



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

## Seward A Friend Of Farming

JAMES L. SEWARD November 28, 2011

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ONEONTA, 11/25/11 – State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I-Oneonta) was recently honored as a recipient of the “Circle of Friends” award from the [New York Farm Bureau](#), the state’s leading and most respected agricultural advocacy organization.

**“Agriculture is our state’s number one industry. It is vital to our economy and our way of life,”** said Senator Seward. **“It is a great honor to work with our upstate farmers and agribusinesses and I will continue to do all I can to assist in their growth.”**

The New York Farm Bureau award is based upon Senator Seward's voting record on issues of importance to New York agriculture, as well as other evidence of legislative support during the 2011 legislative session.

Senator Seward successfully fought for funding for several agriculture initiatives during the past year's budget debate. The Farm Viability Institute, Farm Net, the Center for Dairy Excellence, the Wine and Grape Foundation, and Future Farmers of America are just a few of the agriculture-related programs that received funding thanks in part to Senator Seward's efforts.

**“The importance of farming was undervalued in the governor’s original budget proposal. I joined with my senate colleagues in fighting for the restoration of \$3.5 million in critical funding to strengthen family farms and agri-business,”** added Seward.

A major highlight was the restoration of funding for the [New York Rollover Protection System \(ROPS\) Rebate Program](#). Administered by the [New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health](#) (NYCAMH), ROPS provides farmers with grants to retrofit older-model tractors with life-saving rollover protection.

**“Ensuring our farmers have proper safety equipment is crucial and that is why I have strongly supported the ROPS rebate program since its inception,”** said Seward.

Through Seward's insistence, \$100,000 was included in the 2011-2012 New York State budget for the ROPS rebate program.

**“Farmers deal with countless challenges each and every day. I am committed to offering whatever assistance I can from the state level to help them meet those challenges and protect the future of agriculture in New York state,”** Seward concluded.