it to 40 hours sooner rather than later.

But wait, there's more! As, I write this, all employers must drop everything this fall to comply with the new New York State sexual harassment laws and requirements passed last year. As an employer, I am required to provide sexual harassment prevention training for all workers by Oct. 9, 2019. This includes new fall workers, even 14 year olds! It is just another layer of governmental requirements that make it harder to do our job.

I wish I could write more but can't. I need to get back out on the tractor and try to make a buck and guess what Mother Nature has in store next. Keep the faith, and in these trying New York times sometimes that is all we have. Thanks for listening to my "rant" of the moment!

Eric Behling
President

A MESSAGE FROM CONGRESSMAN JOHN KATKO



As the federal representative for Onondaga, Cayuga, Oswego, and Wayne counties in Washington, I remain focused on supporting our region's agriculture economy. Policies that recently went into effect – such as the new Dairy Margin Coverage program included in the 2018 Farm Bill -- and legislation I have cosponsored

like the Family Farmer Relief Act will improve financial situations for many Central New York farms. Additionally, Congress must focus on finalizing new international trade agreements once it returns for the fall legislative session. I would like to take this opportunity to update you on my recent actions to stand up for Central New York agriculture.

Regional dairy farmers have experienced unfavorable market conditions in recent years. These conditions exposed serious flaws in the Margin Protection Program for Dairy (MPP-Dairy), which failed to provide adequate coverage for dairy producers and was not reflective of their operating costs or needs. It was crucial the MPP-Dairy was replaced to reflect the current state of American dairy farming and I strongly advocated for such changes in the most recent Farm Bill. This legislation introduced the new Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) program, establishing lower premiums and improving coverage levels for dairy farmers. Approximately 10,000 American dairy farms have already signed up for the new DMC program, providing

farmers access to much-needed economic support. Enrollment into the DMC program is now open and I encourage Central New York dairy producers to take advantage of this beneficial program.

Next, I cosponsored legislation that makes it easier for family farms in our community to restructure debts in Chapter 12 bankruptcy. The Family Farmer Relief Act of 2019 raises the debt limit to participate in Chapter 12 bankruptcy to \$10 million. Prior to enactment of this legislation, asset values under Chapter 12 bankruptcy rules for family farms were not reflective of the financial situations of modern family farms. Updating this debt limit will establish modern financial flexibility. This bipartisan legislation had widespread support when it passed both chambers of Congress earlier this summer. The President is expected to sign the bill into law.

Lastly, our country is currently negotiating the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) to create a more level playing field for America's farmers. Trade deals like the USMCA must be approved by Congress and it is imperative Congressional lawmakers finalize the USMCA in a timely, bipartisan manner. When Congress returns from the August district work period, I intend to work with the Administration and Congressional leadership in reviewing the final agreement.

I look forward to continuing to work in Congress to further grow and support the farming industry in our region and across the country. Our region's strong agriculture economy is among my top priorities in Congress and I am honored to represent you in Washington.

ARE YOU A PRODUCER OF FRUITS, VEGETABLES, MEATS OR VALUE-ADDED ITEMS?

The North Star Food Hub is a regional initiative that serves farmers in Jefferson, Lewis, Oswego and St. Lawrence counties.

The Food Hub works in collaboration with the respective Cornell Cooperative Extension Associations and New York State Agriculture and Markets to help local producers expand their production and become more competitive in the marketplace.

In 2015, Cornell University's Charles H. Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management, in collaboration with Cornell Cooperative Extension educators in Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Lewis, Jefferson, and St. Lawrence counties, performed an analysis of opportunities for food hub development in Northern New York. Their report, which can be found at www.northstarfoodhub.com, helped spark this project.

This hub is off and running, guided by a steering committee comprised of local producers and stakeholders who provide guidance and recommendations on development, implementation and operational aspects of the Food Hub. The project is currently funded through a NYS grant, administered by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County.

Are you a producer of fruits, vegetables, meats or value-added items? Are you located in Jefferson, St. Lawrence,

Oswego, or Lewis counties? If so, and you would like to know more about North Star Food Hub and ways to contribute, please contact Neil Miller at 315-560-1580, or Neil@northstarfoodhub.com.

Field Goods LLC, based out of Athens, NY, has been retained to provide staffing and assist local producers in the four-county region to expand existing markets and find new markets for produce, value-added products and meats. Field Goods has significant experience working in other areas of the state buying and selling local farm products. Visit their website at www.field-goods.com to learn more about them.

OSWEGO COUNTY HARVEST DINNER SET

10TH
ANNUAL

Celebrate Oswego County agriculture and all the local food it provides at the **10th Annual Oswego County Harvest Dinner** set for Friday, Sept. 27, beginning at 6:15 p.m. The dinner demonstrates the quality and diversity of agriculture in Oswego County by featuring locally-grown and sourced food. Tickets are \$35 per person and must be purchased ahead of time. Prepaid reservations can be made by contacting Cornell Cooperative Extension of Oswego County at 315-963-7286 or jwv33@cornell.edu. No tickets will be sold at the door.

NEW YORK FARM BUREAU POLICY DEVELOPMENT DISCUSSION FORUM 2020

This forum explores several emerging issues relevant to agriculture in New York and the U.S. Please review these topics and bring this to your county Farm Bureau policy development meeting and County Annual Meeting this summer and fall as a jumping off point for discussion in your county. These issues are only suggestions and unique ideas generated from your county should be an important part of your consideration. These questions are also available on www.nyfb.org and in the July issue of Grassroots.

STATE POLICY TOPICS

- Should eligibility for the New York State Young Farmers Loan Forgiveness Incentive Program be based on if the applicant has produced an agricultural product for no more than ten consecutive years or if the applicant has applied to the program within two of years of college graduation?
- Should semi-trailers (over the road tractors) be able to register as agricultural vehicles?
- Do you support incentives for the expansion of renewable natural gas in New York Renewable fuels standard?
- Should hops be required to be processed in New York State in order to be under the label "New York State Beer" with the same current 60% threshold that grown hops have?
- Should an individual property owner be able to receive a personal income tax credit when costs are incurred for tree removal or tree treatment as recommended by a certified arborist or forester due to damage caused by the emerald ash borer to a tree on their primary or secondary residence or rental property?
- Should the Department of Agriculture and Markets offer cost-share to help livestock producers offset the cost of implementing electronic livestock identification?
- Further questions to consider: If they do provide cost-share funding, what level of cost-share should be provided to producers (50%, higher or lower)? Should funding also be made available to help offset the cost of electronic readers to help farmers and livestock auctions quickly identify animals? Should all types of electronic identification be able to be utilized (low frequency vs. high frequency)? Should certain animals be exempt from electronic identification, including those going directly to slaughter?

NATIONAL POLICY TOPICS

- Should milk vouchers be offered through the Milk Donation Program?
- Should Farm Bureau establish policy on PFAS/ PFOA and if so, what should that policy address in regard to contamination and possible impacts to the agriculture industry?

159 Wolf Road
Albany, NY 12205



Oswego County
Farm Bureau News

*This issue of the Oswego County Farm Bureau
Newsletter is sponsored by:*



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Lori Behling, Pro-Ed	315-963-8160
Mark James, Field Advisor.....	585-738-0242
CNYFB Regional Office	315-252-1367
NYFB Office	800-342-4143

*The board usually meets on the first Tuesday of
the month at the Cornell Cooperative Extension
of Oswego County in Mexico, NY.*

Oswego County Farm Bureau News

September 2019



All are cordially invited to attend an evening celebration of agriculture

OSWEGO COUNTY FARM BUREAU'S ANNUAL MEETING

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 16

at the

TAVERN ON THE LOCK

24 S. First Street, Fulton (right off of the Oneida St. Bridge)

6:30 p.m. Cocktails • 7 p.m. Italian Style Dinner

Cost is \$20 per person*

*1 FREE dinner with a paid 2019 membership

Membership payment will be accepted at the door, please have a separate check.

Please join us at the Tavern on the Lock in Fulton for Oswego County Farm Bureau's Annual Meeting. A delicious meal will be served and there will be quality discussion, decision making and fun for all! We will be electing members to the Oswego County Farm Bureau Board of Directors and voting on policy resolutions that will be sent on for consideration at the New York Farm Bureau's State Annual Meeting. We encourage you to bring your local policy resolutions to be heard. **Member involvement is the cornerstone of our organization.**

As in the past, any Oswego County Farm Bureau member with a paid 2019 membership will receive a FREE dinner. Payment for dinner and dues will be accepted at the door.

We hope to see you there!

RSVP by Oct. 9 at:

1-866-995-7300 or eny@nyfb.org

Please refer to the **Oswego County Annual Meeting** when making your reservation.

DON'T FORGET THE PIE AUCTION

Show off your culinary skills and help out the Oswego County Farm Bureau. We will once again be auctioning off pies or other desserts donated by our members. Please consider bringing a pie or dessert to donate. All proceeds benefit the scholarship fund and other Promotion and Education activities in Oswego County.

