



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jen Metzger

## Senator Metzger Joins with Cornell Cooperative Extensions of Sullivan and Ulster Counties to Distribute Protective Supplies to Farms and Farm Workers

JEN METZGER May 13, 2020

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**Hudson Valley and Catskills, NY...** This past week State Senator Metzger (SD-42) joined Cornell Cooperative Extension in Sullivan and Ulster Counties to distribute sanitizer solution and face-coverings for farms and farmers' markets as part of a State initiative to assist farms, which are essential businesses, to continue to operate safely during the COVID-19 pandemic.

On Friday in Liberty, Senator Metzger joined CCE Sullivan to distribute NYS Clean, a 75% alcohol solution, to Sullivan County farmers who responded to a survey put out by CCE Sullivan's Ag and Food Systems team. The following day, Metzger, who chairs the Senate's Agriculture Committee, joined CCE Ulster to distribute face-coverings and sanitizer to farmers and farm workers as they set up for the Kingston farmers' market.

"I was happy to work with CCE Sullivan and Ulster staff in distributing hand sanitizer and masks for farmers and farm workers in Sullivan and Ulster County who continue to labor during this pandemic to contribute to our food supply," **said Senator Metzger.** "As Senate Agriculture Chair, I have been pressing for increased assistance to our farms during this crisis, and was pleased to see this commitment of critical supplies. I want to thank CCEs across the state for distributing these supplies, and for all the work the Extensions are doing to support our farms in this challenging time."

Getting COVID-19 information and resources to the public has been a major priority of Senator Metzger's, and she has put together informative materials in Spanish and English for the communities she represents.

In early April, **Senator Metzger sent a letter to U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue** urging the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to swiftly aid New York's dairy farms, which have been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The joint letter with the State Senate's Rural Resources Commission, signed by six Senators, requested that the USDA immediately direct to the New York dairy industry a portion of the \$9.5 billion set aside for agriculture in the \$2.2 trillion federal relief package, known as the CARES Act, which was signed into law on March 27. **In late April, Metzger joined five New York State lawmakers in urging federal representatives to prioritize rural communities in the next federal economic stimulus bill.**

**Colleen Monaghan, Executive Director of Cornell Cooperative Extension Sullivan County said,** “CCE Sullivan is pleased to work with New York State to ensure our local farm operations have access to all the tools they need to keep their workers and patrons safe as the 2020 season ramps up. Thank you to Senator Metzger for partnering with us on distribution!”

**Jared Buono, Executive Director of Cornell Cooperative Extension Ulster County said,** “It is heartening to know that so many recognize and support our farmers including Senator Metzger. People are more and more seeking local, trusted sources of food and they increasingly turn to our farmers who, in addition to producing some of the best food in the world, are the backbone of our food system and economy. It is an honor to be able to work alongside the Senator to distribute essential and hard-to-find supplies to producers in our area.”

**Matt Igoe, President of the Rondout Valley Growers Association, Inc. said,** “Thanks to Senator Metzger for help with the heavy lifting on Saturday at the Kingston farmers’ market! 50 mile per hour gusts and snow flurries in May couldn't stop the delivery of hand sanitizer to farm stands. Let’s keep our farms’ workers safe as they work to provide fresh, healthy, local food for our community.”

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