



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael F. Nozzolio

## SENATOR NOZZOLIO ANNOUNCES \$2 MILLION IN STATE FUNDING TO ESTABLISH NEW INSTITUTE FOR FOOD SAFETY

MICHAEL F. NOZZOLIO December 16, 2015



New York State Senator Michael Nozzolio and Cornell University College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Dean Kathryn J. Boor today jointly announced the establishment of the Institute for Food Safety at Cornell, to be located on the campus of Cornell's New York State Agricultural Experiment Station (NYSAES) in Geneva.

The Institute for Food Safety at Cornell is made possible by a \$2 million grant advocated by Senator Nozzolio, and will be established to assist in ensuring New York food growers,

companies, suppliers and processors from farm to table comply with the new regulations and compliance standards of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). The Institute will also support food safety research, education, training, compliance and technical innovation.

The Federal government estimates that 48 million cases of food-borne illness occur annually and one in six Americans are affected each year. The new rules aim to further reduce this number and the Institute will be on the cutting edge of helping the agriculture industry in New York State and across the Nation to comply with the adoption of these more stringent testing methods and quality controls.

“As a staunch supporter of Cornell University’s New York State Agricultural Experiment Station, I am extremely pleased I was able to secure \$2 million in state funding to create the Institute for Food Safety and to assist New York farmers and agricultural businesses in complying with the new Federal food safety regulations,” Senator Nozzolio said. “This funding builds on the momentum created earlier this fall with the announcement of \$600,000 to secure a state-of-the-art Hiperbaric High Pressure Processing (HPP) machine for the Experiment Station. This combined funding is a game changer for Geneva and the central Finger Lakes region and it helps to position the Experiment Station at the forefront of food safety. The Institute will become a magnet for job growth in our region,” Senator Nozzolio continued.

“The commitment that Senator Nozzolio has shown to the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station and the people of the Finger Lakes region is unparalleled,” Elizabeth Garrett, President of Cornell University said. “The formation of the Institute for Food Safety at Cornell is just one more example of his dedication to creating economic development opportunities through the Station for those in the Finger Lakes and throughout the entire State.”

“The long-term vision is for the Institute for Food Safety at Cornell to become the pre-eminent source of scientific research, training and outreach in dairy and produce safety in the U.S. and beyond,” said Kathryn J. Boor, the Ronald P. Lynch Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. “Accomplishing this goal will not only support economic growth of the produce and dairy industry in New York, but it will also help increase exports for dairy and produce products. It is thanks to Senator Nozzolio’s unflagging support that the College will be able to do truly transformative work in advancing food safety technology and innovation.”

“The issue of food safety has never been more important. While we have the technology to trace back to sources of contamination in our food supply, the Institute for Food Safety at Cornell will proactively help prevent such contamination from the start by providing training and the knowledge base to conduct state of the art safe agricultural practices,” said Susan K. Brown, the Goichman Family Director of the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station. “Senator Nozzolio’s foresight in providing funding for this endeavor will advance our impact in ensuring the safety of our food supply, both fresh and processed.”

Senator Nozzolio has been a strong advocate for Cornell University, the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station, and the agriculture industry. Senator Nozzolio recently secured \$600,000 in State funding that enables the NYSAES to purchase and install a state-of-the-art Hiperbaric 55 High Pressure Processing machine. High Pressure Processing destroys pathogens and lengthens shelf-life of fresh products without the disadvantages of traditional high temperature pasteurization. It is a novel processing method that can be used to comply with existing as well as new regulatory requirements without significantly altering the nutrition or sensory quality of the foods. The Station’s Hiperbaric will be the first validation unit in the United States, assisting food processors in creating FDA-compliant products and allowing the Station to conduct transformational research,

instruction and outreach.

“We are fortunate here in the Finger Lakes to be home to one of the world’s premier agricultural research centers. The Hiperbaric unit was a boost for our region and state’s food and beverage businesses. This additional funding to establish the Institute for Food Safety at Cornell will aid our State’s farmers, food processors and food suppliers of all types in complying with the new federal regulations, and will allow our scientists to further expand their research to develop the technical innovation that the food industry is currently demanding,” concluded Senator Nozzolio.

Using training and educational strategies, the Institute will assist in the development of specific research and field projects that will provide scientific data needed to implement the Food Safety Modernization Act. The Institute will also serve as a resource to the food industry in preventing and containing the spread of food borne illnesses by analyzing and sharing information obtained from occurrences such as the hepatitis outbreaks that recently occurred in Seneca County.

“The Institute for Food Safety at Cornell is a great opportunity to focus on our strengths to better serve New Yorkers who need food safety training and expertise to support their farms and processing businesses,” said Betsy Bihn, Director of the Produce Safety Alliance, who will be involved in the leadership of the new institute. “There are very few places that can truly provide food safety expertise farm to fork, but this institute will provide the framework to assemble all the key pieces that are already here to build a unique, valuable, and much needed resource in light of new regulations associated with the Food Safety Modernization Act.”