



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Ritchie Unveils Plan to Secure the Future of Family Farming

PATTY RITCHIE March 4, 2014

| ISSUE: **AGRICULTURE, ORGANIC FARMING, DAIRY, LIVESTOCK**



- Young Farmer Apprenticeship Program: Provides funding to BOCES programs to establish partnerships with real working farmers to help young people gain hands-on experience they can bring to their own successful farm operation. (\$500,000)
- Young Farmer Student Loan Forgiveness Program: Directs the Board of Regents to establish a student loan forgiveness program for up to 10 agriculture degree graduates annually who agree to work full-time in agriculture a minimum of five years. (\$100,000)
- Funding for Agriculture Education: Increases funding for the in-school FFA program, which encourages careers in agriculture. There are 77 FFA chapters in New York, including in New York City.

(\$158,000) As Chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee, Senator Ritchie has been a leader in supporting family farming. Over the past three years, she successfully fought to restore budget funds affecting key agricultural research, education and marketing programs. Senator Ritchie also spearheaded the “Grown in New York” plan and other important new laws to help boost farmers’ bottom lines, including a cap on farmland tax assessments and increased funding for tractor rollover prevention efforts, additional agriculture research, marketing and promotion. The Young Farmers NY program will be included in the Senate’s budget resolution. “The future of agriculture in New York is bright, and we can strengthen our rural, farm economy by taking steps now to preserve family farming for the next generation,” said Senator Ritchie.