



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Aubertine: I Love NY Promos Should Include Agriculture

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Senate passes legislation to include information on agriculture businesses in state promotions

ALBANY (April 26, 2010)—A bill passed by the New York State Senate today would ensure that the state's "I Love New York" tourism promotion campaign shows love for the state's agricultural industry.

"Agriculture and tourism are two key components in our state's economy, both of which we have been working to promote more and more," said Sen. Darrel J. Aubertine, chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee. "Including agricultural tourism in the I Love New York campaign will bolster both industries and help highlight the too often forgotten cornerstone of our economy in New York—the farms and agricultural businesses that support jobs statewide."

The legislation (S.6673) passed today would authorize state agencies, including the state Department of Agriculture and Markets, to develop a program to promote and distribute statewide and regional guides featuring farms, farmers' markets, wineries, harvest festivals, and other agriculturally significant tourist destinations. These guides could include but not be limited to already developed Ag & Markets guides.

"Agriculture should be at the forefront of our economic development efforts and this legislation recognizes the importance of our farms and agriculture businesses," said Sen. Aubertine, who is also chair of the Senate Upstate Caucus and Legislative Commission on Rural Resources. "By promoting our farms, markets and other agricultural businesses as destinations for tourism within New York State, we are promoting local food and growing the customer base for our locally grown and locally made products."

This legislation will ensure that when people are looking for travel information they are provided with information about agricultural guides in the area they are interested in, which will expose them to the many aspects of New York's agriculture industry. The cost of this bill is expected to be contained within the current costs of printing already being incurred through the "I Love New York" program.

Agriculture is the foundation of our state's economy, with about \$4.5 billion in gross receipts in 2007, and about 25 percent of the state's land is used for agriculture. The economic impact goes much further, with that money turning over in rural communities many times over. Many farms, however, are experiencing extreme hardships and are fighting for their survival. Since 1980, more than 12,000 farms have gone out of business in New York. To put this into perspective, every day over the past three decades in New York

State, at least one farm has gone out of business—more than 400 every year.