



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patrick M. Gallivan

Senator Gallivan Says Plan to Help Farmers Sell Products is Positive

JIM RANNEY May 6, 2020

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Senator Patrick M. Gallivan (R-C-I, Elma) says a plan by New York State to help dairy producers sell excess milk will provide much needed relief for farmers who have seen the sale of milk and other dairy products decline dramatically because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The recently announced Nourish New York program calls for products purchased from farms to be sent to food banks and food pantries across the state, many of which are seeing an increased demand for food from people out of work because of the virus. Food banks are expected to receive \$25 million in funding and begin purchasing products soon.

“This plan not only supports our farmers and those in the agriculture industry, it provides residents across the state with nutritious food at a time they need it most,” Senator Gallivan said. “There is no reason to see milk and other products go to waste when we know that our fellow New Yorkers are struggling to feed themselves and their families.”

Over the past several weeks, many farmers have been forced to discard their milk because efforts to control the spread of COVID-19 have forced schools, restaurants and other venues to close, dramatically reducing the demand for milk products.

The majority of the funding will be used to purchase dairy products. Food banks and other emergency food providers will work with New York’s dairy processing partners—Cabot Cheese, Chobani, Dairy Farmers of America, HP Hood, Upstate Niagara Cooperative Inc., and others—to purchase pre-packaged, consumer-ready products, such as milk, cheese, yogurt, sour cream, and cream cheese. The dairy cooperatives will use excess New York State milk to produce these products and are prepared to increase production to meet the rising demand.

"There are major challenges confronting all of agriculture in light of the pandemic. The plan to purchase more New York product, including dairy, to feed those in need will benefit our communities as well as our farmers as we get thru this together. We appreciate Senator Gallivan highlighting the current need and for his support of agriculture in good times and bad," said Jeff Simons, 4th generation dairy farmer with Erie County Farm Bureau.

In April, Senator Gallivan called on the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets to assist farmers and to help match supply and demand.

There are more than 4,000 dairy farms across New York State and Wyoming County leads the state in dairy production. Agriculture remains one of New York's leading industries.