



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George Amedore

SENATOR AMEDORE UNVEILS “PLANTING SEEDS” INITIATIVE TO SUPPORT FARMERS AND HELP THE AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY

GEORGE AMEDORE February 9, 2016



Senator George Amedore and members of the Senate Republican Conference today announced the 2016 “Planting Seeds” initiative to support New York’s farmers and continue to boost the agricultural industry throughout the State.

The plan focuses on budget initiatives to provide farmers with tax and regulatory relief, increase research, education, and marketing assistance, promote quality and safety, and

create job opportunities for those interested in farming -- including veterans.

“Farmers are the backbone of so many of our Upstate communities, particularly throughout the 46th Senate District, where there are almost 2,100 farms that play a vital part in our local economy,” said Senator Amedore. “Helping our farmers succeed will help create a stronger economy, and a healthier New York.”

Highlights of the initiative include:

- > Restoring cuts to more than 42 agricultural programs, as proposed in the 2016-17 Executive Budget;
- > Reducing taxes by increasing the PIT exemption from five to twenty percent, and making more farmers available for the exemption;
- > Speeding up the phase-in of estate tax reform enacted in 2014 to allow farmers to claim the federal exclusion amount;
- > Increasing funding for Cornell’s College of Agriculture and Life Sciences to meet increase demand for agriculture and veterinary instruction programs and keep costs down;
- > Restoring budget funding for a third round of Beginner Farmer grants to help farmers purchase seed, equipment and supplies to begin farming;
- > Increasing funding for local cooperative extensions and making more of an investment in FarmNet to provide services and assistance to farmers;
- > Providing new funding for farmers to install innovative new technology to make their farms more efficient;

> Extending the Beginning Farmer Student Loan Forgiveness Program to include students who are pursuing degrees in agricultural education;

> Supporting high-school based FFA programs; and

> Providing new funding for the Cornell Small Farms Program to help establish up to five veteran-owned small farms to help returning veterans and those seeking a career change to gain training and expertise to begin their own business.

“These initiatives will provide much needed opportunities and resources for farmers. An investment in our family farms is an investment in a strong Upstate economy,” said Senator Amedore.

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