



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Rachel May

Senator Rachel May's Bill to Increase Native Seed Supply in New York Signed by Governor Hochul

DAN MESSINEO January 6, 2025

| ISSUE: **CLEAN DRINKING WATER; ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, FINGER LAKES PROTECTION**



Senator May tours Go Native! Perennials in Skaneateles.

Strengthens habitat stability, filters out pollutants, boosts biodiversity, and increases soil resilience
Senator Rachel May's (Syracuse, Cayuga County) bill ([S7849](#)), which will boost native seed supply and spur much-needed native plant growth across New York, was signed by Governor Kathy Hochul.

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine released a report highlighting that the supply of native seeds in the country is drastically insufficient to meet current and future habitat needs. As a result, many residential and commercial projects use non-native plants because there are not enough native seeds.

This legislation addresses the native seed shortage by establishing a grant program to support both government growing operations and private entities, such as plant nurseries or farms, with the goal of increasing the state's supply of native plant seeds. Additionally, it mandates that the state government prioritize the use of native plants whenever feasible in land management, reforestation, and related activities.

Plants that are native to New York tend to be hardier and easier to maintain. They provide significant benefits, such as enhancing habitat stability, filtering polluted water, increasing biodiversity, and improving soil resilience.

This legislation also aims to strengthen New York's agricultural market by addressing the rising demand for native seeds and plants, which currently outpaces supply. With federal funds allocated for developing a native plant seed supply chain, our legislation will help New York leverage this opportunity and support nurseries and individuals interested in cultivating native plants.

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"Thank you, Governor Hochul, for recognizing the value of native plants for the future of New York's rural and urban landscapes. From the colorful purple asters and red maples of autumn to the native grasses and ferns that blanket fields and woodlands to the humble cattails along

our streams, native plants are not just visual icons but critical to the health of whole ecosystems. The Native Seed Supply, Development, and Enhancement Program will support the propagation of seeds and seedlings that can be used to expand our urban forests, stabilize soils along our waterways, provide habitat for pollinators and other native species, and beautify areas throughout the state. It will also support an important and growing sector of our agricultural economy. I was proud to collaborate on developing this legislation with the Greenbelt Native Plant Center in NYC, Janice Wiles of Doce Lume Farm in Skaneateles, and native plant experts at the Mid-Atlantic Regional Seed Bank and the Nature Conservancy. Their vision for flourishing landscapes across New York State is inspiring and will, I believe, benefit us all,” said Senator Rachel May.

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“With this bill, Senator May, Assemblywoman Kelles, and Governor Hochul have launched the NYS native plant industry. Thanks to their leadership, New York is now positioned to lead the nation in developing an industry that will bring jobs to communities while restoring ecosystems, improving water quality, and building resilience to climate change. Yahoo!” – Janice Wiles, Owner, Go Native! Perennials (Skaneateles, NY)

RELATED LEGISLATION

2023-S7849

- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
 - In Committee Senate

- ○ On Floor Calendar Assembly
 - On Floor Calendar Senate

- ○ Passed Assembly
 - Passed Senate

- Delivered to Governor

- Signed By Governor

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Establishes the native plant seed supply, development and enhancement program

January 03, 2024

Senate Floor Calendar

Sponsored by **Rachel May**

Do you support this bill?