



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Help For Growing Farms Just A Call Away Under Ritchie Bill

PATTY RITCHIE March 13, 2017



A bill sponsored by State Senate Agriculture Committee Chair Patty Ritchie that establishes a “one-stop” farming hotline to connect the more than 35,500 farms in New York State with information and resources that will help them grow their businesses passed the Senate today.

Through Senator Ritchie’s legislation, Senate bill 2898, a toll-free hotline would be established with the assistance of Cornell Cooperative Extension. The hotline would provide individuals with information on all aspects of farming, including tax credit programs, support for

beginning farmers, grant opportunities, research and marketing. In addition, it would also connect farmers to key agriculture agencies, including New York Farm Bureau, FarmNet and Farm Credit East.

“In recent years, we have made great strides in investing in programs that are helping our farmers grow their businesses,” said Senator Ritchie.

“However, there are still many who are not aware of assistance that is available, or do not know how to go about tapping into these resources. This one-stop hotline is a simple way to help them quickly find information and assistance that will help them grow their businesses, and New York agriculture as a whole.”

Senator Ritchie’s sponsorship of this legislation builds on her past efforts to grow New York’s agriculture industry and support farmers. Since 2011, Senator Ritchie has delivered more than \$55 million in restored budget cuts and new funding for farm programs, above the amounts proposed in the Executive Budget, and has worked on a number of efforts to encourage more young people to pursue careers in farming, as well as to make it easier for consumers to access the fresh foods grown and produced by farmers.