



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## HOW SWEET IT IS! RITCHIE JOINS WITH STATE AGRICULTURE COMMISSIONER, NNY AGRICULTURE STUDENTS TO KICK-OFF “MAPLE DAY” AT STATE CAPITOL

PATTY RITCHIE March 29, 2016

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State Senator Patty Ritchie joined with State Agriculture Commissioner Richard Ball and Northern New York agriculture students to welcome maple producers to the State Capitol Tuesday for the New York State Senate’s annual “Maple Day.” The special event, which Senator Ritchie co-hosted with North Country Senators Joe Griffo and Betty Little, as well as Central New York Senator John DeFrancisco, aims to highlight New York’s growing maple

industry.

“Events like Maple Day help shine a spotlight on all things maple in New York State,” said Senator Ritchie.

“This event—along with the upcoming Maple Weekend—teaches people about the journey from tap to table, showing them that maple isn’t just a sweet part of the foods we eat, but also a major part of our state’s agricultural economy.”

Tuesday’s event comes in advance of the second in a series of two “Maple Weekends” in New York State, where producers open their doors to highlight New York’s growing maple industry with pancake breakfasts, tours and more. Those interested in learning more about upcoming Maple Weekend events [can click here](#).

Today, New York is the nation’s second largest producer of maple syrup—after Vermont—with 2.3 million taps—twice the number of 2009. Maple is a \$20 million industry in New York, with the state producing 18 percent of all maple syrup in the country. In addition, New York syrup production in 2015 reached its highest level in 70 years, according to the USDA.

In recent years, Senator Ritchie has advocated for increased support for New York maple farmers. This year, she is working again to reverse cuts in funding for maple producers in both the Governor’s and Assembly’s budgets, with the Senate’s spending plan fully restoring cuts to both the Maple Producers Association—which promotes the sale of maple syrups and other products—and key research done by Cornell University that is helping to strengthen the industry.

In the past five years, Senator Ritchie has successfully advocated for increasing funding for maple research and promotion by \$1.3 million. This year, she is looking to restore over

\$300,000 in cuts included in the Executive Budget.

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*Attn. photo editors: Pictured in the bottom row of the above photo are Senator Joe Griffo, and Alyssa Gagnon, Natalie Chambers and Hayley Rubin of BOCES Northwest Tech.*

*Pictured from left to right in the top row are Senator Patty Ritchie, State Agriculture Commissioner Richard Ball, Senator Betty Little, Assemblyman Ken Blankenbush and students from Vernon-Verona-Sherrill High School.*