



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Hugh T. Farley

## Sen. Farley Reports Senate Passes Bills to Help New York Farmers Expand to New Markets

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State Senator Hugh T. Farley (R, C, I – Schenectady) announced the New York State Senate recently passed three bills to help farmers succeed by improving agricultural marketing efforts and better connecting farms to consumers across the state.

The “Buy From the Backyard Act” (S978) requires state agencies with food contracts to buy at least 20 percent of their food from New York sources. The bill expands upon an existing law

that encourages state agencies to purchase local food products. Mental health facilities, prisons, universities, and state institutions that have food contracts would be required to purchase at least 20 percent that is grown, produced, harvested or processed in New York State.

Two pieces of legislation would help optimize the ways farmers can best connect with customers, suppliers and distributors. A bill passed by the Senate (S2147) directs the state to develop a long-term strategy for sustaining farming and food production by expediting and encouraging consumer trends towards the consumption of locally and regionally grown foods.

Another bill passed (S2152) creates the strategic farm and food product development coordinating council to promote beneficial relationships. The Council would connect farmers with processors, wholesalers, distributors, and state institutional entities such as schools and prisons in order to promote the use of New York-grown products in New York.

The bills have been sent to the Assembly.