



NEW YORK STATE SENATE DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY

For Immediate Release: March 5, 2024

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Senate Majority to Advance Legislation to Support New York's Farmers

(Albany, NY) Today, the Senate Democratic Majority will pass a package of legislation that aims to support farmers and food producers around New York State. The bills being passed establish the Office of Urban Agriculture to support urban farming, expand the definition of land use in agricultural production, establish a farming hotline to help connect farmers to resources to expand their farming operations, create procurement goals for New York State products purchased by state agencies, expand regional farmers' markets, and establish carbon farming tax credits.

Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins said, "Farmers have long been the backbone of America, consistently playing a vital role in New York State. I take pride in the work of my conference and their efforts to introduce and pass this legislation, which reaffirms our unwavering commitment to those who cultivate our food. Across every corner of New York State, agriculture significantly impacts our lives and economy, and it's our duty to continuously safeguard and bolster it. My heartfelt appreciation goes to Senator Michelle Hinchey, Chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee, and the bill sponsors for their dedicated work on this crucial legislation."

Chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee, Senator Michelle Hinchey said, "New York agriculture is a foundational aspect of our everyday lives and statewide economy. It's also an industry that requires our continuous support and protection, and I'm proud to champion this legislative package, put forth by our Senate Majority, that reflects our commitment to meeting the real needs of our farmers. Agriculture is an industry with the most potential to do the most good – fight hunger, affect regional resilience in the face of the Climate Crisis, expand diversity and equity across an entire workforce sector and galvanize a new generation of farmers to take the helm. Ensuring the success of New York agriculture is my priority, and I thank Majority Leader Andrea Stewart Cousins and my legislative colleagues for their partnership in advancing this package and elevating agriculture as a state priority."

The legislation being passed by the Senate Democratic Majority includes:

- **Agricultural Land Use:** This bill, [S1056-A](#), sponsored by Senator Michelle Hinchey expands the definition of "land used in agricultural production" to allow start-up, beginning, and small farms that are in production of the sale of crops, livestock or livestock products to receive an agricultural assessment if the farm is able to establish they have the ability to meet the currently required annual gross sales value within a certain timeframe. This bill provides these farmers an opportunity to receive this tax benefit, protect their land, and connect them with the resources needed to ensure success.
- **Farming Hotline:** This bill, [S2236](#), sponsored by Senator Michelle Hinchey would establish a farming hotline with the Cornell Cooperative Extension. This would serve as a one stop hotline to connect farmers with information and support on needs, including, tax credit programs, beginning farmer loans, and sustainable practices.
- **Procurement Goals for New York State:** This bill, [S3125-A](#), sponsored by Senator Michelle Hinchey would establish procurement goals for New York State food products purchased by state agencies which will incentivize these agencies to strengthen and expand local farm and food economies throughout the state.
- **Farm Ownership Succession Planning Program:** This bill, [S2407](#), sponsored by Senator Jamaal Bailey would establish the farm ownership succession planning program to provide farm owners with a succession planning toolkit that can be used by such farm owners who plan on selling or closing their farm.
- **The Office of Urban Agriculture:** This bill, [S2415](#), sponsored by Senator Jamaal Bailey would establish an Office of Urban Agriculture to assist with and promote various forms of urban farming throughout the state. This office would support and help facilitate various efforts to create and uphold urban agriculture structures around New York.
- **Agricultural Representation on the State Fire Prevention and Building Code Council:** This bill, [S1218-B](#), sponsored by Senator Leroy Comrie would require that one member, appointed by the governor, to the State Fire Prevention and Building Council shall represent agricultural producers.
- **Expansion of Regional Farmers' Markets:** This bill, [S1365](#), sponsored by Senator Tim Kennedy directs the Department of Agriculture and Markets to increase the number of regional farmers' markets for the direct marketing of foods and produce in the state.
- **Interstate and Intrastate Cider Shipment:** This bill, [S1999](#), sponsored by Senator Rachel May would allow both intrastate shipment of hard cider in New York and interstate shipment to New York by cideries located in states that afford the same treatment to New York cideries.
- **Carbon Farming Tax Credit For Farmers:** This bill, [S4270](#), sponsored by Senator Kevin Parker establishes a tax credit for farmers who maximize carbon sequestration potential through a "carbon farming" land management strategy and directs the Department of Environmental Conservation to develop regulations related to certifying the amount of carbon sequestered or emissions reduced. This would create a new financial incentive for land management practices undertaken by farmers which help improve soil health and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, making New York a leader in promoting new agricultural strategies that combat climate change.

- **New York Healthy Incentive Program:** This bill, [S3069-A](#), sponsored by Senator Roxanne J. Persaud establishes a framework to implement a statewide New York Healthy Incentive Program (NYHIP) to incentivize fresh and healthy food purchases using SNAP benefits and increase local investments in farms and farm-to-consumer entities.

Bill Sponsor Senator Jamaal Bailey said, “This legislation is a pivotal step towards transforming underutilized spaces in our communities into flourishing green spaces and growing a greener and more sustainable future. This legislative package represents a multifaceted approach to advancing the agricultural sector in New York. I am proud to carry this bill, S2415, which will create the Office of Urban Agriculture to expand urban farming initiatives and equitable access to fresh, locally grown produce in communities like the Bronx through a dedicated office and empower residents to be a part of this change through opportunities for environmental stewardship. I want to thank Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart Cousins and my colleagues in the State Senate for their commitment to a healthier and more sustainable New York.”

Bill Sponsor Senator Leroy Comrie said, "Representation matters, particularly in an industry like agriculture where the needs are unique and nuanced," said Senator Leroy Comrie. "My bill will help course correct an oversight, by adding a representative from the ag industry to the State's Fire Prevention and Building Code Council. The ag industry should have a voice in the process of changes to codes and procedures that can impact everything from their building regulations to the proper management of crops and animals. I commend Leader Stewart-Cousins and all of my colleagues for advancing this package of legislation which seeks to help our New York State farmers and the agricultural industry grow and thrive."

Bill Sponsor Senator Tim Kennedy said, "Increasing access to fresh, locally grown food is critical to both building healthy communities and supporting the farmers and regional producers who drive our agriculture industries across New York. This package, advanced under the leadership of Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and the Chair of the Agriculture Committee Senator Michelle Hinchey, will ultimately incentivize the expansion of farming and ensure that producers statewide have access to the necessary support and tools to sustain their small businesses long-term."

Bill Sponsor Senator Rachel May said, “The apple growing industry in New York is the second largest in the country, with over 125 licenses hard cider producers. However, there are barriers to the shipment of hard cider that need to be resolved in order for this important industry to flourish. Currently, cideries are not permitted to ship their products directly to consumers, which gives competitors an unfair economic advantage. The Senate has passed my bill to allow direct shipment to consumers for six years in a row, and I will continue to fight so that this industry has the right to showcase its product nationwide.”

Bill Sponsor Senator Kevin Parker said, “As climate change intensifies, it is imperative that we proactively seek out solutions to reduce our carbon emissions. My ‘Carbon Farming Act’ would do just that by encouraging farmers to enhance their agricultural carbon sequestration practices and techniques by offering them a tax credit as an incentive to meet carbon

sequestration and emission level standards. The storage of carbon in our environment protects New Yorkers and positively impacts agricultural production, which benefits New York's vigorous farming and agricultural communities. Reducing carbon emissions through land and agriculture management will help pave the way to making New York State a leader in enacting policies that combat the cataclysmic impact of climate change."

Bill Sponsor Senator Roxanne J. Persaud said, "Bill S.3069A is legislation that is good for food-insecure households and farmers alike, as it would establish a statewide SNAP Healthy Incentives Program. This program would allow households receiving SNAP benefits to purchase community-supported agriculture (CSA) shares. Rewarding New Yorkers for purchasing fresh, healthy, and local food utilizing SNAP benefits will improve health and provide additional purchasing power for needy families."

David Fisher, New York Farm Bureau President said, "New York agriculture is essential in so many ways. Our family farms provide access to local food, support the greater economy, and contribute to a better quality of life for all New Yorkers. New York Farm Bureau appreciates Senate Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins, Sen. Michelle Hinchey and her colleagues in the Senate Majority for introducing the package of bills that seek to expand market opportunities for farmers and provide logistical support, including for farmland transition and growing businesses. We look forward to working with the legislature to support farms across the state."

Julie Suarez, Associate Dean for Land Grant Affairs for Cornell CALS said, "Senate Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins, Senator Hinchey and her colleagues consistently provide an excellent voice in Albany for our family farmers, from those farming in rural landscapes to those farming in our cities. Cornell's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences recognizes both the deep responsibility and the incredible privilege of being New York State's land-grant partner for over 150 years, and our College and extension partners look forward to working together to meet the goals of these initiatives – supporting beginning farmers, ensuring everyone has access to healthy, local food, and finding opportunities for our family farmers to be both economically and environmentally sustainable."

Mikaela Perry, New York Policy Manager, American Farmland Trust said, "American Farmland Trust applauds the NY State Senate for their continued support of agriculture, farmers, and farmland across the state. Recent agriculture census data shows that between 2017 and 2022, NY State lost over 2,700 farms and 360,000 acres of farmland, highlighting the urgent need for this package of legislation to support our state's farmers, farmland, and food system. We look forward to continuing this critical work with our champions in the legislature."

Northeast Dairy Producers Association Chair Keith Kimball said, "The Senate's package of farm bills is an important step forward in supporting New York's entire agriculture community. By working with our partners at state agencies and Cornell to build upon the science-based management practices already in place, New York's dairy industry will continue to play a key role in meeting the climate goals of the CLCPA, while feeding families in every corner of the state. NEDPA looks forward to continuing to work with our elected leaders to build on this

momentum, support our farmers' ongoing environmental stewardship efforts, and ensure a viable future for dairy farms in the Empire State.”

New York Corn and Soybean Growers Association President Tom Corcoran said, “The New York Corn and Soybean Growers Association applauds the Senate for advancing this legislative package which will bolster New York's agriculture industry. Farms across the state provide important economic, environmental and cultural contributions to so many communities. The Senate's commitment to supporting New York's farms is welcomed and appreciated.”

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