



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

'Buy From the Backyard' Aims to Boost N.y. Farms

PATTY RITCHIE March 19, 2012

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Senate OKs Ritchie Bill to Require 20 Percent Purchases from Local Sources

The State Senate today approved a bipartisan bill sponsored by Senator Patty Ritchie that aims to boost local farming by requiring state agencies to purchase 20 percent of its food supplies from New York-based sources.

The "Buy from the Backyard Act" (S.2468), which has 22 sponsors in both houses of the Legislature, would be a boon to local agriculture as state offices, colleges, hospitals and prisons would turn to local sources for more of their food needs.

"As Chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee, I've been working every day to encourage more consumers to buy locally—and support New York's 38,000 farm families," Senator Ritchie said. "Using the purchasing power of state government can make a real difference in supporting our family farmers and helping our leading industry—agriculture—grow."

Senator Ritchie recently led an effort to increase the amount of New York produced farm goods sold in state office buildings, encouraging the Commissioner of General Services to offer New York-produced milk in state lunch rooms that serve more than 40,000 workers and guests each day.

Commissioner RoAnn Destito agreed, and also announced that should also would begin to require the use of more vegetables and other New York-made products in lunch rooms at state facilities.

"You can't beat the quality of fresh, locally produced food, and consumers and farmers benefit from the healthy products that our family farms can offer," said Senator Ritchie.

The bill was sent to the Assembly.