



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

RITCHIE TO HOST CORNELL UNIVERSITY AT FIRST SENATE AG COMMITTEE MEETING OF 2016

PATTY RITCHIE January 25, 2016

| ISSUE: **AGRICULTURE**



Efforts to support farmers and help them expand their businesses, encouraging young people to pursue careers in agriculture and combating the deadly rabies disease will be the topics of conversation Tuesday when the State Senate Committee on Agriculture hosts Cornell University at its first meeting of 2016.

The meeting, which is being hosted by Senate Agriculture Committee Chair, State Senator Patty Ritchie, will take place at 9:00 a.m. and will be live streamed at www.nysenate.gov.

“With record sales and a growing workforce of 100,000, New York State agriculture has grown by leaps and bounds in recent years,” said Senator Ritchie.

“Not only am I excited to join the Senate Agriculture Committee and continue our efforts to support our state’s hardworking farmers, I’m looking forward to again joining with partners—like Cornell University—who share our common goal of helping New York’s agriculture industry continue to grow.”

Representing Cornell will be Dr. Kathryn Boor, Dean of the School of Agriculture and Life Sciences, who will speak about the college’s research, education and marketing programs that help to strengthen the farming industry and Dr. Lorin Warnick, Interim Dean of the Veterinary School at Cornell University, who will share information on New York’s response to wildlife rabies.

With more than 2,300 cases of rabies reported statewide since 2010—including 146 in Jefferson, Oswego, and St. Lawrence Counties—the Senate Agriculture Committee in recent years has advocated for increased funding for Cornell-run efforts to stop the spread of the deadly disease.

In 2015, Senator Ritchie led the way to secure increased support that helped expand the area where Cornell conducts rabies “bait drops.” This unique effort utilizes low-flying planes to drop small packets—which contain a vaccine, surrounded by a mixture of sugar, vegetable fat and other flavors—that are then consumed by animals, namely raccoons.

In recent years, the Senate Agriculture Committee has successfully sought to increase funding for a number of Cornell-run programs, including:

- “Harvest NY,” a program that supports farmers in the areas of dairy processing, food safety, local food distribution, marketing, dairy modernization and profitability. Established in Western New York, last year, the initiative expanded to now include the North Country;
- PRO-DAIRY, an initiative that seeks to improve the profitability and competitiveness of our state’s dairy industry; and
- Key research in a number of areas, including pest management, maple and honeybees, among others.