



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Robert G. Ortt

## Ortt: Senate Budget Boosts New York Agriculture

ROBERT G. ORTT March 16, 2015

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### *Senator Fights For Small Farms, Rural Communities and Market Expansion*

New York State Senator Rob Ortt (R,C,I–North Tonawanda) understands the needs of farmers and the importance of increasing access to locally-grown products as a way to grow the region’s agriculture industry. Sen. Ortt recently voted in favor of the Senate’s “Brighter Future” budget plan, which addresses the priorities of Western New York families and farmers.

There's been a demand among consumers for locally-grown food, and as a way to meet that demand, the Senate has put forth a multi-faceted "Grown in New York" agriculture plan. The farm plan supports local farmers in their efforts to provide quality, fresh food while strengthening rural communities.

The proposed "Grown in New York" plan would also help farmers expand their markets by providing funding to create five local transportation cooperatives where farmers can arrange to move their products to New York City and other major populated areas. Also, \$250,000 in New York State Thruway Toll rebates would help lower transportation costs of these goods.

"The whole goal of the 'Grown in New York' initiative is to better connect with our consumers while providing them with healthy, locally-grown farm products," said Sen. Ortt. "This plan is the key to better nutrition and strengthening our region's and our state's leading industry. Distributing our local products around the world will create stronger bottom lines for hardworking farmers generation after generation."

The Republican Majority's one-house budget resolution would also fund agricultural research, marketing and education. In addition, it would expand the young farmer initiative to encourage a new generation of farmers, create a "Grown in New York" brand, and provide financial incentives to encourage schools to utilize locally produced, healthy food choices.