



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pamela Helming

Senator Helming Announces \$5.5 Million in Farmland Protection Grants

[JONATHAN MONFILETTO - 315-568-9816](#) February 8, 2018

GENEVA – Senator Pam Helming today announced that \$5.5 million is available through two state grant programs to fund farmland protection projects. Both the Farmland Protection Implementation Program and Land Trust Grants can help preserve viable farmland, protecting it from development and conversion to non-farm uses. The funding helps farmers identify available land and expedite the process of permanently protecting agricultural properties through conservation easements.

“In the Wayne-Finger Lakes region, we rely on our farmland to put healthy, nutritious food and milk on our tables. Our farmland is also important to our regional economy because farms and agribusinesses are a top job creator. With our diversity of locally grown farm products, leading agricultural research at Cornell University, and abundant fresh and clean water, New York State really is at the forefront of farming excellence. It is critical that we continue to discuss the different development pressures on our farmland and how our local communities can plan for and promote farmland preservation. I urge our municipal and community leaders to take advantage of this funding opportunity to protect our precious agricultural resources,” Senator Helming said.

The \$5 million Farmland Protection Implementation Program assists landowners interested in permanently protecting their farms by determining the value of development rights and expediting the process to purchase a perpetual conservation easement. Grants of up to \$500,000 help eligible applicants, such as municipalities, counties, soil and water conservation districts, and land trusts, cover the costs associated with obtaining a conservation easement. Applications will be accepted until the available funding is fully committed. More information about the application process is available on the Department of Agriculture and Markets website, www.agriculture.ny.gov/RFPS.html.

The new \$500,000 Land Trust Grants program supports farmland protection projects identified by counties and municipalities and provides grants of up to \$50,000 to land trusts. The funding will help develop local inventories of viable farmland and inform landowners of programs and opportunities to protect their properties from conversion to non-farm uses. It will also help expand outreach efforts to better connect willing landowners with farmers interested in leasing or buying their properties for agricultural production. Applications must be submitted by Monday, March 5. More details are available on the Department of Agriculture and Markets website.

Senator Helming represents the 54th Senate District, which consists of Seneca and Wayne Counties, parts of Cayuga and Ontario Counties, and the towns of Lansing and Webster. For more information, please visit Senator Helming's [website](#), or follow @SenatorHelming on Facebook or Twitter.

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