



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Malcolm Smith

Senate Democrats Tour NYC Agriculture Markets, Distribution Centers In Effort To Strengthen Upstate-downstate Business Partnerships

MALCOLM A. SMITH September 30, 2007

New York State Senate Democratic Leader Malcolm A. Smith (D-St. Albans) and members of the Senate Democratic Conference today visited the Hunts Point Cooperative Market in the Bronx as part of a comprehensive effort to strengthen commercial relationships between upstate agriculture and downstate consumers.

"Hunts Point Cooperative Market is a premier facility for the distribution of fresh meat products, seafood and produce throughout the New York metropolitan area," Smith said. "This is why we've identified Hunts Point as a natural focal point of our effort to combine the best of both worlds -- supply from New York's top-rate agricultural economy with demand from the Big Apple, New York's largest urban market."

Located on 60 acres in the Bronx, the Hunts Point Cooperative Market is a massive production, processing and distribution center. According to its website, the facility is comprised of 47 independent businesses with access to consumers in all five boroughs of New York City, Long Island, New Jersey and Connecticut.

The senators also had an opportunity to visit the adjacent Terminal Market and New Fulton

Fish Market. This was followed by a stop at Union Square's Greenmarket, a year-round open-air market at 14th Street and Broadway in Manhattan where consumers can purchase fresh meat, poultry, cheeses and produce from throughout the region.

Today's events, co-hosted by State Senators David Valesky (D-Oneida) and Liz Krueger (D-Manhattan), were the second installment in an effort by Senate Democrats to raise awareness about the great opportunities that await for New York to promote linkages between upstate agricultural supply and downstate consumer demand.

Last month, Valesky hosted "Farm Days," a visit by several of his Senate Democratic colleagues -- many of whom represent downstate, urban districts -- to Central New York where they toured farms and met with agricultural industry representatives.

The purpose of last month's "Farm Days," as well as today's follow-up, "Farm Days II," is to educate elected officials about New York agri-business while enlisting their support in forging a strong network of commercial relationships among producers, grocers, specialty shops and restaurateurs in ways that benefit the economies and quality of life both upstate and downstate.

Valesky, the Ranking Democrat on the State Senate Agriculture Committee, said: "By combining quality upstate supply with the quantity of downstate demand, we can effectively live up to the vision of 'One New York,' strengthening our economy, encouraging sustainability and fostering a sense of pride in the wonderful array of products being made right here at home in New York State each and every day."

Krueger said: "We all can benefit from strong commercial relationships rooted in agriculture

and within our state's borders."

"It does not make sense for New Yorkers to pay more for out-of-state food when we have such plentiful in-state options," she added. "Through the partnerships we are forging today, our children will have better access to premium foods without having to pay the premium costs -- economic, environmental and nutritional -- that come with trucking agricultural products across long distances."

Joining Smith, Valesky and Krueger on today's tours were State Senators Suzi Oppenheimer (D-Mamaroneck), Bill Perkins (D-Harlem), Martin Malavé Dilan (D-Brooklyn), Thomas K. Duane (D-Manhattan), Velmanette Montgomery (D-Brooklyn) and Eric Schneiderman (D-Manhattan).