



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Stephen M. Saland

## Senator Saland's Agriculture Legislation Becomes Law

STEPHEN M. SALAND October 4, 2011

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*Requires Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets to consult with local government officials concerning local land use regulations, ordinances and laws*

Senator Steve Saland (R, I, C Poughkeepsie) today announced that Governor Cuomo has signed his legislation that enables local government officials to request an opinion from the Department of Agriculture and Markets before a municipality considers adopting a local ordinance that may impact agriculture (S.3626). This legislation does not require a municipality to contact the Department of Agriculture and Markets prior to enacting a local law, but merely gives the local government officials the option to access the Department's expertise. "There are approximately 35,000 farms in New York State and 99 percent of those are family owned. A strong agricultural industry is beneficial to the state's farm and food industry, to the economy of the state, and to all New York State residents," stated Senator Saland. "This legislation will help protect the future of the state's agricultural industry by facilitating better access and communication between our local government officials and the excellent technical resources of the Department of Agriculture and Markets."

The New York Farm Bureau, the state's largest general farm organization strongly supported S.3626. "This legislation will be especially helpful to those farmers who are not located within an agricultural district," stated Jeff Williams, deputy director of the Public Policy Division of the New York Farm Bureau. "The state's Right to Farm law is a separate statute, and does extend a measure of protection for farmers in the county designated agricultural

districts from unreasonably restrictive local ordinances. This legislation, however, would enable the Department to provide technical advice to municipalities about the impact of a proposed local law, whether or not the municipality's jurisdiction includes an agricultural district.