

## Food Justice Summit (cont'd):

farmers identify that interfere with the affordability of their products? What laws and policies must change to address economic inequality of farm labor, especially migrant farm labor?

Students: What is the inside story about food insecurity on college campuses? How is this problem best addressed, and by whom? We invite students to share what they are learning about poverty and food in their academic courses, service projects and internships.

Teachers: K-12 educators share their innovative strategies, methods, readings and lesson plan content for teaching about poverty, inequality and food.

Health professionals: What challenges are health professionals facing that fall within the arena of poverty and food? What initiatives are successful in meeting these challenges?

Registration link: <http://www.craigardan.org/events/foodsummit2020>

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## New York Farm Bureau Releases 2020 State Legislative Priorities

- ◆ Support critical funding for current agricultural animal health, promotion, research and environmental programs in the final FY 20/21 state budget.
- ◆ Obtain financial offsets and amendments to the recently enacted farm labor statute in the final 2020-2021 State Budget.
- ◆ Ensure fair and equitable farm labor wage board hearings that are located in farming regions across the state. We support providing the wage board with adequate time and resources to ensure that sufficient farm data is available to know the full effects of the law prior to a wage board decision.
- ◆ Ensure staff funding for critical positions at the Department of Agriculture and Markets.
- ◆ Oppose legislative pesticide prohibition or ban bills that circumvent the registration process at the Department of Environmental Conservation.
- ◆ Oppose efforts to establish a prevailing wage for publicly funded projects, including agricultural cost share programs through the Environmental Protection Fund.
- ◆ Support farmers in their efforts to adapt to and mitigate climate change through funding of critical programs in the Environmental Protection Fund and legislative programs that support on farm renewable energy.
- ◆ Oppose efforts to further restrict the use of medically necessary preventative and therapeutic use of antibiotics.
- ◆ Oppose the NY Health Act
- ◆ Support funding for Cornell University College of Life Sciences and College of Veterinarian Medicine Growing Demand for Dairy Proposal.



## Strategic Planning for Essex County: Farming and Food Systems

Agriculture everywhere is going through a lot of change. In Essex County, half of farmers who responded to the Agriculture Census are at retirement age. Many have not made a plan for succession or transition, a process that can take years to best serve landowners. Direct market farming is expanding: over the past ten years, there's been a 98% increase in direct-market farming ventures and a 1,205% increase in revenues. Farms brought in \$3.7 million in wages to the local community in 2018. Farms are diverse in Essex County. You can eat almost anything produced locally.

Sustainable, positive growth of these agricultural businesses requires supporting the entire interconnected system composed of economy, community, environment, agricultural production and market components. Supporting farmland viability strengthens environmental stewardship, climate resiliency, community growth, and quality of life for farmers and community members.

Many organizations work to support the agricultural system as best they can. We are embarking on a strategic planning process to make sure our efforts are directed at true needs and that we create a solid plan to achieve tangible goals. We need farmers, landowners and community members to share their perspectives with us to make that happen. We'll be organizing

various community engagement meetings and interviews to connect with you. Stay tuned for dates and times. Please be in touch if you want to make sure you are on our contact list. Help us understand how to best serve area farms, bring more people to support their local farming businesses, increase food access for all community members, and create a sustainable economy and future for farming in Essex County. Contact Carly Summers, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Essex County, Agriculture at [cfs82@cornell.edu](mailto:cfs82@cornell.edu) or call at 518-962-4810.

*If you want to learn more about local farms and where to buy local food in the Adirondacks, check out [AdirondackHarvest.com](http://AdirondackHarvest.com)*

## President's Message (cont'd):

In January, we rounded out our local board of directors by appointing Lee Garvey and Jori Welkin. Also at the January meeting, we voted to sponsor the Agricultural Literacy Week books, the Horsemen's Social, and the Pollinators film that the Essex County Master Gardener's are organizing. As a county, we are very supportive of our friends at Cornell Cooperative Extension and Essex County Soil and Water. Thank you all for being members of our great organization. We are membership based, and derive most of our income on the county level from membership dues. I would encourage you to go out and sign up your neighbor so we can continue to do great work for agriculture in Essex County. I hope you all have a safe and productive planting season and look out for more upcoming events from Essex County Farm Bureau when the weather warms up.

Jeff Leavitt  
President



Essex County Farm Bureau members at their County Annual Meeting in October 2019.

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



Essex County  
Farm Bureau News

# Essex County Farm Bureau News February 2020



## President's Message:

Greetings Essex County Farm Bureau Members,



My name is Jeff Leavitt, and I am honored to serve as your new Essex County Farm Bureau President. A lot has happened with Essex County Farm Bureau since our last newsletter. We again held our County Annual Meeting at Noblewood Park in Willsboro. Thank you to Papa Duke's BBQ for their delicious

dinner as always. This year we collected food donations for the Willsboro food pantry and were able to donate around 50 pounds of food from our members. We elected two new board members, Tamayra Rice and Racey Henderson. In December, Racey and I attended the New York Farm Bureau State Annual Meeting. We had some great policy discussion and our county won all four County Awards of Excellence for local program planning. Additionally, we won the distinguished Gold County Award of Excellence. The Gold Award is given to only four counties in New York, and is awarded based on highest overall point totals for program planning at the local level.

*Cont. inside::*

**Food Justice Summit ~ Feb. 27, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
The Wild Center, 45 Museum Drive, Tupper Lake**

**P**revious Food Justice Summit conferences brought together activists, farmers, consumers and educators to speak about advocacy, politics and grassroots organizing. This year's summit singles out a particular strand of these previous broad analyses: poverty and food. This theme reflects the urgency about inequalities in our world, and invites conference participants to work collectively as problem solvers. We seek to identify obstacles and successful initiatives that address the intersection of poverty and food: activism, institutional change and policy.

Local farmers: What conditions are necessary for local farmers to be economically sustainable? What challenges do

## Spring Horseman's Seminar and Social

**March 20**

**5:30 p.m. - 9 p.m.**

**Westport Hotel and Tavern, 6691 Main Street, Westport**

**T**his event is for equine business owners, riders and enthusiasts. We will be starting the evening off with a poster session at 5:30 p.m. along with appetizers. Following the poster sessions, we will have guest speakers, dinner and an equine panel. More details about speakers will be updated as we get closer to the event. The cost for the event is \$15, which includes dinner. Also included in that \$15 fee is an opportunity for you to submit your business card/description. We will be compiling all business information and forming an equine business book that we can hand out so that locals are aware of what equine businesses are in the area. There will also be basket raffles. Please contact Jessica Tyson at [jms943@cornell.edu](mailto:jms943@cornell.edu) with any questions, concerns and food limitations.

**Registration link: [https://reg.cce.cornell.edu/SpringHorseman'sSeminar\\_215](https://reg.cce.cornell.edu/SpringHorseman'sSeminar_215)**



Check out our Facebook page at:  
[www.facebook.com/EssexCountyFarmBureau/](http://www.facebook.com/EssexCountyFarmBureau/)



Essex County Farm Bureau board members, Linda Gilliland and President Jeff Leavitt, with food donations for Willsboro Food Pantry

### Essex County Farm Bureau Board of Directors *Don't forget to dial 518 first.*

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