



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Sen. Ritchie: Agribusiness Can Revitalize Upstate

PATTY RITCHIE September 20, 2011

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Agricultural Businesses Offer Ideas To Ritchie's Senate Ag Panel

Upstate agriculture industry leaders, including onion growers, wineries and dairy farmers, told New York State Senate Agriculture Committee Chair Patty Ritchie that upstate can grow jobs if the state reduces the regulatory burden on farm families.

Speaking at Senator Ritchie's Agricultural Business Forum in Watertown on Tuesday, farm owners and representatives of agricultural groups said Albany needs to cut regulations and reduce burdensome rules that are adding to the cost of operations and reducing profit margins.

Senator Ritchie held the session to help her committee set its agenda for the upcoming legislative session.

“Too often New York gives lip service to its Number One industry, but leaves farms out of the critical economic development equation,” Senator Ritchie said. “What we grow on our farms provide the critical materials for many of our upstate manufacturing companies that provide high paying jobs for our citizens.”

Speakers urged the Senate to consider:

- Reducing State Liquor Authority regulations on wineries.
- Abolish New York’s pesticide regulations that duplicate existing federal Environmental Protection Agency rules.
- Encourage the development of farm-based anaerobic digesters to produce electricity.
- Continue supporting Pro Dairy, New York Farm Viability Institute, Northern New York Agricultural Development Program, Grape and Wine Growers Foundation, Maple Producers Association and other agencies that help New York’s farmers stay on the cutting edge of the agricultural industry.

Attendees included Senator David Valesky (D-Oneida) and Assemblyman Ken Blankenbush (R-Black River), ranking member of the Assembly Agriculture Committee.

Senator Ritchie has also scheduled the following events, each beginning at 1 p.m.:

Oct. 18, Geneseo, Livingston County Center, 6 Court St.

Oct. 20, Long Island, Riverhead Town Hall

If you are interested in attending, submitting testimony or getting more information, please contact the Senate Agriculture Committee at 518-455-3438.

Senator Ritchie also announced creation of a [special webform](#) for farmers and those interested in agriculture issues to share their ideas for boosting farming and helping to create jobs.