



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Continuing New York's Tradition of County Fairs

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Senator Ritchie's Weekly Column

Whether it is the smell of wonderful food or the sound of children laughing as they enjoy midway rides, for many people, local fairs are an annual, summertime tradition.

Local fairs in New York State attract millions of people who want to both be entertained and learn more about agriculture—including animals found on the farm, as well as where their food comes from. Local fairs do just that, and highlight New York's leading industry while also helping people recognize the need to support our hardworking farm families.

Local fairs are a summer staple in Central and Northern New York—and that is why, as Chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee, I fought to include \$5 million in the new state budget for upgrades to county and youth fairs across the state.

This marks the third year I have successfully secured funding for local fairs to upgrade buildings and equipment, such as outdated comfort stations that make fair visits more enjoyable for families. It is these types of improvements that help attract more visitors, boost local economies and improve family fun.

New York State has 52 fairs eligible for funding, including the three county fairs in our region. Each year, these fairs—taking place in Jefferson, Oswego and St. Lawrence Counties—attract thousands of visitors, and each have been operating for over 160 years. In fact, at 201 years old, the Jefferson County Fair is our country's oldest, continually operating county fair.

Be sure to mark your calendar for our local, upcoming county fairs:

- Jefferson County Fair: July 10-July 15 in Watertown;
- Gouverneur and St. Lawrence County Fair: July 31-August 5 in Gouverneur; and
- Oswego County Fair: August 8-12th in Sandy Creek.

Every year, millions of New Yorkers visit their local fair to be entertained, and learn more about agriculture and where their food comes from. These fairs highlight New York's leading industry and help people recognize the need to support our hardworking farm families.