

Jefferson County Farm Bureau

February 2022



President's Report



Happy New Year to our Jefferson County Farm Bureau members,

I hope everyone is staying warm and dry this winter season and that some of you are even out enjoying the snow.

It was good seeing everyone at our County Annual Meeting held last October and we were pleased to be able to honor Nick Surdo along with Clarence & Sharon Littlefield with the Distinguished Service to Agriculture Awards at that time. I hope as spring comes and the weather gets better that the get-togethers will be more frequent than this past year.

Jefferson County Farm Bureau has continued working on behalf of our members as we keep agriculture and the benefits it brings at the forefront of everyone's mind. We had 3 delegates attend the New York Farm Bureau State Annual Meeting held at the Desmond in Albany this past December. This meeting is the culmination of policy development that began at our very own County Annual meeting and helps to determine New York Farm Bureau policies for the new year. This January, farmers and employees alike testified, myself included, at virtual hearings scheduled by the Wage Board as they continue to look at reducing the overtime threshold for farmworkers from 60 hours down to 40 hours. We are awaiting a decision and will keep you posted as things progress. Lobby Day is coming up. This is one of the more important things we do as we meet with our state representatives and advocate on behalf of our farmers. Unfortunately because of the pandemic, we will be virtual just like last year. Even virtual, these have meetings have been productive and are currently being scheduled.

I'm pleased to be able to take this opportunity and announce that the Jefferson County Farm Bureau has stepped up to become a year long sponsor of our local Watertown Rapids Collegiate Baseball Team. Our sponsorship with the Watertown Rapids offers a unique opportunity of honoring our very own "Hometown Heroes." Our Hometown Hero recognition will take place at every Watertown Rapids home game of the 2022 season and will recognize and thank a pre-selected Jefferson County Farm Bureau member for their contribution to agriculture. Each Hometown Hero will receive six (6) free tickets to attend, as well as, be introduced at the game. **Nominations for our Jefferson County Farm Bureau Hometown Hero program are now being accepted** email your nomination to John Wagner at jwagner@nyfb.org. You can also call him with your nomination at 315-761-9770. **Nominate a hardworking family member, friend, neighbor, or even YOURSELF.** Don't hesitate with getting your Hometown Hero nominee entered, as I'm sure everyone can think of someone that is worthy of this recognition and there's a limited number of slots available.

The Jefferson County Farm Bureau is excited to be a part of the Watertown Rapids Family and I hope you come out, enjoy the games and help recognize our own Jefferson County Farm Bureau Hometown Heroes.

Devon Shelmidine, President

Jefferson County Farm Bureau



Top L-R: Assemblyman Ken Blankenbush, JFCB Vice President Kyle Hafeman, Distinguished Service to Agriculture Award recipient Nick Surdo, JFCB President Devon Shelmidine.

Bottom L-R: JFCB President Devon Shelmidine, Assemblyman Ken Blankenbush, Distinguished Service to Agriculture Award Recipients Sharon and Clarence Littlefield, JFCB Vice President Kyle Hafeman.



JEFFERSON COUNTY FARM BUREAU WINS STATE AWARDS

Jefferson County Farm Bureau has received four County Awards of Excellence awards from New York Farm Bureau as part of its end of the year recognition program.

The County Excellence Awards are presented to county Farm Bureaus that have exhibited excellence in a variety of categories relating to effectiveness in agriculture promotion and outreach, leadership and county Farm Bureau management, legislative advocacy, and membership. Jefferson County Farm Bureau was successful in being recognized in all four categories this year. In addition, Devon Shelmidine, Jefferson County Farm Bureau president was recognized with the Distinguished President Award.

The Jefferson County Farm Bureau sent delegates to New York Farm Bureau's 65th State Annual Meeting on December 7 in Albany. The farmer members took part in the grassroots process of discussing and voting on public policy positions on the delegate floor that lay the groundwork for New York Farm Bureau in the new year in Albany and Washington, D.C.

"Jefferson County Farm Bureau's awards are recognition of the positive work we do on behalf of our members to improve the agricultural community. We are proud of our advocacy efforts and are always here to support our members at the local, state and national levels," said Devon Shelmidine, Jefferson County Farm Bureau President.

2022 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Below are the New York Farm Bureau 2022 Legislative Priorities. These priorities are a culmination of the grassroots efforts which began last fall at County Annual meetings and culminate at the State Annual Meeting held in December. These priorities reflect the collective interest of our members and rural communities and will determine the focus of our advocacy discussion and action for the year ahead.

- Double the Agricultural Workforce Retention Tax Credit
- Establish a refundable investment tax credit for agriculture.
- Support critical funding for current agricultural animal health (such as the Avian Disease Program), promotion, research, and environmental programs in the final FY 22/23 state budget, including a \$500 million Environmental Protection Fund.
- Support legislation that adjusts New York's unemployment insurance employer contribution rate, which would allow New York to replenish the UI trust fund without overburdening businesses with high UI tax bills as they recover from the pandemic.
- Support legislation allowing direct to consumer shipping for all New York-produced farm beverages, including beer, cider, and distillates.
- 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.
- Support the development of solar energy that balances private property rights and current and future land needs of agriculture in the state. Whenever possible, prime soils and actively farmed lands should be avoided in favor of previously disturbed or fallow lands and rooftop development for distributed generation. Power should be generated more closely to where it is going to be used.
- Support investment in new meat, vegetable, fruit and seafood processing facilities in New York.
- Oppose legislation that prohibits the use of agricultural pesticides.
- Oppose Extended Producer Responsibility legislation that doesn't require consumer responsibility of packaging they receive.
- Ensure a common-sense resolution to DEC's water withdrawal regulatory actions for farms.
- Pursue legislation that would require utilities to maintain a minimum height of 20 feet for power lines and 18 feet for other lines over farm fields upon request of landowner or farmer who is leasing the land.

NYFB LOBBY DAY GOES VIRTUAL AGAIN THIS YEAR

NYFB's Lobby Day will be virtual this year due to the ongoing pandemic. Lobby Day, usually scheduled as a two-day trip into Albany, is designed to help build connections and communicate the needs of agriculture to elected officials. Virtual meetings this year will make for an interesting opportunity, as some of you who aren't able to make an overnight to Albany, might be able to join us virtually! Meetings will be scheduled with elected representatives over a span of days as we try to make scheduling a little easier on everyone. If you're interested in meeting with your elected officials "virtually" and representing Jefferson County Farm Bureau, contact John Wagner at 315-761-9770.

SCHOLARSHIPS ANNOUNCED

NYFB Youth Scholarship

Available to 2022 High School Grads

\$3,000 First Place \$2,000 Second Place

DEADLINE
March 1—5 PM

Sponsor: NYFB Promotion & Education Program

Any 2022 graduating High School Senior who will continue their education to prepare for a career in some way connected to the diverse agricultural industry is eligible. This includes advancing their education through college or pursuing advanced training in skilled trades. Applicants must live or work on a farm or be involved with agriculture via any avenue. Farm Bureau membership or Student Farm Bureau membership is required. Students can join as a student member by visiting www.nyfb.org/membership.

Application & information is available at the NYFB website, www.nyfb.org or more specifically <https://www.nyfb.org/programs/promotion-education/scholarship>

For More Information: www.nyfb.org or 1-800-342-4143.

JEFFERSON COUNTY FARM BUREAU SCHOLARSHIP

REGISTRATION
Opens in February

The Jefferson County Farm Bureau Scholarship is awarded to a member or family member of the Jefferson, Lewis, Oswego, or St. Lawrence County Farm Bureau,

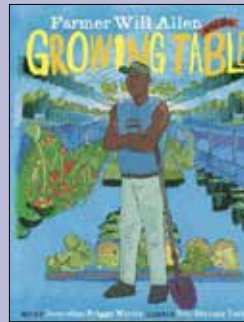
with preference given to Jefferson County. The scholarship is awarded to any year student at Jefferson Community College, with preference given to a second year student, who has financial need and has shown citizenship and leadership through community involvement and/or extracurricular school activities. In order to maintain the award throughout the academic year, the student must maintain a 3.0 GPA. All final applicants must be verified through the Farm Bureau.

Registration application will be available in February and can be found at: <https://sunyjefferson.org>



AGRICULTURAL LITERACY WEEK

March 21-25, 2022



For the past 17 years, volunteers throughout the state have helped to celebrate New York agriculture by reading a book with an agricultural theme to elementary school students.

This year's featured book ***Farmer Will Allen and the Growing Table*** written by

Jacqueline Briggs Martin with art by Eric Shabazz Larkin, focuses on farmer Will Allen who is no ordinary farmer. A former basketball star, he's as tall as his truck, and can hold a cabbage, or a basketball, in one hand. Farmer Will sees what others can't, the opportunities for growing food whether you have 100 acres or a rooftop and shares the journey from soil to table with those around. This book will take students on an explorative journey learning about community gardens and inspire them to build communities through food, even if they only have a pot on their porch to cultivate. Hands-on activities related to the book are also offered to extend learning. Books are then donated to the school or classroom library. Last year 2,300 books were donated while 75,000 elementary students participated in an experiential learning activity.



Serving our members Since 1967

Workers' Compensation Safety Group 486

Take a look at what NYFB Safety Group 486 has to offer.

- **16.3% Average Decrease** in 2019 rates for Safety Group 486 policyholder
- **Cumulative rate decrease of over 51%** in the past four years.
- **40% five-year Dividend Average**
- **25% Maximum Safety Group Upfront Discount**
- **Low 8.5% Group Managers' Fee**
- **Licensed NYFB staff services account** and acts as liaison with NYSIF

Call John Wagner for a quote 315-761-9770



NYFB.ORG 800-342-4143

STARTED BY FARMERS FOR FARMERS

* Percentage is based on dividends paid 2015 through 2019. Dividends are not guaranteed. Continued membership in NYFB is required to participate in Safety Group 486. Eligibility for insurance is subject to the New York State Insurance Fund underwriting requirements. NYFB and its subsidiaries have no authority to bind coverage for any member.

New York Farm Bureau
159 Wolf Road, Suite 300
Albany, NY 12205



Jefferson County Farm Bureau

This issue of JCFB news is sponsored by:
Jefferson County Economic Development

Who Moved My Cheese?

Adapting to the Future of Agriculture

Jefferson County Agricultural
Development Conference

Friday, April 8, 2022 • 8:30 am to 2:30 pm
Hilton Garden Inn, Watertown, NY

For more information visit
agricultureevents.com



Keynote Speaker

Sarah Tveidt, Director of Executive
Intelligence at Aimpoint Research

Sarah will speak about extensive
research conducted by Aimpoint
into the Farmer of the Future.
Who is that person? What skill
sets will they have and how do we
meet their needs?

JEFFERSON COUNTY FARM BUREAU BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT: Devon Shelmidine 315-486-8959
VICE PRESIDENT: Kyle Hafemann.. 315-778-6457
PAST PRESIDENT: Adam Miner 315-775-3774
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FIELD ADVISOR: John Wagner 315-761-9770
CNY OFFICE: Jill Williamson..... 315-252-1367

Jefferson County Farm Bureau meets on the first
Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Jefferson
County Community College in Watertown.