



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

With regular deer season underway, O'Mara issues reminder on Venison Donation Coalition: Bath-based coalition has provided over 4 million meals

THOMAS F. O'MARA November 21, 2017

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Elmira, N.Y., November 21—State Senator Tom O’Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats) today said that the opening of this year’s regular deer hunting season on Saturday, November 18, means that it’s

also time for the annual reminder on one of this region's most effective charitable organizations: the Venison Donation Coalition.

This year's **regular deer hunting season in the Southern Zone runs from November 18 to December 10.**

“For nearly two decades, the Venison Donation Coalition has helped put a good, highly nutritious meal on millions of needy tables throughout the Southern Tier and Finger Lakes regions, and across New York State. It's a homegrown foundation supported by sportsmen's organizations, of course, but also by corporations, local farm bureaus, government agencies, civic and religious groups, and individual citizens,” said O'Mara, chairman of the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee. “I'm always grateful for this annual opportunity to call attention to its work. In government, particularly in an era like the current one defined by limited resources to address seemingly infinite demands, we're always searching for ways to encourage individual citizens and organizations to contribute to the overall quality of our communities, in this case by helping to feed the hungry. Our region has certainly answered the call and the generosity has been overwhelming.”

Since 1999, the Bath-based Coalition has coordinated the processing of an average of 38 tons of venison annually and provided over 4 million highly nutritious, low-fat, high-protein servings to individuals and children in need. Today the Venison Donation Coalition has 85 processors in 52 counties and is always looking for additional processors to participate. The venison donation program is now a broad-based partnership that includes a range of area supporters, including the Food Bank of the Southern Tier. It has facilitated the donation of venison to food banks, food pantries, soup kitchens and additional not-for-profit organizations and charities.

O'Mara noted that deer hunting is a mainstay of the regional and statewide recreational economy, by some estimates accounting for \$2 billion of economic activity and nearly 30,000 jobs statewide. Steuben County, for example, remains one of the Northeast's premiere deer hunting destinations.

As the Coalition highlights on its website, a \$1 donation can help provide four meals. For every dollar donated, in fact, the Coalition dedicates 90 cents towards processing donated venison.

For more information on donating deer, becoming a participating processor, and other ways to help the Coalition, visit the Venison Donation Coalition website at

<http://www.venisondonation.com>, or call, toll-free, 1-866-862-3337.