



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David J. Valesky

Senate Passes Valesky Legislation Expanding Agricultural Markets in New York State

DAVID J. VALESKY May 21, 2013

| ISSUE: **AGRICULTURE**

ALBANY, N.Y.--The New York State Senate today passed legislation sponsored by Senator David J. Valesky (D-Oneida) that will improve agricultural marketing efforts and connect farms to consumers across the state.

“New York State has significant high-quality agricultural assets that are widely known to produce excellent products,” said Senator Valesky. “From both economic and health perspectives, it makes sense to connect our own in-state markets to ensure that all New Yorkers have access to local products. This legislation will enable us to do this efficiently and effectively.”

Two pieces of legislation sponsored Senator Valesky would help optimize the ways farmers can best connect with customers, suppliers and distributors. S.2147 directs the state to develop a long-term strategy for sustaining farming and food production by expediting and encouraging consumer trends toward the consumption of locally and regionally grown foods.

The other bill, S.2152 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.

In addition, legislation co-sponsored by Senator Valesky, the “Buy From the Backyard Act” (S.978), passed the Senate. This legislation 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.

The bills have been sent to the Assembly.

###