



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

## Griffo, Brindisi: New State Budget Includes Boost to Agriculture

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO March 31, 2014

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ALBANY – As Maple Weekend comes to a close, Sen. Joseph A. Griffo and Assemblyman Anthony Brindisi are pleased to announce more than \$8.5 million in funding to sustain future agriculture programs.

The 2014-15 state budget includes \$2.4 million for vital agricultural programs restored through negotiations, as well as a \$6.3 million increase in funding for important ongoing research – the largest commitment in at least six years, the legislators said.

“New York farmers need our support to make their operations more efficient and more profitable,” said Griffo, R-Rome. “That’s why I was pleased to advocate for rejecting the governor’s proposed cuts to these essential programs and increasing funding to several others.”

“The programs that are being restored include vitally important research and educational programs that promote increased productivity and safety on our state’s farms,” said Brindisi, D-Utica. “Farming continues to be one of New York’s biggest industries, and I’m pleased to announce budget restorations to programs that will contribute to agriculture’s growth.”

The final budget includes the following funding, all of which the governor previously proposed eliminating:

- \$1.1 million for the Farm Viability Institute (total funding: \$1.5 million)
- \$544,000 for the Apple Growers Association (total funding: \$750,000)
- \$287,000 for the Wine and Grape Foundation (total: \$1 million)
- \$220,000 for dairy profit teams at the Farm Viability Institute (total: \$370,000)
- \$150,000 for Turfgrass Association
- \$100,000 for the Genesee-Livingston-Steuben-Wyoming BOCES Agriculture Academy; and
- \$20,000 for Island Harvest

The budget also includes the following increases in funding:

- \$1 million for the Cornell Animal Health Diagnostic Center (total: \$5.42 million)
- \$1 million for Agribusiness child development
- \$600,000 for the Northern NY Agriculture Development Program

- \$516,000 for Farm Net assistance for farmers
- \$500,000 for NYS Horticulture Society
- \$460,000 for wildlife rabies programs at Cornell (total funding: \$500,000)
- \$320,000 for the Berry Growers Association
- \$300,000 for Harvest NY
- \$175,000 for Eastern Equine Encephalitis prevention
- \$160,000 for local fair assistance (total: \$500,000)
- \$160,000 for hops and barley research at Cornell (total funding: \$200,000)
- \$158,000 for FFA (total funding: \$350,000)
- \$150,000 for the Tractor Rollover Prevention program
- \$150,000 for the Maple Producers Association
- \$120,000 for Christmas tree growers
- \$105,000 for Cornell Maple Research
- \$100,000 for the Vegetable Growers Association
- \$100,000 for the Wood Products Council
- \$75,000 for the Corn and Soybean Growers Association
- \$50,000 for honeybee research at Cornell
- \$50,000 for the Onion Growers Association
- \$25,000 for the low-cost vaccine program administered by St. Lawrence & Jefferson counties' public health departments

In addition, the budget includes a new \$1 million "NY Beginning Farmer Fund" that will provide up to \$50,000 in grants for new farmers to purchase land, equipment and supplies. It

also includes \$100,000 in student loan forgiveness for farmers who recently graduated from a New York college.

“It’s simple: No farms, no food. That’s why it’s so important to encourage farming among younger generations and make it easier for those retiring to transfer their holdings to their relatives,” said Griffo.

“We need to encourage young people to consider a career in agriculture if the industry is to prosper, and I am pleased to see that programs that encourage young people to enter farming are included in this year’s budget,” concluded Brindisi.