



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jessica Ramos

Senator Jessica Ramos, New York State Farmers Coordinate Delivery of 34,000 Pounds of Donated Milk, Beef and Produce to NYC Families in Need

JESSICA RAMOS May 1, 2020

| ISSUE: **COVID-19, ACCESS TO FRESH FOOD, FOOD DONATION**



East Elmhurst, NY — State Senator Jessica Ramos (D-Queens) — in partnership with the Northeast Dairy Producers Association (NEDPA) — announced today that farms and co-ops across upstate New York are donating more than 34,000 pounds of fresh milk, beef and produce for hundreds of hungry New York City families in need.

In addition to the packages of New York State-sourced milk and food, coloring books and packets of crayons for kids have also been donated and will be available Friday morning, May 1st, at Senator Ramos' district Senate office in East Elmhurst, Queens. A hot meal distribution will take place on Saturday, May 2, also at Senator Ramos' office. Event details appear below.

“In addition to the unspeakable loss of life caused by the coronavirus pandemic, two additional devastating tragedies are unfolding during this crisis — a spike in hunger as the economic pain takes its toll, and the breakdown of our food supply chain.” said Senator Jessica Ramos. “We cannot have hungry families in New York City, and farmers upstate dumping their product because they cannot sell it. Together with our farmer partners, we created our own network, and we will convert our district office into a food distribution hub to provide our neighbors with fresh produce and meals.”

Many areas in Senate District 13 neighborhoods — Elmhurst, East Elmhurst, Jackson Heights, Corona and parts of Woodside and Astoria — are considered food deserts, making it difficult to obtain fresh meals. Few local food pantries remain open as residents fall ill with COVID-19.

Senator Ramos partnered with several farms and associations — including Torrey Farms, Deer Run Farms, Crist Farms, Kelder Farms, La Casa De Leche Farm, Northeast Dairy Producers Association, Dairy Farmers of America, New York State Growers and the New York State and Long Island Farm Bureaus — to pick up produce and dairy, and deliver them to New York City. The following donations were made possible by a partnership between Senator Jessica Ramos and a number of New York State farms:

- 300 pounds of beef donated by La Casa De Leche Farm (Livingston County) and the Northeast Dairy Producers Association Board of Directors.

- 1,700 gallons of milk donated by Dairy Farmers of America.
- 20,000 apples donated by Farm Fresh First, Inc., which markets NY apples from over 100 apple growers throughout the state.
- 14,000 pounds of onions, 8,000 pounds of potatoes and 4,000 pounds of cabbage donated by Torrey Farms, Inc. (Genesee County) and the New York State Vegetable Growers Association.
- 2,880 pounds of blueberry and vanilla parfait yogurt donated by Upstate Niagara Cooperative, Inc.
- 575 packs of Prang Crayons made with soybean oil for children to enjoy, donated by the New York Corn & Soybean Growers Association.

On Wednesday, April 29, a truck packed with vegetables and yogurt left Western New York, stopped to pick up more donations from farms in Central New York, and arrived in Albany in the evening. The truck loaded 1,700 gallons of milk from Dean Foods in Rensselaer County Wednesday evening and arrived in Queens on Thursday, April 30.

Northeast Dairy Producers Association Vice Chair and Owner of La Casa De Leche Dairy Farm (Livingston County) Keith Kimball said, “The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted us all - our families, our businesses and the greater New York community. By pooling resources and working together to adapt to unprecedented market disruption, we’re able to get milk, beef and produce in the hands of those in need. I’m proud to partner with farmers, co-ops and processors across the state to make this donation a reality, and thankful to Senator Ramos for hosting the event for families in Queens.”

Maureen Torrey, co-owner of Torrey Farms, Inc. (Genesee County) said, “Thanks to the passionate employees on our family farm and our dedicated truck drivers, we’re able to donate 26,000 pounds of fresh vegetables to families in need, including onions that Senator Ramos helped us plant last year. This public health crisis has changed life as we know it, but what we’ve learned is that no matter where you live - Buffalo, Plattsburgh, New York City and everywhere in between - we’re all New Yorkers and together we are New York Tough.”

Senator Ramos’ upstate partnerships are further bolstered by working with local community-based organizations, nonprofits and centers — including the Queens Chamber of Commerce, Street Vendors Project, Together We Can Resource Center, Sustainable United Neighborhoods, the COVID Care Neighbor Network, Hour Children, Queens Together, and Biking Public Project — which assisted with logistics, food and PPE donations.

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