

2011-J725

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commending Lagoner Farms upon the occasion of its designation by the New York State Agricultural Society as the recipient of a 2011 Century Farm Award

WHEREAS, The agricultural industry is part of the foundation upon which our distinct American heritage is built; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body takes great pride in acknowledging outstanding individuals and businesses associated with the agricultural industry which clearly contribute to the spirit of excellence which so distinguishes the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern and fully in accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Lagoner Farms of Williamson, New York upon the occasion of its designation by the New York State Agricultural Society as the recipient of a 2011 Century Farm Award at the Society's 179th Annual Agricultural Forum, held in Syracuse on January 6, 2011; and

WHEREAS, The New York State Agricultural Society was organized in 1832 to foster, promote and improve the New York State food and agriculture industry; adapting to the changing needs of the industry, the Society remains true to its mission and each year proudly honors several New York State farms with its Century Farm Award; and

WHEREAS, The Century Farm program, begun in 1937, honors New York Farms in continuous operation on the same land by the same family for 100 years or more; each year deserving farm families are recognized by the Society with Century Farm Awards, now proudly sponsored by Farm Credit Northeast AgEnhancement; and

WHEREAS, In 1909 Anthony and Jennie Lagoner purchased a 50 acre farm which, today, has grown to include more than 200 acres; in the early days the farm consisted of a combination of cash crops and subsistence

agriculture; and

WHEREAS, Livestock, grains, vegetable and fruits were raised to provide for the family; limited plantings of apples, peaches, cherries and pears were also grown to provide income for the balance of the family's needs; and

WHEREAS, Gradually the farm became more specialized as mechanization and the region's infrastructure evolved; farm equipment innovations, processing plants, rail lines and improved roads and trucks created new and expanded markets for increased acreages of pears, apples and sour cherries; and

WHEREAS, By the 1960's Lagoner Farms was entirely devoted to the production of tree fruits as the appropriate climate near Lake Ontario along with the necessary marketing channels created an environment for these crops to remain viable; and

WHEREAS, Around 2000, the fifth generation of the Lagoner family expressed a desire to continue the family farm, and in an effort to increase income levels, acreage as well as production and marketing goals were gradually expanded; small fruits were planted along with a range of vegetables but apples remain the cornerstone of the farm's production base with increasing plantings of dwarfing rootstocks; and

WHEREAS, A Farm Market was built in 2003 and expanded in 2010; the current welcome trend toward buying local produce also helps to drive sales of the farm's crops at area farmers' markets, including the Lagoner's own more than 7,000 square foot on-site Farm Market; and

WHEREAS, Mark, Diana and Jacob Lagoner are the current owners of the farm and there are now three generations of the Lagoner family proudly active in the farm business; many additional part-time, seasonal and full-time workers are employed throughout the year as well; and

WHEREAS, Members of the Lagoner Family are, in addition, well-known for being active in local organizations and institutions, and in the agricultural industry; and

WHEREAS, Mark Lagoner has served on the Town Planning Board; he worked on the town's comprehensive plan and has served in leadership roles in his church; he and his wife, Diana, also serve as youth group leaders at their church and, in both 2008 and 2009, the family generously hosted fundraisers at their Farm Market for the three local fire companies; and WHEREAS, Lagoner Farms and members of the Lagoner family are valued and involved members of several industry organizations including the New York State Apple Growers Association, the New York State Berry Growers Association, and the Fruit and Vegetable Association and several others and, Jacob Lagoner, as well as several Lagoner Farms employees, are also active members of the New Fruit Growers Group, a statewide association for new and younger fruit growers which is facilitated by the Lake Ontario Fruit Team of Cornell Cooperative Extension; and WHEREAS, Lagoner Farms' continuing evaluation of marketing strategies and its renewal of plantings, upgrades in equipment, and building maintenance are some of the many strengths of this forward-thinking agricultural enterprise which have helped Lagoner Farms, located in Wayne County, truly and justly merit recognition as a Century Farm; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Lagoner Farms upon the occasion of its designation by the New York State Agricultural Society as a 2011 Century Farm and to commend the Lagoner family for its commitment to excellence and for proudly continuing New York's agricultural heritage, which remains such an important part of our great State and nation's economic foundation; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Lagoner family, proud stewards of Lagoner Farms, 6895 Lake Avenue, Williamson, New York 14589.