



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David J. Valesky

Senator Valesky's Expanded Pride of New York Legislation Passes Senate Bill Will Encourage Restaurants to Use Local Foods

DAVID J. VALESKY May 30, 2013

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ALBANY, N.Y.—Legislation creating a program to recognize restaurants featuring local products promoting New York-grown products sponsored by Senator David J. Valesky (D-Oneida) passed the Senate today.

The legislation ([S.2146](#)) will build upon a statewide burgeoning “Buy Local” movement by enhancing the successful “Pride of New York” program, creating an additional designation for restaurants called “Dine: Pride of New York.”

“Statewide, and especially in Central New York, more and more consumers are looking for local products on restaurant menus,” Senator Valesky said. “This legislation will create a statewide marketing opportunity for restaurants to let customers know they are cooking with or significantly featuring locally grown ingredients in their dishes.”

New York’s agricultural industry is a driving force in the state, accounting for \$31.2 billion in farming and related agricultural activity annually. A report released by the Independent Democratic Conference in 2012 found that while direct sales between farmers and consumers have increased through the expansion of farmers’ markets, there is much room to grow.

“By expanding the Pride of New York program, we have the opportunity to strengthen the state’s agriculture industry, promote the local economy and make local, healthy foods we will help stimulate our local economies while strengthening the agriculture industry across the state.”

According to Syracuse First, a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to promote buying local products including food, “with just a 10 percent shift in market share from national or global businesses to locally owned independents, \$130 million in new economic activity would be generated in Onondaga County.” In addition, Madison County promotes a “Buy Local Week” each summer where local restaurants showcase menu items that contain products grown in the county itself.

Central New York is already seeing a growing effort to support local products. Many restaurants have adopted a local foods focus, promoting in their menus where the products were grown. At Empire Brewery in Syracuse, locally grown food is highlighted on the menu, where patrons are pointed to 56 different farms or producers that Empire uses.

In Senator Valesky’s legislation, restaurants must demonstrate that 15 percent of their total ingredients are grown and/or processed in New York State in order to qualify for a Dine: Pride of New York designation.

Restaurants and food sellers that are designated would be allowed to use a logo to hang in their front windows and for advertising and marketing purposes. The businesses would also be listed in a directory on the state Agriculture and Markets website.

“New York Farm Bureau supports efforts to encourage, promote and market the consumption of fresh farm and food products. With the locally grown movement turning from a trend into a reality of the marketplace, legislation like this only makes sense to further encourage our state’s restaurants to serve our state’s fresh, locally grown food. This legislation is a great effort to increase awareness of consumers and purchasers of our state’s diverse agricultural products, and our organization appreciates Senator Valesky and [Assembly sponsor] Assemblyman Magee’s leadership in this effort,” said Dean Norton, President of the New York Farm Bureau.

“This legislation will positively impact the 'Think Local' movement in Central New York by painting a more clear picture of which products are unique and local. The demand for local food is climbing rapidly and this initiative will help to connect the dots between food producers and consumers by using the ‘Pride of New York’ brand,” said Christopher Fowler, Executive Director of Syracuse First. “We applaud Senator Valesky for his leadership on this issue and for recognizing the potential that buying local has on the regional economy.”

The bill will be sent to the Assembly where it is sponsored by Assemblyman William Magee.