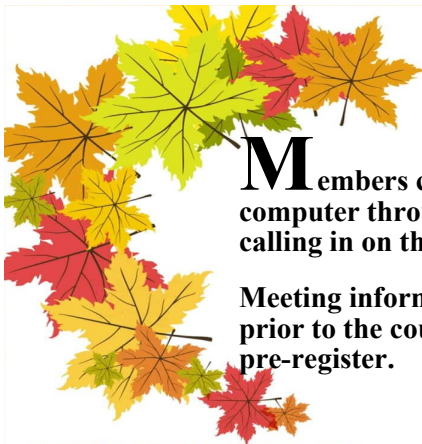


Washington County Farm Bureau News

Fall 2020



To Serve And Strengthen Agriculture



Virtual County Annual Meeting Thursday, Oct. 22, at 7 p.m.

Members can log into the meeting on their computer through Zoom technology or by calling in on the telephone.

Meeting information will be sent in an email prior to the county annual meeting for you to pre-register.

If you do not have an email on file with us, please email eny@nyfb.org so we can add it.

If you wish to just call in that night, please call the ENY Regional Office at 1-866-995-7300 and we will provide you with the telephone number to access the meeting.

See back of newsletter for proposed resolutions.

President's Message:



Happy fall to all of our members. I know this has been a challenging past several months for many of you. The impacts of COVID-19 have been felt by everyone in the agriculture community. For some producers, they are seeing more business than they ever have as consumers focus on buying local. Others have had their supply chains severely disrupted, resulting in

lost revenue. One thing that this pandemic has made many consumers realize is how important our food supply is and how fragile the distribution process can be. This is an opportunity to build on that momentum and continue to market your products as local, viable sources of food for members of our community. Farmers are resilient and innovative. I know many of you have already adapted your day-to-day operations to deal with the changes COVID-19 has had on your businesses. The ability to be flexible and think outside the box will likely be ongoing themes in order to be successful in the long run.

The pandemic has also caused a lot of stress within your businesses and others that you deal with. This is not something to be taken lightly or ignored. If you are feeling high levels of stress, anxiety or depression, or know someone else that is, NY FarmNet has great resources available to help you deal with these issues. Sometimes just having someone else to talk to can have a profound impact on another's day. NY FarmNet can be contacted at 1-800-547-3276 or by visiting www.nyfarmnet.org.

We are now in the time of year when we are working on policy development. You will see several proposed policies within this newsletter. One that WCFB put together in response to COVID-19 is the following: "NYBF, AFBF and USDA need to work together to develop a crisis management plan for natural disasters, disease outbreaks, catastrophic events, and pandemics so that the flow of food can be safely maintained from producers to consumers." Several other counties will likely propose policies similar to this. We are looking for your feedback on this policy as well as the others proposed. If you have any additional policies that you would like to put forward, please feel free to reach out to any of the board members or email eny@nyfb.org. These need to be submitted prior to our County Annual Meeting.

Due to COVID-19, we are changing up the format of our County Annual Meeting this year. The meeting will be held on Oct. 22 in a virtual format and all members are invited to attend. Many of us are becoming accustomed to virtual meetings and, while this will be different from what we've done in the past, we can still accomplish everything we need to and at the same time run an efficient meeting. We are adapting the way we do things just like you are in your businesses. I encourage you to attend. More information will be sent out to all members in regards to signing up for the meeting.

At the annual meeting, we also elect members to the board. There are currently two empty board seats. If you are looking to make a difference at the local/county level, please reach out to me or email the NYFB Eastern Regional Office at eny@nyfb.org.

[Cont'd on the back] ➡

2021 New Proposed Policies

State

Agricultural Issues/ Agricultural Assessments

We support decreasing the annual gross sales requirement from \$50,000 to \$25,000 for farms that are less than seven acres for the first two years of business.

Agricultural Issues/ Department of Agriculture and Markets

We oppose New York State establishing funds for capital improvement on farms.

Economic Issues/ Energy/ Renewable Energy

We oppose additional restrictions on where solar installations can be cited.

National

Section 4/ USDA: Programs and Services/ 462- Role of USDA

USDA should work together with AFBF and state Farm Bureaus to develop a crisis management plan for natural disasters, animal disease outbreaks, pandemics, and other catastrophic events, so that the food supply chain can be safely maintained from producers to consumers.

Section 4/ USDA: Programs and Services/ 464- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

We oppose assistance given to farmers to facilitate online SNAP.



Washington County Farm Bureau

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President's Message (cont'd)

Lastly, as a result of COVID-19 regulations, we had to cancel/postpone a couple of events that were planned for this year. The first was the Ag Safety Day that was planned for May 6 at the Hartford Central School. We are still working with Progressive Agriculture and the school and would like to get this rescheduled for next spring, if possible. The other event that we have to cancel is our annual trivia night, held in November. We look forward to reconvening it next year.

Thank you to all of you who continue to keep agriculture resilient in Washington County.

Tricia Lockwood
President

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