



# Annual Report 2024

New York State Senate  
Standing Committee on

Agriculture

# SENATOR MICHELLE HINCHEY

Chair

Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins  
President Pro Tempore  
NYS Senate Majority Leader



**CHAIR**  
AGRICULTURE

**COMMITTEES**  
CULTURAL AFFAIRS, TOURISM,  
PARKS AND RECREATION  
ENERGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS  
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION  
FINANCE  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
TRANSPORTATION

THE SENATE  
STATE OF NEW YORK



**MICHELLE HINCHEY**  
Senator, 41<sup>ST</sup> District

**MEMBER**  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CANNABIS  
JOINT SENATE TASK FORCE  
ON OPIOIDS, ADDICTION, AND  
OVERDOSE PREVENTION  
LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION ON  
RURAL RESOURCES  
LEGISLATIVE WOMEN'S CAUCUS  
SELECT MAJORITY TASK FORCE ON  
MINORITY AND WOMEN-OWNED  
BUSINESS ENTERPRISES

December 16, 2024

The Honorable Andrea Stewart-Cousins  
Temporary President and Majority Leader  
New York State Senate  
Albany, NY 12247

Dear Leader Stewart-Cousins:

I am pleased to share the Annual Report of the New York State Senate Standing Committee on Agriculture for the 2024 Legislative Session. As Chair, I'm proud to guide our efforts to support this vital industry. Agriculture is not only a cornerstone of New York's economy but also vital to our daily lives—shaping our food security, preserving our natural resources, and supporting regional resilience in the face of a changing climate.

During the 2024 session, the Agriculture Committee met six (6) times and reported thirty-three (33) bills. As Chair of the committee, I worked to elevate the importance of our agricultural community through a variety of statewide tours, forums, and panels that brought together farmers, elected officials, and community stakeholders. I thank my colleagues who served on the Committee for their efforts, and the continued support from you and the Majority Conference members to grow and strengthen this crucial industry within our state. Furthermore, a sincere thank you to our partners across New York, including elected officials at all levels of government and stakeholders within this community, for their continued partnership in creating a resilient and sustainable food system from field to fork.

New York has a pivotal role to play in ensuring the future and safety of our Country's food supply along with the protection of our natural environment. Our work over this last year reflects efforts to grow sustainability while increasing access to land, knowledge, and capital for those interested in this field. I look forward to the opportunities in next year's session to build on our success and to ensure that New York's agricultural economy can grow well into the future.

Sincerely,

*Michelle Hinchey*

Senator Michelle Hinchey

ALBANY OFFICE: 902 LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING, ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247 • PHONE: (518) 455-2350 • FAX: (518) 426-6751

DISTRICT OFFICE: 721 BROADWAY, SUITE 150, KINGSTON, NEW YORK 12401 • PHONE: (845) 331-3810 • FAX: (845) 331-2083

E-MAIL ADDRESS: [HINCHEY@NYSenate.GOV](mailto:HINCHEY@NYSenate.GOV)





**2024 LEGISLATIVE SESSION REPORT**

**NEW YORK STATE SENATE  
STANDING COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE**

**Senator Michelle Hinchey, Chairperson**

Committee Members

Senator John Mannion	Senator George Borrello - <i>Ranking Member</i>
Senator Rachel May	Senator Pamela Helming
Senator Jessica Ramos	Senator Peter Oberacker
Senator Kevin Thomas	
Senator Lea Webb	

Committee Staff

Maria Morrissey - Senior Counsel

Malik Dare - Principal Analyst

Brian Coffin - Albany Chief of Staff and Legislative Director

Daniel Wrenn - Scheduler and Committee Clerk



## COMMITTEE JURISDICTION AND OVERVIEW

The New York State Senate Standing Committee on Agriculture has legislative oversight responsibilities for issues concerning the state's agricultural sector and food supply chain. The Committee routinely deals with legislation that impacts the Department of Agriculture and Markets, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and farm organizations.

During the 2024 Legislative Session, one hundred eleven (111) bills were referred to the Committee for its review. Of these bills, thirty-three (33) were reported from the Committee. Twenty six (26) were passed by the Senate, and nine (9) passed in both houses. This work was conducted through a series of six (6) committee meetings. A list of all the bills that were reported from the committee is provided at the end of this report.

As Chair, I hosted three marquee events at the Capitol. On April 8, 2024, we hosted Animal Advocacy Day, in partnership with Senator Martinez, welcoming pet and animal resource groups to Albany to connect with legislators. Working with the New York Brewers Association, on May 13, 2024 we invited ten (10) craft breweries, from Long Island to the Adirondacks, to the Legislative Office Building to share samples of their products and advocate for legislation relevant to their businesses. To cap off this session, on May 29, 2024, dairy producers gathered in the Well to celebrate Dairy Day and June as the upcoming Dairy Month.

Aside from the legislation highlighted later in this report, I led efforts in this year's budget to ensure New York's transition to clean energy protects our food supply and environment. The final budget incorporated elements from multiple bills that I authored, expanding upon the Executive's RAPID Act to create first-ever protections for prime agricultural land through the Office of Renewable Energy Siting (ORES) and bring greater community input to the siting process. These new protections include requiring ORES to minimize significant adverse impacts on agricultural lands, with special consideration given to land within agricultural districts and with mineral soil groups 1-4; exempting farmland actively used for agricultural production, prime farmland (soil groups 1-4), and land within agricultural districts from NYSERDA's build-ready program unless it is needed for project interconnection infrastructure; and directing ORES to create and regularly update a map of all renewable energy projects, both approved and proposed, that are in the application process.

In addition to our agricultural policy work in Albany, I visited and toured a diverse number of farms and agricultural facilities across the state. During one of this year's maple weekends (March 23, 2024), I toured the sugarbush at New Beginnings Farmstead, where we talked about New York's maple sugar making processes and traditions. On April 25, 2024, I visited the Crist Bros Orchard, toured their farm and discussed apple science advancements with the Crist family in apple growing, storing, and packing.

On July 10, 2024, I visited the Hudson Valley Research Laboratory, a 100-year partnership between Cornell University and local farmers located in the Hudson Valley — one of our country's most important agricultural regions. At the lab, scientists develop tailored solutions to



help farmers address climate resilience, pest and disease management, organic farming, and support for New York's craft beverage industry. To stay a leader in agricultural research, the lab needs major upgrades. A grant from my office is helping modernize the facility, ensuring it can be a hub for sustainable innovation and has state-of-the-art capabilities to help New York farmers throughout their growing seasons.

On August 12, 2024, I welcomed my colleague Senator Pete Harckham, Chair of the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee, to Kingston for a tour of the farmer-owned dairy cooperative Hudson Valley Fresh to learn about their operation and how we can better support New York dairy farmers. Hudson Valley Fresh is a venture of eight Hudson River Valley farmers that provide fresh, local dairy products to clients of all sizes — everyone from our K-12 schools to West Point and our neighbors in New York City. In an industry where farmers don't get to set their prices, Hudson Valley Fresh's mission is to secure a living wage for farming families so we can keep our food supply local amidst a growing Climate Crisis that's bringing severe challenges to food production in key agricultural states.

On October 29, 2024, I had the privilege of speaking at the Columbia County Farm Bureau's annual dinner in Kinderhook. We shared details about some of our work through the Ag Committee and the importance of advocating with leaders at every level of government about the challenges farmers are facing today and the opportunities we have to strengthen the industry and New York's food supply.

Throughout the year, I met with numerous stakeholders to hear the issues on their minds and discuss how we can protect New York's irreplaceable agricultural land. On February 14, 2024, I welcomed the Alliance for New York's Farmland to the Capitol to discuss how to reverse the trend of New York's farmland being converted to other uses. On November 15, 2024, I participated in Orange County Land Trust's forum on Farmland Protection for Ulster County Farmers. This forum gathered farmers, elected officials, and conservation advisory councils to educate people on the agricultural easement process and funding opportunities to help farmers preserve their farms. On September 24, 2024, I participated in New York City's Climate Week as a panelist in an opening session to discuss the role of regional food policy and how better to connect the dots between New York City and that State's robust agriculture community and products in order to expand markets for our farmers and bring locally sourced, fresh, healthy food to New York residents.

During the year, I was proud to fight for expanding student access to nutritious food and the state and local purchasing of New York grown food. On February 14, 2024, I spoke to a coalition of groups in support of Healthy School Meals for all, a bill I carry to provide free school meals to all students across New York. On February 29th, I joined the Cub Café breakfast at Cold Spring Elementary in Stanfordville, a special event that started in 2023 during Heart Health Month to highlight healthy and local eating. The menu featured french toast made with bread from Chatham, eggs from Feather Ridge Farm in Elizaville, Hudson Valley Fresh milk, and apples from an orchard in Marlborough—all grown and produced in New York. It was a great opportunity to spotlight the value of eating local while encouraging healthy choices for students.



On October 18, 2024, for National School Lunch Week, I toured Coxsackie-Athens School District and presented them with a proclamation honoring their Food Service Department for their dedication to ensuring all students have access to meals that contribute to their overall health and well being.

My days were also filled with opportunities to meet with the next generation of leaders in agriculture. In February, Assemblywoman Lupardo and I hosted FFA students in Albany during their Advocacy Day. Later in the year, on July 25, 2024, I joined youth in opening the Greene County Youth Fair, and announced that my office was providing Cornell Cooperative Extension Columbia-Greene with a \$200,000 grant to build an outdoor classroom for year-round educational programming. A couple of days later, on July 31, 2024, I attended the opening of the Ulster County Fair and toured the Youth Building and 4-H projects there. These events, in addition to all the above work, showed firsthand the promise of New York agriculture leading us into the future.

## COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS

The following key bills were acted on by the committee in 2024:

- **S1058-A Hinchey/A2299-A Lupardo** - This legislation establishes the agrivoltaics viability pilot program within the farmland viability program to provide grants to identify the best practices and strategies for dual-use solar energy projects that protect soil health during construction and decommissioning of solar arrays, utilize sustainable agricultural production practices, monitor any benefits solar energy may have on farms and to the state, track economic viability, study the commercialization of dual-use solar energy projects, and encourage equitable engagement of stakeholders. As New York continues to take action against climate change and work to meet the goals of the CLCPA, it is important that an energy crisis is not exchanged for a food crisis. Solar energy production and agriculture do not need to be mutually exclusive and can work together in a dual-use model, helping facilitate a transition to a renewable energy economy with-profitable farms generating energy and food. This bill works to understand and optimize agrivoltaics, incentivizing pilot implementation through grants.
- **S8606-A Hinchey/ A10432-A Woerner** - This legislation prohibits sellers of liquified petroleum from charging consumers certain fees including; a “special usage fee” or more than nominal value if they use less than a minimum amount of petroleum set by a seller, for liquified petroleum that is not actually delivered, a fee of more than labor costs or nominal value for ending service before their contract with the petroleum seller has ended, a tank rental fee after the seller has disconnected the customer’s service or a delivery fee if a consumer runs out of petroleum due to the seller’s failure to deliver. Companies selling propane in New York charge numerous hidden fees, many of which are excessively burdensome for consumers and work contrary to our ambitious climate goals. There can be exorbitant fees to cancel service or to have a propane tank removed, making it exceedingly expensive for consumers to end their contracts with their current provider. By prohibiting petroleum gas companies from charging these unnecessary fees, this bill would remove some of those barriers and put money back into people's pockets.
- **S2415 Bailey/A6613 Cruz** - This legislation establishes the office of urban agriculture. The creation of the Office for Urban Agriculture will support and help facilitate various efforts to create and uphold urban agriculture structures around the state. The office will serve as a resource for residents by creating an interactive website that provides information and resources with regard to urban farming, available state or municipality owned-land available for use/cultivation, and provide direction regarding assisting in promulgating urban agriculture efforts. Urban agriculture creates an avenue for urban communities, with limited access to fresh produce, to produce their own fresh, healthy foods for their residents.

- **S6365 Hinchey/A2881 Lupardo** - This legislation would require owners of real property to inspect vacated properties within three days of the owner being notified that it is vacant to check to see that no animals were left abandoned in the home and would require the landowner to notify animal control, police or SPCA in order for the animal to be removed or cared for until such time as it can be removed. Oftentimes when people are forced from their homes it is due to financial reasons or a change in lifestyle or relocation. These types of reasons for vacating a home can occasionally lead individuals to make hasty and desperate decisions for their pets. This bill would ensure that any pets that may have been left behind can be brought to a new home.
- **S4270-A Parker/A5919 Barrett** - This legislation would create a tax credit for farmers who engage in carbon farming, which is defined as implementing a land management strategy for the purpose of reducing, sequestering and mitigating greenhouse gas emissions on land. The amount of the refundable credit that the farmer receives would be determined by DEC and based on the value of the emissions reductions achieved. By using no-till systems, planting cover crops, trees and perennial forages, and managing compost application, farmers can see improvements in water holding capacity, nutrient storage, and reduced erosion. All of these farming practices have the collateral benefit of sequestering carbon in the soil, thereby reducing its release into the atmosphere as CO<sub>2</sub>. The carbon farming tax credit would incentivize farmers to adopt these practices and help New York achieve its climate goals.

**TWO HOUSE BILLS**

<b>2024 Senate Agriculture Committee 2 House Bills</b>			
<b>BILL</b>	<b>SPONSOR</b>	<b>SUMMARY</b>	<b>SIGNIFICANT ACT</b>
S01195	PERSAUD	Requires the department of agriculture and markets to maintain a publicly available database of the results of its graded inspections on its website; requires the department to provide information as to where a customer may file a consumer report; requires the department to facilitate and coordinate the planning and implementation of an awareness and educational program to inform the general public on the standards retail food stores shall meet and how consumers may report retail food stores with poor sanitary conditions.	Vetoed Memorandum 93
S01752	HINCHEY	Expands the definition of crops, livestock and livestock products to include cannabis.	Substituted By A1234 - Delivered to Governor
S06796A	ADDABBO	Strengthens enforcement efforts of the state's anti-slaughter of race horses and race horse breeding stock law; requires the posting of signage that states it is illegal to sell or transfer such animals for the purposes of slaughter.	Substituted By A6947A - Delivered to Governor
S07849	MAY	Establishes the native plant seed supply, development and enhancement program.	Substituted By A9043 - Delivered to Governor
S08542	GIANARIS	Extends the effectiveness of provisions related to licensing of establishments where animals or fowls are slaughtered.	Substituted By A9254 - Chaptered 181
S08690	HINCHEY	Expands the definitions of surplus agricultural products and processed products for the purposes of the Nourish New York program to include certain milk and other non-alcoholic farm produced beverages.	Substituted By A9259 - Delivered to Governor

S09232	MAY	Relates to crop loss determinations for apples used in the production of New York state labeled cider made by the commissioner of agriculture and markets; authorizes use of apples grown outside the state for New York state labeled cider when necessary due to a loss of crops. Eff. Date 08/28/2024 Department of Agriculture and Markets	Chaptered 231
S09248	HINCHEY	Expands the young farmer advisory board on agriculture to become the beginning farmer advisory board on agriculture. Department of Agriculture and Markets	Substituted By A7020A - Chaptered 230
S09249	HINCHEY	Provides that it shall be unlawful for any person to purchase, deal in, sell or rescue cattle, swine, horses, cervids, camelids, sheep, goats or poultry or to operate an auction where such animals are sold unless a valid domestic animal health permit is held. Department of Agriculture and Markets	Substituted By A10110 - Chaptered 256

**SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE ACTIVITY**

<b>2024 Senate Agriculture Committee Activity</b>			
<b>BILL</b>	<b>SPONSOR</b>	<b>SUMMARY</b>	<b>SIGNIFICANT ACT</b>
S00142	GIANARIS	Restricts the performance of surgical devocalization procedures on dogs and cats.	Passed the Senate
S00213B	MYRIE	Relates to false or misleading advertisements of food and food products; provides factors to determine whether an advertisement is false or misleading; provides for enforcement and a private right of action.	Passed the Senate
S00761	KRUEGER	Relates to aggravated cruelty to animals.	Passed the Senate
S01055	HINCHEY	Establishes the New York state youth in agriculture and entrepreneurship summer employment program to provide students with the opportunity to be educated on the agricultural industry and alternative career paths and to provide agricultural work experience and entrepreneurship work experience.	Passed the Senate
S01056A	HINCHEY	Includes certain land that is owned or rented as a farm operation for the production for sale of crops, livestock or livestock products as land used in agricultural production.	Passed the Senate
S01058A	HINCHEY	Establishes the agrivoltaics viability pilot program within the farmland viability program to provide grants to identify the best practices and strategies for dual-use solar energy projects that protect soil health during construction and decommissioning of solar arrays, utilize sustainable agricultural production practices, monitor any benefits solar energy may have on farms and to the state, track economic viability, study the commercialization of dual-use solar energy projects, and encourage equitable engagement of stakeholders.	Reported to Senate Finance

S01195	PERSAUD	Requires the department of agriculture and markets to maintain a publicly available database of the results of its graded inspections on its website; requires the department to provide information as to where a customer may file a consumer report; requires the department to facilitate and coordinate the planning and implementation of an awareness and educational program to inform the general public on the standards retail food stores shall meet and how consumers may report retail food stores with poor sanitary conditions.	Vetoed Memorandum 93
S01365	KENNEDY	Directs the department of agriculture and markets to increase the number of regional farmers' markets for the direct marketing of foods and produce produced in the state.	Passed the Senate
S01751	HINCHEY	Requires applicants for a license to grow adult-use or medical cannabis to submit an energy efficiency plan to the department of agriculture and markets; sets resource efficiency requirements for such cannabis growers.	Reported to Senate Energy and Telecommunications
S01752	HINCHEY	Expands the definition of crops, livestock and livestock products to include cannabis.	Substituted By A1234 - Delivered to Governor
S02236	HINCHEY	Establishes a one-stop farming hotline with the Cornell cooperative extension.	Passed the Senate
S02407	BAILEY	Establishes the farm ownership succession planning program to provide farm owners with a succession planning toolkit that can be used by such farm owners who plan on selling or closing their farm.	Passed the Senate
S02415	BAILEY	Establishes the office of urban agriculture.	Passed the Senate
S02461	PERSAUD	Establishes the sanitary retail food store grant program to provide funding to retail food stores that fail inspections to correct deficiencies if such stores are unable to sustain the costs to immediately correct critical deficiencies, are located in food deserts, and would otherwise be unable to stay in operation due to their inability to meet and maintain sanitary standards.	Reported to Senate Finance
S03431A	SKOUFIS	Relates to promoting animal fighting and appropriately punishing individuals associated with such activities. Criminal Sanction Impact.	Passed the Senate



S04270A	PARKER	Establishes a tax credit for farmers who maximize carbon sequestration potential through a "carbon farming" land management strategy; directs DEC to develop regulations related to certifying the amount of carbon sequestered or emissions reduced.	Passed the Senate
S05325	MARTINEZ	Enacts "Tucker's law"; removes the provision that provides that any term of imprisonment for a violation of aggravated cruelty to animals may not exceed two years.	Passed the Senate
S06365	HINCHEY	Relates to the inspection of property that has been vacated for abandoned animals; requires property owners and lessors to inspect such property within three days and to immediately notify the appropriate authorities when such person finds an animal which appears to be abandoned.	Passed the Senate
S06796A	ADDABBO	Strengthens enforcement efforts of the state's anti-slaughter of race horses and race horse breeding stock law; requires the posting of signage that states it is illegal to sell or transfer such animals for the purposes of slaughter.	Substituted By A6947A - Delivered to Governor
S07036A	RAMOS	Prohibits the retail sale of spices that exceed lead level limits; defines spices and types of spices; establishes acceptable lead limits for various types of spices.	Passed the Senate
S07849	MAY	Establishes the native plant seed supply, development and enhancement program.	Substituted By A9043 - Delivered to Governor
S08425	SKOUFIS	Establishes a process for designating transfer-on-death beneficiaries for farming implements involving filing a document with the commissioner of agriculture and markets.	Senate Rules
S08542	GIANARIS	Extends the effectiveness of provisions related to licensing of establishments where animals or fowls are slaughtered.	Substituted By A9254 - Chaptered 181
S08560	COMRIE	Requires the community gardens task force to conduct an assessment of all community gardens located on publicly owned land in the state to facilitate each garden's designation as a critical environmental area.	Passed the Senate
S08606A	HINCHEY	Prohibits the misrepresentation or collection of certain fees related to the delivery, usage, and storage of liquified petroleum.	Passed the Senate

S08690	HINCHEY	Expands the definitions of surplus agricultural products and processed products for the purposes of the Nourish New York program to include certain milk and other non-alcoholic farm produced beverages.	Substituted By A9259 - Delivered to Governor
S09002	HINCHEY	Defines therapeutic agriculture for the purposes of community gardens as the use of agricultural activities as a means of promoting physical, mental and emotional well-being, rehabilitation and therapy for certain individuals.	Passed the Senate
S09041	HINCHEY	Prohibits the separation of foals younger than four months of age from the mare; prohibits abrupt weaning of foals; establishes fines for violations.	Senate Rules
S09081A	THOMAS	Permits microchipping of certain animals possessed by animal protective associations and rescue organizations.	Senate Rules
S09232	MAY	Relates to crop loss determinations for apples used in the production of New York state labeled cider made by the commissioner of agriculture and markets; authorizes use of apples grown outside the state for New York state labeled cider when necessary due to a loss of crops. Eff. Date 08/28/2024 Department of Agriculture and Markets	Chaptered 231
S09248	HINCHEY	Expands the young farmer advisory board on agriculture to become the beginning farmer advisory board on agriculture. Department of Agriculture and Markets	Substituted By A7020A - Chaptered 230
S09249	HINCHEY	Provides that it shall be unlawful for any person to purchase, deal in, sell or rescue cattle, swine, horses, cervids, camelids, sheep, goats or poultry or to operate an auction where such animals are sold unless a valid domestic animal health permit is held. Department of Agriculture and Markets	Substituted By A10110 - Chaptered 256







Annual Report 2024

**New York State Senate Standing Committee on  
Agriculture**