



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## CULTIVATING CONNECTIONS: RITCHIE MEETS WITH OSWEGO COUNTY FARMERS TO DISCUSS FUTURE “FOOD HUB”

PATTY RITCHIE February 11, 2016

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Nearly two-dozen local farmers and agriculture professionals met with State Senator Patty Ritchie Wednesday for a forum to discuss the establishment of a “food hub” that would link Upstate farmers with larger metro markets across New York State.

“Despite a growing demand for local foods, Upstate farmers are still facing challenges when it comes to getting their foods to large metro areas—however, a ‘food hub’ could help

connect our farmers with new, larger markets across the state,” said Senator Ritchie, who serves as Chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee.

“I’ve had the opportunity to hear from dozens of farmers and agribusiness owners in recent months about how we can make our “food hub” venture a success and I’m looking forward to using this most recent feedback as we continue to work to expand business for our farmers and make fresh foods more accessible to people throughout our state.”

At Wednesday’s meeting, which was held at CiTi in Mexico, Senator Ritchie and other agriculture leaders, including members of the Senator’s Agriculture Advisory Council, discussed how to best utilize more than \$1 million in the 2015-2016 state budget to establish food hubs, which will give farmers and agribusiness owners an opportunity to bring products to a central location where they can then be transported to major cities throughout our state, including New York City. This was the third forum hosted by Senator Ritchie to discuss the establishment of a ‘food hub,’ with others taking place in Jefferson and St. Lawrence Counties.

Wednesday’s meeting builds on Senator Ritchie’s efforts to support our state’s farmers as Chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee. Earlier this week, she unveiled “Planting Seeds,” a new plan to support New York’s agriculture industry by restoring budget cuts and increasing funding for key agriculture programs in the areas of research, education and marketing, providing new tax and regulatory relief for farmers, supporting initiatives that promote food safety and creating new opportunities for veterans, as well as young people in the agriculture industry, among others.