



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

O'Mara: 65 projects across the 58th Senate District awarded state funding through Southern Tier Agricultural Industry Enhancement Program ~ O'Mara says investments focus on strengthening area farms, agribusinesses economically and environmentally

THOMAS F. O'MARA August 16, 2016

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**Elmira, N.Y., August 16**—State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats), chairman of the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee and a member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, today said that 65 projects across Chemung, Schuyler, Steuben and Tompkins counties will share a total of approximately \$5.5 million in funding under the first round of state grants being awarded through the **Southern Tier Agricultural Industry Enhancement Program**.

The program was created as part of the 2015-16 state budget to assist Southern Tier farmers and agribusinesses enhance and expand their operations in ways that promote the protection of the region's natural resources. The awards were announced earlier today by Governor Andrew Cuomo as part of a total of \$18 million being allocated for projects across the 11-county Southern Tier region.

"Agriculture is a foundation of the Southern Tier economy and we need to keep taking actions and making investments that can help keep Southern Tier farmers and agribusinesses competitive for the long haul. We're hopeful that the assistance being provided through the Southern Tier Agricultural Industry Enhancement Program will strengthen regional agriculture through new construction projects like barns, silos, greenhouses and processing facilities while, at the same time, encouraging environmental upgrades including irrigation and drainage," said O'Mara, who also serves as one of 10 members on the Legislature's joint, bipartisan Commission on Rural Resources.

O'Mara said that today's first round funding will support a total of 214 projects. He said that the following awards are being made within the counties he represents as part of the 58th Senate District:

> Chemung County farms are being awarded \$450,000 to support five projects;

- > Schuyler County farms are being awarded \$900,000 to assist 11 projects;
- > Steuben County farms are being awarded \$3,456,170 to invest in 41 projects; and
- > Tompkins County farms will receive \$620,390 to aid eight projects.

According to today's announcement, applicants were awarded on a first come, first served basis and will receive up to \$100,000 each for projects that help increase farm production and profitability, and better protect or enhance natural resources. The funding will be used for costs associated with construction, renovation, irrigation, drainage, fencing, trellis systems, greenhouses, and environmental enhancements.

A second round of applications will be accepted for the remaining funding of approximately \$4 million. For more information, visit the state Department of Agriculture and Markets website at: <http://www.agriculture.ny.gov/>

The state Department of Agriculture and Markets is working in coordination with local County Soil and Water Conservation Districts to administer the program.

See today's full announcement [HERE](#).