



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

Agricultural Assessment Program Extended to Land Used for Corn & Hay Bale Mazes

CATHARINE YOUNG August 22, 2011

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OLEAN - A new measure that extends the state's agriculture assessment program to portions of farm land used for amusements, such as corn and hay bale mazes, was recently signed into law by Governor Cuomo, according the bill's sponsor Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I – Olean).

"Combining agriculture and tourism, our two top industries in the state, brings more business and opportunities to our communities," said Senator Young.

Senator Young said with 38,000 farms on 7.8 million acres of cropland, pasture and woodlands statewide, more farmers today are turning to agri-tourism and agricultural amusements to boost their operations and the economy.

Established in the 1970's, the agricultural assessment program is designed to encourage the preservation of farmland in New York State. Through the program, eligible farmers are able to receive a reduced tax assessment rate on land based on its agricultural value, rather than its non-farm market value.

Senator Young said the new law expands the program to include land used for agricultural amusements that are made from crops grown or produced on the farm and later harvested - like "corn mazes" or "hay bale mazes."

Dean Norton, President of the New York Farm Bureau said, "The passage of this legislation will help ensure that our farm families have the ability to continue to adjust their farm operations over time, allowing our farmers to help attract new revenue through the addition of agricultural tourism activities without jeopardizing their agricultural districts or agricultural assessment status. This legislation has been a priority for NYFB for several years, and I applaud Senator Young's leadership in getting this bill enacted into law to help keep our farmers farming."