

*2021 Legislative Recommendations
 and Policy Statements*



A Vision for Agriculture in New York State

- A vibrant, increasingly profitable and cohesive agriculture and food industry that directs its future and is sensitive to the environment.
- A business climate that fosters the industry’s growth.
- A public, including decision-makers at the local and state levels, that clearly identifies agriculture as a large and critical business entity within New York State.

INTRODUCTION

The Empire State Council of Agricultural Organizations has, since its formation in 1954, enabled its members to develop a unified set of positions on fundamental economic, regulatory, legislative, administrative, and other local, state, and national issues affecting the viability of agriculture in New York State.

This booklet contains the Council's policy statements with respect to these issues, and its legislative recommendations for 2021. The statements and recommendations have been adopted unanimously by the Council's 27 members, who represent all facets of New York's diverse agricultural industry. They are intended to inform the Council's key stakeholders of the industry's concerns and proposals for addressing them.

Agriculture is New York State's most important industry. The agriculture industry, including farming, agricultural services and food and agricultural processing in New York State, contribute \$37.2 billion to the New York State economy*. **This estimate does not include** all related wholesale, retail and food service operations involved in the farm to table marketing chain. In addition, production agriculture and the food and agricultural manufacturing sectors provide over 160,000 jobs.

Nonetheless, the industry faces many serious challenges. While the industry has shown its resilience and essential nature throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, throughout the agriculture and food sector, many businesses are facing financial stress due to pandemic as well as low commodity prices and/or reduced margins. Access to reliable and affordable labor is also a concern for many businesses.

Government plays a critical role in investing in and maintaining the competitiveness of our industry. Our organization supports continued investment in the programs, institutions, and infrastructure that the industry relies upon. **It is especially critical the state recognizes that our industry competes in a global marketplace**, and does not impose additional costs or regulations that put New York producers at a disadvantage relative to those outside our state.

Farmers rely on their land and their animals for their livelihoods which is why they are excellent stewards of our natural resources. **Regulations on conservation and food production practices should be based in sound science and not impose unnecessary costs on New York producers or deny them access to inputs available in other states.**

While New York agriculture continues to position itself to capitalize on its advantages – large consumer markets, good infrastructure, skilled workforce, and progressive research and education institutions – government must recognize and support the agriculture and food industry as a major contributor to the economy and the quality of life in New York. We hope that this book will serve as a useful resource on the range of issues facing policymakers and the broadly supported approaches for addressing them, to maintain the competitiveness of this vital industry in our state.

* Northeast Economic Engine, 2020, Farm Credit East

2021 Legislative Recommendations and Policy Statements

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STATE ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic as well as other future impactful circumstances has/have impacted every aspect of the food and agriculture sector in New York. The pandemic has underscored that New York's farms and the entire food and agriculture sector is comprised of essential businesses. These businesses have continued to operate through the pandemic, taking extraordinary measures to keep their workers, customers and families safe and healthy while providing food and other products, services and experiences that we all rely upon.

We recognize that the pandemic has had a major negative impact on New York State's fiscal situation. The CAO urges policymakers to continue working with New York's congressional delegation to obtain federal state and local financial aid to mitigate the fiscal impact on state and local governments. Many of the recommendations for funding and programs predate the pandemic, but this financial support and investment in our industry are more critical than ever.

In some sections of this policy book, specific recommendations relate to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic or other emergency situations should they arise, but this section highlights a few recommendations that relate broadly to the COVID-19 pandemic and the entire food and agriculture sector.

- With the availability of a vaccine, it is imperative that farmworkers and other food and agricultural employees be considered essential personnel and get priority for receiving it.
- As future shut down orders are considered or enacted, it is critical that all farm and food businesses are considered essential and permitted to continue operating.
 - The CAO represents the broad scope of the food and agriculture sector in the state. Our membership comprises an integrated sector that support and do business across industry or commodity designations. Singling out or excluding one category of businesses on the basis of location, type of operation or commodity produced weakens the whole system.
- Build upon the tremendous success of the Nourish New York program, connecting producers across the state with those in need.
- As essential businesses who have to keep operating to produce food or care for animals, crops and other plants, it is critical that farm and food businesses receive basic employer protections from liability.
 - Our members' businesses are committed to taking care of their customers and their workers and those that don't should be held responsible. During a pandemic, however, certain risks are unavoidable, so employers should be protected from frivolous litigation. Any disruption in any aspect of the chain has a deleterious impact on the entire distribution and thus the locally produced food supply that became essential when processing plants in the Midwest began to shut down. We need to protect and consider all aspects of Agriculture essential during these times. Shutting down any facet for whatever reason impacts the ability of Agriculture to feed our people.

----- AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT, RESEARCH AND REGULATION -----

**AGRICULTURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
AND COMPETITIVENESS**

New York agriculture is a very diverse and dynamic industry. Agriculture provides employment to thousands of New Yorkers throughout the state and generates millions of dollars in tax base to support hundreds of local communities and school districts. It is a complex industry involving not only producers, but also input providers, processors and those involved in the marketing of farm and food products in the United States and to foreign markets.

New York agriculture faces many challenges in an increasingly global marketplace. The ability of New York farmers and agricultural-related businesses to be viable requires a commitment to keep costs of production at low levels, while maintaining high levels of productivity and adopting new technologies and management systems.

A major limiting factor for agricultural growth is regulatory compliance. Government agencies often are unable to clearly define what farm businesses must do to comply with labor, health care, transportation and environmental regulations. Additional educational and informational non-regulatory actions are necessary to help producers comply and be allowed to effectively operate their businesses without regulatory interference.

WE RECOMMEND

- 1. Support for tax incentives for telecommunication providers to install high speed internet service and increased wireless networks in rural areas not currently served.**
- 2. Support for legislation in the NYS Assembly and Senate authorizing Industrial Development Agencies (IDAs) to assist agricultural producers of New York State.**
- 3. Support for inclusion of the establishment of a specific funding source for agricultural development proposals considered within the current regional and state economic development plans.**
- 4. Support a continuing comprehensive review of regulatory restraints on agriculture and implementation of measures to eliminate unnecessary financial and administrative burdens on farmers.**
- 5. Revitalizing and maintaining the Hunts Point Terminal Market in New York State, to maximize sales opportunities for New York agriculture.**
- 6. Support for state sponsored economic development programs, tailored to provide significant investment in agricultural and rural business development projects.**
- 7. State support for agricultural projects must allow more flexible and expedited contract procedures and approval of re-appropriations to ensure completion of projects.**
- 8. Support for policies that encourage young people to enter or return to farming and that assist farm families in passing their farms to future generations.**
- 9. Support for programs, within the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, to provide grants to agricultural organizations and cooperatives that administer grower and processor supported marketing, research, education and agri-business development programs.**
- 10. Support efforts to reduce school and county property taxes through mandate relief.**
- 11. Support for the agricultural export market development efforts at the Departments of Agriculture and Markets, Economic Development, and USDA Foreign Agricultural Service.**
- 12. Support for a farm loan guarantee program that enables the State to work with Farm Credit and other commercial lenders to ensure adequate credit to farmers.**

13. Support for legislation that amends sections 301 and 308 of the Agriculture and Markets Law to include road-side stands and retail farm markets in the definition of a “farm operation”, and thus give farmers protection for their retail farm operations under the states right-to-farm laws.
14. That New York City laws, regulations and policies are favorable to New York agriculture and transportation.
15. Support for amending the Agriculture and Markets Law to include a definition of agricultural custom operator, and provide protections when the operator is working on lands within an agricultural district.
16. Support for the Governor’s proposal to triple the income exclusion for farmers and making the investment tax credit refundable.

STATE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT BRANDING PROGRAMS

Expansion of New York State agricultural marketing and promotion efforts would result in expanded economic opportunities and help to grow the state’s agriculture industry. A USDA analysis of the Jersey Fresh program revealed that for every \$1 invested in the marketing program, \$54 was returned to the local economy. A fully funded branding and marketing campaign would duplicate these extraordinary returns.

WE RECOMMEND

1. **Support for a New York State Agricultural Branding Program that includes the following:**
 - a. **Support for the New York State Grown & Certified Program, with additional funding to support the statewide marketing efforts of the program.**
 - b. **A matching funds program for promotion and marketing.**
 - c. **The program supports only New York-grown products.**
 - d. **An advisory committee of New York farmers that make sure the program stays focused on New York-grown products.**
 - e. **A Taste-NY store and kiosk program.**
 - f. **Continued support of the Pride of New York program.**
 - g. **Continued investment in state, national and international food marketing programs.**

NEW YORK FARM VIABILITY INSTITUTE

The New York Farm Viability Institute is an independent nonprofit organization led by an all-farmer board of directors. The Institute awards grants on a competitive basis to applied research and outreach education projects/services that work with farmers to improve profitability at the farm. The Institute works with farms of all sizes, production practices, and geographic locations within the State, as well as diverse commodities and sectors. Projects focus on the barriers that limit farm profitability and growth; and the organization fosters a working partnership among private, public, and academic entities. The results of this investment in the future of New York agriculture will enhance economic activity and jobs, provide greater access to safe food and renewable energy sources, foster the retention of farmland, and improve the quality of life in communities throughout the State. An appropriate annual State investment will help to ensure that the Institute can support high priority agricultural projects to benefit all New Yorkers.

WE RECOMMEND:

1. **Continued and expanded financial support from the State of New York to support the New York Farm Viability Institute and to fund projects that will address challenges facing NY’s farms.**
2. **Approval of re-appropriations for the New York Farm Viability Institute to allow projects to be completed.**

BIOTECHNOLOGY

Biotechnology is the management of biological systems to meet human needs. It offers many health, safety, environmental and economic benefits to consumers. Biotechnology for agriculture includes work in: the increased efficiency of plant and animal production; food processing and production; waste disposal; fermentation processes; biomass conversion to fuel and feed stocks; the biological controls of plant insects and diseases; and the diagnostics of plant and animal diseases.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Active state support of biotechnology derived industries, including bio fuels.**
- 2. Support for consumer, student, and faculty education about biotechnology; the technology, the science, and the role they play in our food system.**
- 3. Opposition to any prohibition on the use of a federally approved biotechnology derived crop, variety or product.**
- 4. Opposition to mandatory state and local labeling of products derived through the use of biotechnology.**
- 5. State support for the development of a value added agricultural biotechnology industry to create new opportunities for producers.**
- 6. Any unauthorized person or entity who willfully and knowingly damages or destroys an agricultural commodity, animal or facility be held financially (compensatory and punitive damages) and criminally liable for their actions.**
- 7. Opposition to mandatory federal labeling not required by the FDA or other federal agencies on food or agricultural products derived through biotechnology.**

NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND MARKETS

The Department of Agriculture and Markets plays a number of important roles for New York's agriculture and food industry, as well as for local and state economies. It serves our state through the marketing and promotion of agricultural products, developing and supporting agricultural businesses and ensuring food safety.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Ensuring appropriate funding for the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets to fulfill its essential functions, including staffing levels, product grading, inspection services, food safety and other essential functions. Funds should not be taken from one function to pay for another, compromising the Department's ability to meet those needs.**
- 2. Opposition to fee increases on all agribusiness related licensing and inspection programs.**
- 3. Given the importance of credible statistical information, continued support for state funding for the Division of Agricultural Statistics, and possible collaboration with Empire State Development, for expanded commodity specific data.**
- 4. Appropriate funding to the Department of Agriculture and Markets apiary research and inspection programs.**
- 5. Support for a thoughtful and thorough review of Article 20, The Agriculture Producers Security Program, by focusing on the impact of the law to all impacted commodities and marketing channels. We recommend all "food hubs" purchasing New York farm products be registered and bonded through the NYS Agricultural Producers Security Program and the USDA's Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act, if appropriate.**

6. The Department take a lead role in identifying issues related to cross border trade with Canada and assure laws and codes are enforced.
7. Support for a survey and an economic impact study of nurseries, dealers and all other green industries.
8. Support for a comprehensive effort at the state and federal level to deal with invasive pests and pathogens on a scientific basis so as to protect agricultural and horticultural industries.
9. Support for the Cooperative Agriculture Pest Survey Program (CAPS) within the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets.
10. Support for the Department of Agriculture and Markets' efforts to promote the use of renewable fuels from perennial and annual crops and to bring underutilized land into production.
11. Continued funding and staff support for the Wood Products Marketing Development Council.
12. Any food labeling laws and regulations at the state level be consistent with Federal regulations.
13. Adequate support and maintenance for the farm products grading and inspection services.
14. Support for a continued role in the development of new commodities and markets in the agricultural industry.
15. Support for initiatives for encouraging diversity and inclusion in all aspects of New York State agriculture.
16. Support for animal response teams.

EMPIRE STATE DEVELOPMENT

Empire State Development promotes the growth of the state's economy by encouraging business investment and job creation through loans, grants, tax credits, real estate development, marketing and other forms of investment. Agribusiness is one of the agency's 15 key strategic industries for investment and support.

WE RECOMMEND:

1. Continued and increased funding for the new Farmer Grant Program.
2. Support for regional council prioritization for agribusiness projects.
3. Prioritization by NYS Broadband Programs office towards rural broadband investments to support growth of agribusiness.
4. Continued support for agribusiness growth through Cornell AgriTech's Center of Excellence, tax credits, low interest loans, grants, marketing and Taste New York welcome centers.
5. Improved metrics for evaluation of agricultural projects under the REDC process include downstream job growth multipliers, and enable additional projects without strict jobs and matching requirements.
6. Improvement of the state's telecommunications for rural communities, which includes cellular service and broadband.

NEW YORK STATE FAIR

The State Fair has showcased agricultural exhibits and exhibitions of excellence throughout its 177-year history. This institution has been an important venue for bringing together farmers and the non-farm public and effectively building bridges between the two diverse communities. Most recently, Governor Cuomo launched the most significant reinvestment in the State Fair in well over 100 years and this effort is intended to transform the Fairgrounds into a vibrant 21st century venue that will serve the State of New York for many years to come.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Revitalization of the infrastructure in the agriculture youth and livestock sections of the fairgrounds that will showcase cutting edge agriculture industry practices, celebrate youth accomplishments in agriculture and recognize the work of those engaged in agriculture and agribusiness.**
- 2. Support for promotion of agriculture careers and opportunities.**
- 3. Support for recognition of farm workers, farmers and agriculturists through continued efforts and emphasis at the New York State Fair that highlight people engaged in the agriculture industry.**
- 4. Encouraging agriculturally-based organizational participation by offering discounted marketing/promotions/sales venues supporting state industry-based initiatives.**

FOOD SAFETY

U.S. consumers enjoy a food supply that is regarded as the safest and most plentiful in the world. We commend the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets for establishing the task force on food safety and security to review the safety of New York's food system from farm to store.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Continued support for the New York State food and dairy inspection, testing, outreach and regulatory programs of the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets to ensure the safety of all foods. For example, we support adequate funding to verify that imported dairy products comply with legal and regulatory requirements.**
- 2. Support for the continued development and implementation of the NYS Cattle Health Assurance Program, NYS Produce Quality Assurance Program, the NYS Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, NYS Sheep/Goat Health Assurance Program, Quality Milk Production Services and Pro-Dairy.**
- 3. Support for state and federal efforts together with trade associations to combat food and agriculture bio-terrorism.**
- 4. Increased resources for NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, Cornell Cooperative Extension and Cornell University, including the On-Farm Readiness Review Project, to assist farmers and food, feed and transportation businesses to comply with the requirements of the federal Food Safety and Modernization Act (FSMA).**
- 5. Support for the Produce Safety Alliance and the Institute for Food Safety at Cornell University AgriTech, to train farmers in good agricultural practices necessary to obtain appropriate food safety certifications.**

FERTILIZER, LIME AND SEED PROGRAMS

The Agriculture and Markets law regulates the sale and inspection of seeds, the sale of agricultural liming materials and the sale and analysis of commercial fertilizer.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Support adoption of the Association for American Plant and Fertilizer Control Officials standards.**
- 2. Legislation to amend the NYS Seed Law to establish a mandatory non-binding arbitration system to ease settlement of disputes between farmers and seed distributors.**
- 3. Support for the state pre-emption of regulatory control over seed and fertilizer laws and regulations.**
- 4. Adequate funding and staffing be provided to the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets to operate and enforce these programs.**
- 5. The Department of Agriculture and Markets be given authority to regulate products that are sold or bartered and claim a nutrient value such as the by-products of municipal solid waste and municipal sewage sludge.**
- 6. Continued support for making seed testing services available for regulatory and agricultural sampling purposes.**
- 7. The state not duplicate federal regulation of pesticide products applied as coatings to seeds.**

PLANT INDUSTRY PROGRAMS

The New York State Agriculture and Markets law regulates the inspection of wholesale nurseries, plant shipping and administration of plant quarantines. The law also authorizes the Department to register nursery growers and dealers. Without the program of the Division of Plant Industry, agriculture and the environment of New York are at risk from exotic and potentially invasive pestilence that affect plants, plant product and real property values. Without this surveillance, consumers and landowners would not be protected and legitimate growers and dealers would be at a disadvantage in the marketplace.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Continued support for an early warning notification system for all plant pests and diseases. All agricultural industries, especially registered greenhouses, nurseries and plant dealers should have access to plant pest issues on a real-time basis. Further, we support a line on registrations and renewals for the voluntary submission of email addresses.**
- 2. Support for an active plant industry advisory council in the Department of Agriculture and Markets to meet at least annually.**
- 3. Effective funding levels for plant programs and inspection services.**
- 4. Adequate resources be provided to establish taxonomic and diagnostic support to assist in timely identification of plant pests and plants – considered invasive pests themselves.**
- 5. Adequate resources for the Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey (CAPS) for the early detection of exotic plant pests and pests of “export” significance and to administer phytosanitary certificates that enhance opportunities for New York products (ie. fruits, vegetables, nursery stock) in new domestic and foreign markets.**
- 6. Support for the State’s Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey (CAPS) to “bundle surveys” based on a common factor, such as business, site, habitat, urban – rural – significant ecological communities, etc., that makes biological, environmental, and/or economic sense in the state.**

7. **Support for the State’s Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey (CAPS) to maintain and enhance outreach to stakeholders and cooperators so as to improve existing or new survey initiatives at the same time communicating risks and needs to land relevant industries, management personnel, and the public.**
8. **Support continued state funding for the Plum Pox Virus program.**
9. **Strategic and coordinated efforts to control with, in some cases the aim of elimination of invasive species and other pests, pathogens and plants, including, but not limited to Asian Longhorn Beetle, Brown Marmorated Stink Bug, European Crane Fly, Allium Leaf Miner, Q Biotype White Fly, the Sirex Woodwasp, *Phytophthora capsici*, Emerald ash borer, Sudden Oak Death (*Phytophthora ramorum*), Spotted Wing Drosophila, Swede Midge, Spotted Lanternfly, Balsam and Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, European Cherry Fruit Fly, Light Brown Peppered Moth, Southern Pine Beetle and Bloat Nematode on garlic.**
10. **Live plant, transplants, Christmas trees, and cut flower shipments from Canada be subject to the same standards as those imposed on interstate plant shipments by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets and that the standards be vigorously enforced.**
11. **The NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets inspect and ban shipments of “starts” that are imported into the state that are found to be contaminated by disease.**

IN-LAND PORT

An in-land port to transport goods produced in New York and surrounding regions has been supported and approved by NYS and federal government to be created in the Syracuse, NY area. The in-land port will provide a cost effective and competitive railway transport system to allow agriculture products be collected, stored and shipped to the Port of New York or New Jersey for overseas export opportunities. No other in-land port exists in the northeast United States. Creating the concept in Syracuse, NY will create jobs, increase sales and provide increased production demand for all types of agriculture products in the region for the foreseeable future.

WE RECOMMEND:

1. **Support for the construction of an in-land port initiative.**
2. **Support to increase the competitiveness for New York State agriculture products.**
3. **Support to provide capital spending on infrastructure to help organize warehousing near railway services in the in-land port for NYS products, including agriculture.**
4. **Support for creating export opportunities for New York State agriculture products utilizing the in-land port.**

NEW YORK STATE SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAM

Child hunger is often associated with lower grades, higher rate of absenteeism, repeating a grade, and an inability to focus among students, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. For many children, the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program offer the best opportunity to receive a regular nutritious meal. Yet, while nearly 60 percent of students in New York public schools are currently eligible to receive a free or reduced price breakfast at school, only 34 percent of these students eat breakfast on any given day, according to the New York State Education Department.

WE RECOMMEND:

1. **Continued support for the “No Student Goes Hungry Program” by maintaining the reimbursement rate for lunch meals served at \$0.25/meal for any school district purchasing at least 30% ingredients sourced from New York State farms, and expand the program to other school meals.**

2. We support incentivizing increased spending of K-12 breakfast meal dollars on New York products.
3. Support for the farm to school grants program, to assist schools in purchasing New York products.
4. Support for the creation of a Regional Farm to School Coordinator program to help schools buy more New York products from farmers.
5. All types of real™ milk are essential and part of the USDA My Plate Nutrition Guide. All types of milk are recognized and allowed as part of the My Plate Guide for good nutrition. Schools should be allowed to sell all types of real™ milk and no restrictions should be placed on calories per serving size, flavors or containers.
6. New York State schools procure New York State concord grape products, dairy and all other New York produced products to serve in schools.
7. Support for expanding the New York Thursdays Program statewide.

----- NYS AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRIES -----

ALPACA INDUSTRY

The alpaca industry in New York State and nationally has continued to grow despite an overall decline in alpaca farms. The United States herd size is approximately 192,000 registered alpaca. New York has the 7th highest herd population in the U.S. (13,023 registered alpaca). The alpaca industry supports farm labor, veterinary practices, agricultural supplies, feed and hay production, and livestock health supplies. The industry is actively involved in many farm markets and fiber festivals.

As the alpaca industry evolves from a predominately breeder model into a fiber model, we support its growth to more of a livestock model, including marketing of fiber, meat, fertilizer and agritourism.

WE RECOMMEND:

1. Continued support for the alpaca farming industry being recognized as a legitimate farming industry, and not be labeled as exotic species or hobby/pet farm.
2. Opposing any legislation that would redefine alpaca as anything but livestock.
3. Support for research and educational programs that would improve herd health and productivity, especially with parasite education, treatment and identification.

APPLE AND APPLE PRODUCTS

The apple industry is a vital part of New York State agriculture, and apple production and apple products are of major importance to the state economy.

WE RECOMMEND:

1. The State make a long term financial commitment to the apple industry by funding the New York Apple Association and the Apple Research and Development Funds separate annual line items in the New York State budget.
2. Increased support to the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets' Regulatory Inspection Division to enforce New York State package labeling laws as they relate to misbranding of apple varieties.

- 3. The State match research funds collected from the industry. Total funding levels should reflect the 5-year average of collections by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets' Regulatory Inspection Division.**
- 4. Support for the growing hard cider industry.**

BERRY INDUSTRY

The expansion of the strong strawberry industry in New York State is now being joined by blueberries, raspberries and blackberries. In order to grow these new markets, consumer education and promotion is necessary.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. The State to invest in the promotion of consumer education of both the nutritional and seasonality of these berry products.**
- 2. Continued support for the research programs at Cornell to develop new varieties, insect and disease resistance in berry crops.**
- 3. Continue support for research on the Spotted Wing Drosophila control.**
- 4. Support for a New York State Berry Industry Survey.**

BREWING INDUSTRY

Before COVID-19, the New York State craft brewing industry was seeing historic growth over the past 5 years and now ranks 2nd in overall number of breweries of 484 and 3rd in economic impact in the entire country (\$5.4 billion), but there is still room to grow and now is the time to ensure that growth continues in a constructive, responsible and inclusive way. Because of COVID-19, New Yorkers stepped up to support their local craft breweries and were allowed to have beer shipped and delivered to their homes for the first time, they embraced those temporary privileges fully and now want those to become permanent. We request renewed marketing funding to help the New York State Brewers Association focus on helping breweries recover from this pandemic and continue the growth and economic impact in our state pre-COVID. Hops and barley research are critical to our growth as well, without real research funding, those industries will grow stagnant over time and eventually decline.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Continued funding support for marketing New York State beer to New Yorkers that will further support growing craft and farm brewing in our state.**
- 2. Increased research funding for the hops and barley industries in New York State to further support the brewing industry in our state and beyond.**
- 3. Developing programs to become more inclusive to minority groups interested in craft beer.**
- 4. No further increase in excise taxes.**
- 5. Allow direct-to-consumer shipping and home delivery for the craft beer, cider and distilled spirits industries.**
- 6. Separating wine and craft beverage industries as agricultural and manufacturing when mandating further Covid/pandemic restrictions on the restaurant and bar industries.**

CANNABIS

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Funding research for best agronomic practices or other applications for all cannabis species under .03 THC at Cornell University or other agricultural colleges in New York State.**
- 2. If legalized, support for the agricultural industry having an active role in the growth and production of cannabis and also the development and implementation of an adult use cannabis program in New York State.**
- 3. If legalized, support for the creation of a statewide advisory committee overseeing the production of cannabis, with seats reserved for farmers.**
- 4. Cannabis grown for medical purposes be treated as a legitimate agricultural crop.**
- 5. Support for ensuring NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets has adequate staff to test THC levels.**
- 6. Support for requiring buyers of hemp to be licensed and bonded under New York regulations.**
- 7. NYS should respect the farmer's right to grow and sell hemp flower directly to consumers, at farmers markets and other retail locations.**

CHRISTMAS TREE INDUSTRY

The estimated value of New York State's cut-tree crop is \$13.8 million. Retail sales of NYS-grown Christmas trees and evergreen products generate nearly \$1 million in sales tax revenues annually. There are approximately 793 Christmas tree farms in New York State. As such, NYS is ranked as the fourth largest producer of real Christmas trees in the nation.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Support for legislation that would allow cut evergreen trees to be displayed inside places of public assembly and governmental facilities in order to demonstrate to consumers that real trees are safe for home use.**
- 2. The State continue a financial commitment to the real tree industry by funding a line item in the NYS budget for marketing, education, and promotion activities as proposed by the Christmas Tree Farmers Association of NY.**
- 3. Continued support for research and extension programs at Cornell, SUNY-ESF and SUNY-Cobleskill related to all aspects of Christmas tree farming, effective pest management, weed control, and fertilization practices; and identifying new Christmas tree varieties that will thrive in NYS.**
- 4. Support for creation of a screening program for Balsam Woolly Adelgid.**

DAIRY INDUSTRY

New York's dairy farms are significant economic engines for their communities and fellow agriculture farms supplying a strong processing and manufacturing presence throughout the state. New York is the 3rd largest milk producing state in the country. We rank as the nation's largest manufacturer of yogurt, cottage cheese, and sour cream. New York's thriving dairy farms provide half of all agriculture receipts in the state at a value of over \$2.6 billion annually. The entire dairy industry from farm, to processor, to consumer, creates opportunities for new jobs, businesses, ancillary supplier companies and investment in all areas of the state.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Support for policies that promote and further the economic development and viability of all facets of the New York State dairy industry.**
- 2. Support for the New York State Milk Marketing Advisory Council to address key issues of the State's dairy industry as stipulated in section 254-a, Article 21, Milk Control law.**
- 3. All types of real™ milk are essential and part of the USDA My Plate Nutrition Guide. All types of milk are recognized and allowed as part of the My Plate Guide for good nutrition. Schools should be allowed to sell all types of real™ milk and no restrictions should be placed on calories per serving size, flavors or containers.**
- 4. Oppose changes in state laws or regulations that would expand the current raw milk certification program.**
- 5. Repeal of Agriculture and Markets milk licensing laws that allow any monthly minimum quantity exclusions to any person transporting milk for resale.**
- 6. Support for efforts to secure research dollars to develop new food ingredient uses for acid whey and dairy byproducts, and provide guidance to farmers and processors on appropriate land application strategies and digestion.**
- 7. Support for the *National Action Plan for Combating Antibiotic-resistant Bacteria*. Quality Milk Production Services (QMPS) is in need of additional funding to promote and instruct dairy producers on the use of pathogen based therapy in the treatment of mastitis. This program will result in significant reductions in antibiotic use and significantly increased revenue for milk producers.**

EQUINE INDUSTRY

Encompassing racing, breeding, showing, sales and recreational aspects, the equine industry is vital to New York State agriculture and New York State's economy. New York State ranks 16th among the states in its number of horses. The current value of New York's 200,000 equine currently residing on farms and stables, is likely over \$2 billion and those equine contribute over \$1.5 billion to the State's economy with a multiplier of about 2 times, it is incumbent that our State provide a safe and viable economic platform to thrive. As such, it supports the production of hay, feed and other agribusinesses, thereby helping protect and retain farmland throughout the state.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Re-establishment of the NYS Horse Health Assurance Program (NYSHHAP).**
- 2. Support the establishment of a New York State Horse Park as an economic engine for the state.**
- 3. Opposition to legislation which explicitly or implicitly removes any equine from farm animal classifications and defines them as companion animals.**

FLORICULTURE INDUSTRY

The current USDA year book on agriculture shows New York in 12th place nationally. The wholesale value of Floriculture crops grown in New York State is \$93,352 million with 210 greenhouse growers registered in the state.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Support for NY DEC to make accommodations for out of state seminars that offer pesticide credits for private certified applicators be recognized in New York. There are several conferences offered in neighboring states attended by our growers and NYSDEC does not recognize the credits, even when the same program with the same speakers are given in-state.**
- 2. Support for advertising and promotion to recognize that New York flower farmers are part of the New York Grown and Certified program and Taste of New York.**
- 3). Floriculture continue to be considered an essential industry during times of pandemic and other unsettling circumstances.**

GRAPE AND WINE PRODUCTS

Grape growing is a vital part of New York's agriculture, and wine and grape products are of major importance to the state's economy, which generates over \$6.5 billion in economic activity and supports 71,000 jobs. New York State has made great strides in the support of wine and grapes, and the continuing promotion of grape and wine products is essential to continued growth of the industry and its ability to contribute to New York's economy.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Continued funding for the New York Wine and Grape Foundation to support promotion and research.**
- 2. Funding for research to combat the spread of the Asian spotted lanternfly.**
- 3. No further increase in the excise tax.**
- 4. Support for legislation allowing the sale of wine in retail food markets.**
- 5. Continued support of virus testing of grapes, small fruit and nursery stock of Vitis at Cornell AgriTech; and establish virus indexing programs for nursery stock and small fruits.**
- 6. Seek to lower Canadian provincial tariffs on New York wines imported by Canadian tourists visiting New York wine regions.**
- 7. Opposition to "at rest" and similar legislation which impedes and restricts the marketing of wine in New York State.**
- 8. New York State schools procure New York State concord grape products to serve in schools.**
- 9. Support for supplemental funding for a sustainability certification program.**
- 10. Opposition to expansion of the Bottle Deposit Bottle Bill.**
- 11. Separating wine and craft beverage industries as agricultural and manufacturing when mandating further Covid/pandemic restrictions on the restaurant and bar industries.**

HOP INDUSTRY

The hop industry in New York is growing to meet the demand of craft brewers in New York and the Northeast with nearly 500 acres and a farm gate value of \$4,000,000 that is increasing annually. There is a critical need for research and Extension programs to support the \$10,000,000 investment that growers have made over the last 8 years. There is a strong demand from the 400+ craft brewers in the state producing over 1 million barrels/year.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Support for marketing New York State hops that will further support New York grown craft and farm brewing in our state.**
- 2. The state provide funding for a hop variety breeding program through Cornell AgriTech.**
- 3. The state continue to support the beer ingredient initiative for hops.**
- 4. Continue support of hops being included in the New York Grown and Certified Program for beer ingredients.**
- 5. Funding for research to combat the spread of the Asian spotted lanternfly.**
- 6. Support for additional funding for hops research, as part of Cornell's Hops Research Program.**

MAPLE INDUSTRY

The maple industry in New York State contributes about \$32 million to the state's rural economy annually. Industry promotions and educational programs emphasize the unique features of maple products, the rich history of maple syrup-making, the authenticity and artisanal nature of their sugar operations, and the contribution which the industry makes to agri-tourism and to the quality of life for all New Yorkers.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Continued funding to assist with the New York Maple Specialist position at Cornell.**
- 2. Support for the development of standards and guidelines for issuance of multi-year permits, that would provide for tapping maple trees on forested lands owned by the state of NY by private producers with existing operations. DEC should convene a meeting between maple producers and conservation easement holders and facilitate a discussion on tapping of trees on conserved lands.**
- 3. Maple tree orchards should be explicitly defined as agricultural lands analogous to orchards and vineyards and that sugar houses are recognized as agricultural buildings.**
- 4. Continued financial support for the Cornell Maple Program while the endowment fund campaign proceeds.**
- 5. Financial support for research on population controls, monitoring and eradication of spotted lanternfly, Asian longhorned beetle and the forest tent caterpillar.**
- 6. Encourage NYSERDA to recognize the energy efficiency opportunities of reverse osmosis (RO) in maple production and provide matching funding for producers' upgrades to new technology; the state Ag Development Fund should help producers who want to become more profitable through the installation and operation of RO equipment.**

POTATO INDUSTRY

In the past there have been severe outbreaks of Potato Late Blight in several New York potato production areas.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Increased support for an “Action Plan” to deal with Potato Late Blight (*Phytophthora infestans*).**
- 2. The Department of Agriculture and Markets seek federal support and funding for New York scientists and researchers working against this global disease.**
- 3. Support the following organizations continuing to work together to develop strategies for combating Potato Late Blight (*Phytophthora infestans*): NYS Departments of Agriculture and Markets and Environmental Conservation, Empire State Potato Growers, USDA, EPA, Cornell University, the National Potato Council and others.**
- 4. Continued and increased support for the Golden Nematode control program-with emphasis on the accelerated development and distribution of all strains of RO2 potato varieties and related programs/activities conducted at the Uhlein Farm, Lake Placid, New York.**

SHEEP INDUSTRY

The sheep industry in NYS continues to grow despite a national declining trend – NYS is one of only 4 states in the US in which there is an increase in both the number of sheep and in the number of sheep farmers. NYS ranks 13th in the US in lamb, wool, and sheep dairy production combined. As such, it supports the production of hay, feed, and other agribusinesses; and is keeping farmland in production across the state. With relatively low costs of entry and small acreage requirements, sheep farming is also attracting many young and beginning farmers.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Support for research and marketing programs that enable producers to take advantage of consumer demand and available distribution systems for locally-produced foods including sheep dairy products and lamb.**
- 2. Continued support and promotion of the New York State Sheep/Goat Health Assurance Program (NYSSGHAP) to increase the herd’s/flock’s health, productivity and profitability, assure food safety, public health, and consumer confidence in animal agriculture and promote environmental stewardship.**
- 3. Support for New York State Fair Sheep Barn and Wool Center re-development. Renovations would allow programming to expand and, as a result, increase awareness of fair goers as to the value NYS’s sheep industry adds to their lives and to the state’s economy.**
- 4. Support for collaborative research and marketing projects being undertaken through partnerships among the Empire Sheep Producers Association, individual farms and fiber processing facilities, colleges and universities. These initiatives will link fashion and interior designers with NYS-sourced, milled, and manufactured wool products to meet consumer demand for local farm products.**

TURFGRASS INDUSTRY

The NYS turfgrass industry is large and multi-faceted. It serves the functional and recreational demands of the populace, beautifies the landscape and greatly improves the quality of life for citizens. The turfgrass industry contributes \$5.1 billion to the state economy. Increasing consumer demand on turf managers for perfection has coincided with increased public awareness of environmental protection. Turf managers require research to equip them to meet stringent demands of consumers while maintaining the ideals of environmental stewardship.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. The State continue a financial commitment to the turfgrass industry by funding an annual line item in the NYS budget to the Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Fund for research, outreach and education.**
- 2. During a pandemic, golf course maintenance and residential/commercial lawn care should be considered essential services.**
- 3. Support for state funding to improve turfgrass research facilities to ensure the continuation of cutting edge research beneficial to the industry.**
- 4. Support for an updated Turfgrass Survey.**

VEGETABLE INDUSTRY

New York State has a dynamic vegetable industry comprised of both fresh and processing vegetable growers. Public policy efforts should be dedicated towards continuing the growth of this industry by capitalizing on recent consumer interest in locally grown and healthy eating, and support of related processing and distribution channels.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Support funding for research in controlling and fighting Phytophthora Blight and Downy Mildew as a line item in NYS Budget.**
- 2. Adequate support for research into vegetable diseases, weed control and other pests.**
- 3. Adequate support for efforts to increase New York grown vegetable consumption through state and local institutions.**
- 4. Support refilling and maintaining key faculty and extension positions at Cornell.**
- 5. Adequate support for research on new herbicide active ingredients to reduce reliance on older less environmentally friendly products.**

----- AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS CLIMATE -----

AGRICULTURAL TRADE ISSUES

In an international marketplace, trade plays an essential role in all agricultural markets today. While trade agreements and relationships are maintained on a federal level, there remain actions that the state can undertake to encourage healthy trade relations for New York farmers.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. The state support efforts to resolve trade issues that negatively impact New York agricultural industries.**
- 2. New York State take immediate, appropriate and legal action available to ensure all Canadian goods entering the U.S. meet and abide by the strict requirements set forth in all federal trade agreements and**

New York State law in response to unfair trade practices being imposed on U.S. goods entering Canada by the Canadian government.

- 3. The state consider the needs of all agricultural commodities during trade negotiations and disputes.**
- 4. The Department take a lead role in identifying issues related to cross border trade with Canada and assure laws and codes are enforced.**
- 5. Support for rapid resolution of current trade disputes and return to multinational trade agreements.**
- 6. Support to ensure all commercial vehicles coming from Canada comply with new electronic tolling systems.**

ENERGY

The energy problem facing the state and nation requires conservation and the development of alternate renewable energy sources. The northeast is very dependent upon energy supplies from outside the region. Energy plans should emphasize conservation, yet not inequitably burden agriculture with increased energy costs. Biofuels are an important domestic source of renewable energy and can be used as a clean fuel in vehicles (E85).

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Public policy guiding the development of large-scale solar installations that incentivizes siting away from actively farmed lands and high-quality agricultural soils. Further, actively farmed lands and those containing soils Classifications 1-4 should be avoided for solar installations whether in an agricultural district or not.**
- 2. Establishment of best practices guidelines for farmers and large-scale developers that will assist in finding the most suitable installation locations that minimizes impact on agricultural activities and soils. Such BMPS when adopted through public policy can provide an expedited review process for developers on farmland.**
- 3. Support for research and incentives that provide proof of concept for Agrivoltaics in New York or Dual Use of the same parcel for solar and bonafide agriculture, including crops and livestock.**
- 4. Support for prioritizing siting on rooftops and previously disturbed lands such as brownfields and landfills through incentives first before siting on greenfields.**
- 5. Establishment of a low carbon fuel standard in New York that creates market incentives to develop and grow renewable natural gas production on New York dairy farms.**
- 6. Requiring that power companies ensure the infrastructure is in place to encourage economic development.**
- 7. The executive and legislative branches review and reduce excessive taxes on utility bills.**
- 8. State government support of the use of E85 in New York State by:**
 - a) encouraging the NYS Office of General Services and all authorities to include E85 vehicles/ fuel in its bid contracts,**
 - b) working with farmers, ethanol suppliers/distributors, state agencies, authorities and municipalities to target sites for infrastructure development to support agency fleets large enough to create sufficient demand for E85.**
- 9. Support for NYSERDA's Agricultural Energy Efficiency Program.**
- 10.-Support for bio-fuel, solar and wind producer tax incentives and other measures to promote the use of renewable energy.**
- 11. Support for efforts to establish ethanol and biodiesel production facilities in New York.**
- 12. Support for tax credits to incentivize the establishment of necessary infrastructure for providing biofuels to the general public.**
- 13. Support for a property tax credit to offset land preparation costs for growing energy feedstocks.**

14. Electricity produced by on-farm anaerobic digester generators (ADGs) should be valued at a rate that sustains current facilities and incentivizes growth. Rules governing demand charges, imposed on farms with anaerobic digesters, should reflect the consistent high performance level of ADG power when determining the monthly demand charge.

15. Support of drilling for natural gas, so long as appropriate safeguards for drinking and ground water are developed and appropriate, and strict enforcement/oversight is conducted by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation.

16. Support for continued landowner operation of existing noncommercial self-use gas wells in compliance with existing regulations.

17. Support for compensation for the value of methane destroyed as a function of generating renewable energy from anaerobic digesters (ADGs). Such compensation would complement the current net metering or Value of Distributed Resources (VDER) programs by compensating ADGs for the environmental attribute of reducing methane, a greenhouse gas 34 times more potent than carbon dioxide.

REAL PROPERTY TAXATION

Property taxation places an inequitable burden on the farm community in New York. Inequalities in the application of the property tax on farms and the services it funds need to be addressed. Ownership of property is not an equitable measurement of one's ability to pay taxes, nor does it reflect the owner's obligation or demand for public services.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Support for meaningful mandate relief for local governments and school districts to give them the flexibility to control spending to meet the annual property tax cap.**
- 2. Adequate and equitable state funding of rural school districts.**
- 3. Strengthening the staff at the agricultural assessment unit currently within the Department of Tax and Finance. Further, we support the relocation of the unit to the Department of Agriculture and Markets.**
- 4. Town assessors and revaluation contractors receive training to ensure farm properties be assessed at their current use and not be assessed a value at their highest and best use.**
- 5. Support for an adequately funded and fully appointed Governor's Advisory Council on Agriculture. Further, we recommend that the Council assess the current agricultural assessment formula and make recommendations that will enhance the program's responsiveness to New York farmers.**
- 6. Local taxing jurisdictions be required to tax farm property based on agricultural assessment values. Further, farmland should be exempt from fire district assessments.**
- 7. Town assessors accept a letter from tax professionals when verifying farm income to qualify for an ag assessment.**

FARMLAND PROTECTION AND RETENTION

To ensure that New York State's agricultural economy thrives, agricultural lands must be protected from urban encroachment and other threats. Profitability and agricultural economic development are key to keeping farmland in production.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. High quality agricultural soils should be considered "irreplaceable" and receive similar protection as wetlands in context to infrastructure siting by utilities. These soils should also be lower priority, or**

disincentivized, for hosting solar energy projects, particularly large scale projects, through state and local policy.

2. A comprehensive examination of the Eminent Domain Procedures Law to ensure that government is able to carry out its duty and responsibility to the people of the State while respecting and balancing individual rights.
3. Support for requiring an agricultural impact statement when any land, within an agricultural district, is considered for taking under eminent domain.
4. Increase funding for farmland protection within the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF).
5. Support for a streamlined process at the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets that accelerates the timeline from PDR project approval to landowner payment from the EPF.
6. Support for legislation creating a tax credit to land owners who sell or rent their agricultural land to a beginning or new farmer.

TRANSPORTATION AND HIGHWAY SAFETY

Maintaining a modern transportation infrastructure and dealing with highway safety problems facing New York are of importance and concern for farmers and agribusiness.

WE RECOMMEND:

1. Support development of a NYS Department of Transportation plan to maintain appropriate bridges, in order for farmers to be able to move their farm equipment and transport their farm commodities to the marketplace.
2. Opposition to any state, city or municipal ordinance, law, regulation or mandate which would prohibit distribution using public roadways of any consumable food product at any time of day or night to any processing, manufacturing, distribution, wholesale, retail, foodservice, school, hospital and nursing home locations, where consumers purchase or are provided food.
3. Opposition to new policies and regulations that would prohibit legal transportation of goods by privately owned commercial large trucks of any size on New York State roadways.
4. During travel bans, vehicles associated with transporting, processing or distributing perishable agricultural products should be given priority to roads, following vehicles critical to public safety and well-being.
5. That the appropriate state agencies work with agriculture to analyze railroad abandonments/mergers.
6. Continue the New York State Department of Transportation plans for the preservation of rail services essential to agriculture.
7. Support for the Consolidated Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS), NYS Highway Maintenance or any new program for highway improvements.
8. Roadside safety inspections conducted by local law enforcement agencies in cooperation with the New York State Department of Transportation be encouraged to use Commercial Vehicle Safety Association (CVSA) identification stickers as a sign of a vehicle's record of roadside inspection and compliance.
9. Agricultural equipment be governed by the same regulations governing bulk agricultural commodity implements provided they adhere to the Slow Moving Vehicle (SMV) law.
10. Opposition to NYS Thruway toll increases for commercial vehicles.
11. Support for reduced tolls on designated trucks hauling agricultural products across NYS and NYC toll roads, toll bridges and tunnels.
12. Support for exempting self-propelled agricultural equipment for Highway Use Tax (HUT), NYS inspection and any DMV registration other than as special-commercial.
13. Support for an agricultural exemption for the electronic logging device.

14. Support for an amendment to the Vehicle and Traffic Law changing the definition of motor vehicles as it relates to farm tractors and self-propelled agriculture equipment from used “exclusively” to used “primarily” for agricultural purposes.

----- AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND EXTENSION -----

NYS COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND LIFE SCIENCES

The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CAL S) at Cornell University is one of four statutory colleges supporting the land grant mission in New York State. CAL S role is to support agriculture and food systems research and innovation, nutrition, life and social sciences, and, as statewide administrators of the Cornell Cooperative Extension system, ensure the transmission of research-based knowledge into New York communities. CAL S is consistently ranked in the top five in the world among global research universities, for scientific discovery and teaching in the area of plant and animal sciences. This critical expertise directly supports the New York State farm and food industries.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. A substantial increase in SUNY operational funds specific to the land grant mission and the statutory colleges, to ensure that CAL S can refill, maintain, and hire key faculty to aid in teaching, research, and extension of knowledge.**
- 2. Additional state support to CAL S to maintain research farm locations critical to providing cutting edge research and development to New York State farmers, such as Cornell AgriTech in Geneva, the Hudson Valley Research Lab, etc.**
- 3. An increase in SUNY capital funding specifically to support critical infrastructure needs in the farm, food processing and craft beverage areas, as well as student research and teaching infrastructure.**
- 4. Establishment of a Plant Sciences Innovation Center at Cornell University, catalyzing new innovations in plant metabolomics for better plant varieties and serving as an incubator for new plant-based businesses.**
- 5. Support for the Northeast Center for Excellence for Vector Borne Diseases at Cornell.**

**SUNY COLLEGES OF AGRICULTURE AND TECHNOLOGY
AND COMMUNITY COLLEGES WITH AGRICULTURE RELATED PROGRAMS**

The global food system is rapidly changing and so is the demand for professionals who understand the processes, businesses and policies from farm to plate all over the world. The green industries and outdoor living are of increasing economic importance to the state. The Agricultural and Technical Colleges and community colleges within the State University of New York (SUNY) system are uniquely suited to producing these professionals because of their commitment to market-relevant, experiential education. These colleges require strong financial and administrative support from the SUNY system in order to continue to cultivate innovation through intimate exposure to real-world challenges that farm, food businesses and the green industries face and their students live and learn among state-of-the-art technology and facilities.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Increased SUNY Capital Funding targeted specifically toward agricultural and food processing program equipment critical to the maintenance of existing programs and development of new agriculture technology programs.**

- 2. Adequate SUNY funding for academic personnel to support agriculture technology and agricultural education programs.**
- 3. Increased funding that better connects youth with higher education and career pathways in agriculture by developing more educational opportunities, such as the Agricultural P-Tech program, throughout New York State.**
- 4. Support for strengthening the connections of college agricultural programs with New York State agricultural industries and organizations (ie: John Deere, CAT, PAS) to ensure the development of an appropriately trained workforce.**

NEW YORK STATE VETERINARY DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY

Health and well-being of the livestock sector, which represents over 70% of our agriculture industry in New York State, are protected by services solely provided by the Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory at the New York State College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University. Primary funding for the laboratory is through the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets. Services provided by the Diagnostic Laboratory make possible the diagnosis, control, suppression, eradication and prevention of diseases of all animals of the state.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Increasing the budget allocation for the New York State Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (NYSVDL) programs to meet current and future operational needs. Programs include services that provide rapid and accurate detection and characterization of highly infectious diseases like foot and mouth disease, African swine fever and classical swine fever; animal diseases that also may affect humans like SARS-CoV-2, avian influenza, Salmonella Dublin infection, and Lyme disease; and diseases that year after year cause high economic losses like mastitis addressed by Quality Milk Production Services (QMPS) and Johne's disease in dairy cows that also are addressed within the NYS Cattle Health Assurance Program (NYSCHAP). The NYSVDL also detects and measures antimicrobial resistance in disease agents, helps reduce usage of antibiotics in food production (QMPS), and characterizes SARS-CoV-2 from animals and humans and animal influenza isolates from animals from New York State for early detection of introduction and mutations of viruses that endanger human and animal populations.**
- 2. Funding the Forensics Program at the NYSVDL in response to a significant increase in forensic necropsies with extensive case workup under rigorous chain of custody requiring determination of cause, manner and mechanism of death, timing of injuries and degree of suffering, with review of police reports, statements of witnesses, crime scene photographs; post mortem radiographs and toxicology reports.**
- 3. Funding the Wildlife Rabies Vaccination program that protects livestock, pets and humans from spillover of the lethal rabies virus from wildlife.**

NEW YORK STATE COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

It is important that the New York livestock and equine industries remain competitive through the improvement of animal health and productivity. There is a need to enhance veterinary education on livestock, particularly dairy cattle, equine and regulatory medicine and provide veterinary practitioners for rural communities. Class size at the College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell is increasing to fulfill those needs.

The Summer Dairy Institute (SDI) at Cornell University offers fourth year veterinary students and recent graduates an intensive six week course in advanced production medicine methods. Academic support comes from Cornell University, including CALS, Pro-Dairy and Cornell Cooperative Extension, other universities and guest faculty. The SDI is supported financially by grants, scholarships, contributions from the industry and participants.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Support for increased operating funds for the College of Veterinary Medicine to accommodate increased class size. Particular emphasis will be placed on graduating a larger number of veterinarians to serve the needs of New York State animal agriculture industries and rural communities.**
- 2. Support for funding for the Summer Dairy Institute, to enhance education on dairy cattle production medicine.**
- 3. Support for legislation to amend the New York State Education Law to create a large animal rural veterinary education loan forgiveness program.**
- 4. Broad based funding for a residence training program in diagnostic medicine at the New York State Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory.**

THE CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SYSTEM

Cornell Cooperative Extension is a unique partnership of county, state, and federal municipalities coupled with the strengths of Cornell University's research and teaching capacity. Designed to transmit research-based knowledge into local communities, Cornell Cooperative Extension plays a critical role in fostering farm and food economic development, agricultural youth development through 4-H, and community betterment in the form of nutrition and energy education.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. An increase in County Law 224 funding in the SUNY budget, which would ensure that local extensions receive a much needed financial boost.**
- 2. Maintaining and increasing County Law 224b funding in the SUNY budget, to assist in direct support for the operations of regional farm teams and Harvest NY extension personnel.**
- 3. Maintaining and financially supporting the regional team approach to extension, ensuring that farmers have access to well qualified experts in different commodity areas of importance to New York agriculture.**
- 4. Support for the 4-H youth development program, and locally based agriculture in the classroom educators to provide experiential learning in agriculture and the STEM disciplines directly in the classrooms.**

PRO-DAIRY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM OF CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

The Pro-Dairy Management Program is an important resource for continuing education and individualized feedback and assistance including bilingual courses for all dairy farm workers and owners. Maintaining and improving this critical New York State asset is crucial for ensuring affordable access to continuing education in areas of animal agriculture that emphasize proactive and preventive approaches to cattle health issues as a means to ensure a safe milk and meat supply, and also in areas of sustainable agriculture such as waste handling/treatment systems and on-farm climate adaptation strategies aimed at mitigating today's environmental challenges. Education is provided in animal welfare, calf and cow nutrition and feed management, safe and clean management of the milking parlor and cattle environment to avoid mastitis that also helps reduce antimicrobial usage, and in addition Pro-Dairy has demonstrated timely adaptability by providing education on emerging issues through its offering of vital information for dairies managing cattle and financial stress during a pandemic. Pro-Dairy has worked with farm managers to improve New York dairy industry's competitive position through improved management and greater technical skills resulting in cost savings and additional milk production per cow.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Increased funding for the Pro-Dairy and Dairy Advancement program.**

CORNELL AGRITECH AT THE NEW YORK STATE AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION

The New York State Agricultural Experiment Station is a component of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Cornell that has a unique capacity for conducting research and extension that directly impact the NY state economy. Programs focus on expanding food systems through development of new fruit and vegetable varieties, improving crop production practices, managing devastating pests and diseases and assisting state farm and food businesses in production of safe and profitable value-added products.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. The establishment of an annual capital fund for Cornell AgriTech to ensure that land grant research and development farm, laboratory and building infrastructure is revitalized and modernized to meet New York farm and food system needs.**
- 2. Continued support for the Center of Excellence in Food and Agriculture Innovation at Cornell AgriTech, with a focus on increasing economic opportunities throughout New York State.**
- 3. Support for the Grow-NY Prize competition, designed to encourage an innovation ecosystem in New York agriculture.**
- 4. Support for the establishment of an agritech accelerator program, and start-up incubator space at Cornell AgriTech.**

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

Ag education programs in NYS play five important roles - public education on farming practices, K-12 education, college and university ag science programs, preparation and certification of ag teachers, and ag workforce education and leadership development. There is a growing need to explain agriculture and food systems to the general public and to youth as fewer people live on or near farms. There are about 211 secondary ag education programs in the State and over 7,081 students active in FFA. The availability of certified ag teachers is essential to the continuation of these programs, yet there is a current critical shortage of certified ag teachers. Rapid changes in ag and food systems increase the need for continuing education which will enable individuals in the ag workforce to implement new technologies and methodologies.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Support for developing and strengthening pathways for preparing and certifying agriculture teachers in NYS including new and existing ag education degree programs and partnerships.**
- 2. Support for adding an agriculture teacher certification pathway that allows an individual with a Bachelor degree who has an Initial or Professional Teacher Certification in any of the current CTE Agricultural titles (Animal Production, Science, and Business, Agricultural Engineering and Mechanics, Plant Science, Animal Science, or Natural Resources and Ecology) that by successfully passing the Agricultural Content Specialty Test, they would be granted an additional CTE certification in all areas.**
- 3. Support for the designation of agricultural education as a critical teacher shortage area thus making Ag teachers eligible for the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL), Federal Supplemental Loans for Students (SLS) and for cancellation of up to 100% of debt under the Federal Perkins Loan Program (34 CFR 674.53(c)), and teaching obligation fulfillment for recipients under the Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant Program (34 CFR 686).**
- 4. Increased funding for the New York Agriculture in the Classroom Program to support ag literacy week, teacher training sessions, and county agriculture education coordinators.**
- 5. Increased support for the Ag Education and Outreach Program at the College of Ag and Life Sciences at Cornell including Ag in the Classroom and FFA to provide for ag teacher recruitment support, ag teacher retention through professional development, and career exploration events that expose high school students to ag and food sector employment opportunities.**
- 6. Support for new and existing secondary agricultural education programs that enhance the rigor and relevance of agriculture, biotechnology, food, and natural resources and foster college and career ready students.**
- 7. We encourage the New York State Department of Education to require the inclusion of agriculture education in schools at each grade from level K-12 and encourage the use of relevant STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) based curriculum that meets and exceeds current state education standards.**
- 8. Continue support for the Empire State Food and Ag Leadership Institute (LEAD-NY), at the College of Ag and Life Sciences at Cornell.**

NORTHERN NEW YORK AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The Northern New York Agricultural Development Program supports food production industries in the St. Lawrence and Champlain regions of the state. Research and education funded through this project will support this industry and encourage its future development, improve overall production efficiency and enhance its ability to contribute to rural and urban citizens of New York.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Support for the Northern New York Agricultural Development Program.**

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a sustainable approach to managing weed, insect, plant disease, vertebrate and other pests by combining biological, cultural, physical, and chemical tools to minimize economic, health, and environmental risks. IPM programs provide safe and effective pest management options for both the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors of the state.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Maintain full funding for the NYS Agricultural IPM Program to ensure continuation of IPM research and extension programs that address pest problems of livestock and field crops, vegetables, fruits, hops and ornamentals.**
- 2. Support for adoption of the following definition of IPM for New York State. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a sustainable approach to managing pests by combining biological, cultural, physical, and chemical tools to minimize economic, health, and environmental risks.**
- 3. Maintenance of full funding for the Community IPM program to ensure that the large non-agricultural sector in the state has sustainable pest management tools that address pest problems in schools, homes, landscapes, wherever our state's citizens work, live and play.**
- 4. Development of integrative learning tools to help maintain availability of qualified professionals for integrated pest management.**

NEW YORK FARMNET

FarmNet provides farm families with a network of contacts and support services to help them deal with significant life challenges and transitions through personal education, confidential consulting and referral. It targets New York State farmers who have financial or personal problems or require assistance to transition into or out of farming.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Support for state funding for the FarmNet program at a level based on the demand for program services.**
- 2. Support for New York FarmNet's Integrated Business and Succession Planning.**
- 3. Support for New York FarmNet's targeted efforts to assist farm families with stress management and counseling.**
- 4. Recognize and support FarmNet as a critical mechanism for delivering mental health services to farm families in rural communities.**
- 5. Support for training of agriservice professionals, including Cornell Cooperative Extension on recognizing signs of farmer stress and identifying appropriate referrals.**

----- AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT -----

PEST CONTROL

Pest control products have made it possible for farmers to produce abundant, high quality food at affordable prices and help protect public health. Decisions that impact pesticide use must be based on sound science that employs risk-benefit analysis so as to protect the environment and farming.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Funding pest management education and services provided by the NYSDEC and Pesticide Management Education Program.**
- 2. New York State accept the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's pesticide product registration and labeling decisions as the sole basis for product use in the State. Until such time, DEC should prioritize the review of new active ingredients, as they often offer superior pest control properties and reduced environmental impacts.**
- 3. Continuation of the New York State Pesticide Registration Guidance Law and the pesticide registration fee program at current fee levels.**
- 4. The use of crop protectants should be determined by the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets in collaboration with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, and not through state or local legislative initiatives or actions by the Attorney General's office.**
- 5. Oppose legislative efforts to ban pesticides.**
- 6. Oppose efforts to allow localities to regulate pesticides.**
- 7. Opposition to any pesticide use database established without sound scientific justification.**
- 8. Fees collected for pesticide and business registration, applicator certification, and permits should remain in the NYSDEC Bureau of Pesticides and be used to expedite the registration of pesticides and enhance applicator training.**
- 9. Opposition to the State adopting residue tolerances for pesticides more stringent than Federal tolerances.**
- 10. Support for posting and notification requirements as outlined by the Federal Worker Protection Standard without additional regulations imposed by the State.**
- 11. Repeal of the Neighbor Notification Law and substitution of a voluntary statewide registry for commercial applicators to achieve practical off-site notification without expanding notification requirements to producers of agricultural commodities.**
- 12. The NYSDEC and the Health Research Science Board at the Department of Health solicit agricultural input on research projects/grants related to the Pesticide Reporting Law.**
- 13. The NYSDEC adopt agency directives and technical guidance that encourages the best use of pesticides in the control of destructive pests in crop production and on grounds, trees and shrubs.**
- 14. That unless the labeling specifically prohibits such use, a pesticide registered for use in New York State may be used by commercial applicators in a dosage, concentration or frequency less than that specified on the labeling.**
- 15. Reasoned science-based approach to neonicotinoid pesticides with emphasis on consumer education.**
- 16. Support for funding to continue implementation of the New York State Senate Task Force on Lyme and Tick-Borne Diseases; recommendations for a state action plan to enhance research, prevention, diagnosis and treatments for harmful tick-borne illnesses; and for the New York State Health Department to implement an action plan that incorporates the Task Force recommendations.**
- 17. The state not duplicate federal regulation of pesticide products applied as coatings to seed.**

INVASIVE SPECIES

Invasive Species introduced into New York State from around the globe are affecting plant and animal communities on our farms, ranches and coasts; and in our parks, waters, forests, and backyards. As global climate patterns shift, the distribution of species will change, and so will the susceptibility of particular habitats to the impacts of new species introductions. Human activity such as trade, travel and tourism have all increased substantially, increasing the speed and volume of species movement to unprecedented levels. Invasive species are often unintended hitchhikers on cargo and other trade conveyances. Still more species are deliberately introduced as pets, ornamental plants, crops, food, or for recreation, pest control or other purposes. Most nonnative species, including most of our sources of food and fiber, are not harmful; and many are highly beneficial. A small percentage of nonnative species cause great harm to the environment, the economy or human health. Nonnative species that cause harm are collectively known as invasive species.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Support for the Invasive Species Advisory Committee as described and established pursuant to Title 17 of ENV. Law – NYS Invasive Species Council and suggest that the department consider representation from the NYS IPM Program and the NYS Health Department.**
- 2. Pursuant to the classification system of 6 CRR-NY V C 575 of current regulation; the department “Deliver” notice to all eight DEC Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISM) regions of the state, to interested parties, and to all member-organizations and agencies of the invasive species advisory committee, the list of potential species to be considered prior to departments’ review and publish in the *State Register* and *Environmental Notice Bulletin*.**
- 3. Support for an agriculture invasive species Eradication Grant Program, administered by the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets.**
- 4. Support for appropriate funding, staffing and adequate administration of the review process for petitions of candidates for non-invasive plant cultivar-to the list of regulated plants as per NYCRR Part 575.8 (a)(4).**
- 5. Woody perennial plant species of “Terrestrial Cultural Communities” widely distributed and maintained on private or public property in various regions of the state for any beneficial use such as; food, carbon sequestration, stormwater management, shade and air purification, and not harmful to the environment when managed, NOT BE LISTED AS “PROHIBITED” and unlawful to possess.**
- 6. Funding to provide rapid response to discoveries of plant and animal pests that pose a significant agricultural threat or will impede the movement of agricultural goods in commerce.**
- 7. Funding for science-based prediction, detection, GIS mapping, education, management and control.**
- 8. Maintain support for the NYS Invasive Species Institute at Cornell and Cornell Cooperative Extension, that respond to the needs of agricultural and production issues.**
- 9. Stricter surveillance at Canadian and state borders and New York’s ports of entry for species that have a high probability to become invasive.**
- 10. That the Commissioners, when listing species, consider only species with Very High (VH) invasiveness ranking and exclude any sub-species and cultivars of non-native species that do not have VH invasiveness when implementing the socio-economic evaluation.**
- 11. Regulatory programs that document, establish, prioritize and enforce regulated species also identify the statewide methods of informing new technical guidance for sellers, service providers and end users of best management practices of non-native species. In addition, generally acceptable information on potential benefits, as well as negative environmental, economic or human health effects should be provided at The New York Invasive Species – Clearinghouse Cornell Cooperative Extension Invasive Species Program (<http://nyis.info/>).**
- 12. Opposition to the Tree-SMART initiative.**

**NYS DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION**

New York farmers and agribusinesses are dedicated to environmental protection. Sound environmental practices are a key to successful farming and part of traditional good management. Farmers and food processors that may be threatened by having recreational or industrial development proximate to farmland, also have a need for adequate protection for normal farming practices.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Repeal of the NYS pesticide reporting law.**
- 2. No reintroduction of moose, rattlesnakes, wolves, cougars, and elk in New York State.**
- 3. DEC provide funds for wildlife control measures, such as but not limited to fencing and contraceptives/repellents, to minimize damage to agricultural crops and danger to animal and human health.**
- 4. We oppose the Attorney General taking independent legal action against agriculture outside the normal regulatory enforcement process.**
- 5. Continued funding for the Clean Sweep Program.**
- 6. Oppose any unworkable restrictions on the use of outdoor wood boilers in New York State.**
- 7. Requiring all local governments, that seek to enact environmental standards more stringent than current state standards, employ the following actions:**
 - a. Notice of all hearings and workshops on proposed environmental standards in the NYS Environmental Notice Bulletin (ENB).**
 - b. Provide a peer reviewed scientific report, supporting the proposed environmental standard, to the public and all pertinent state agencies.**
 - c. Complete the Full Environmental Assessment Form when satisfying SEQRA requirements.**
- 8. Support funding for the Long Island Pesticide Pollution Prevention Strategy.**
- 9. Support for pesticide certification credits to be available on a weekend.**
- 10. NYS DEC Bureau of Pesticides transition to a digital system to accept applications for Certified Applicator testing, credits, and attendance records, such as QR codes and phone apps.**
- 11. Support for a 21 calendar day review period for pesticide applicator credit requests.**
- 12. Support for the Restore Mother Nature Bond Act as passed in the SFY21 State budget and support for its inclusion on the 2021 ballot.**

PROTECTION OF WATER RESOURCES

Water protection is a public health and natural resource issue. A major challenge is to properly classify groundwater for its intended use. Another challenge is to use sound management practices to protect against groundwater contamination.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. That no restrictive standards for chemicals in groundwater be established without scientific basis.**
- 2. Opposition to control over agricultural use of surface or groundwater resources by permit and opposition to a fee provision for agriculture.**
- 3. Support for adequate State funding of Soil and Water Conservation Districts.**
- 4. Support for amending Soil and Water Conservation District law to allow the State to reimburse Districts for a portion of their rent, building expenses, and utilities.**
- 5. Support for amending the Executive law to allow Soil and Water Conservation Districts, acting in cooperation with a local government, to be eligible applicants to the EPF's Local Waterfront Revitalization Grant Program.**
- 6. NYS Department of Environmental Conservation implement and enforce Phase II Stormwater regulation guidelines but that no other local authority establish restrictive standards without scientific basis.**
- 7. Oppose proposal of any fees for the water withdrawal program in NY State.**
- 8. The creation and implementation of a voluntary management plan, for the residential and commercial landscape industry, that will prescribe best management practices to ensure the integrity of our soil and water resources, particularly those on Long Island, and that will incorporate the stewardship efforts that our industry has always promoted.**
- 9. Opposition to the mandated collection of runoff greenhouse water.**

ENVIRONMENTAL LIABILITY

The liability of farmers and agribusinesses for environmental contamination from the use of agricultural chemicals is a potentially devastating burden for a producer and for agriculture. A fair standard of liability will recognize the farmers' role as a user of agricultural chemicals, and the important role agribusiness plays in the production of the necessary farm commodities.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Opposition to legislation allowing citizens the right to sue for alleged violations of NYS Conservation laws.**
- 2. Landowners not be held liable for chemical contamination caused by a previous landowner or tenant.**
- 3. That no landowner, applicator or business be held liable for contamination of land or water by chemicals that were properly used for agricultural purposes according to existing laws and instructions as set forth on the product label at the time of application.**
- 4. With respect to the land application of wastewater and sludge, that:**
 - a. Any policy, contract or agreement addressing the application of waste on farmland permit voluntary participation by farmers; afford participating farmers flexibility in the amount and timing of applications; provide economic incentives for the adoption of new or improved techniques for handling wastewater and sludge; and require certification by waste handling authorities that heavy metals and other non-degradable materials have been removed from the wastes.**
 - b. Farmers and landowners not be held liable for any contamination of land and water resulting from approved land application of municipal waste, and that public monies be used to clean up any such contamination and to indemnify the farmer or landowner against any loss.**

c. Any approved land application program indemnify farmers for any crop or livestock losses sustained because of components in the waste or because of governmental regulation affecting the marketability of crops grown or livestock pastured on treated land.

5. Support for the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation to establish a training program to foster awareness of laws, rules and regulations pertaining to the farming industry.

ANIMAL NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT

The United States Department of Agriculture and the Environmental Protection Agency have developed an Unified Animal Feeding Operations Strategy calling for all animal feeding operations to develop and implement comprehensive nutrient management plans. Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) are required to develop nutrient management plans and get permits under the authority of the Clean Water Act. New York State Department of Environmental Conservation has developed a general permit for animal feeding operations.

WE RECOMMEND:

1. Increased funding for the agricultural nonpoint source abatement program within the Environmental Protection Fund.

2. Support for a linked deposit program to provide assistance to agricultural producers through reduced interest rate loans for environmentally related projects to be administered through Farm Credit and other commercial lenders.

3. Continued support for the Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) Program which provides:
a. Financial assistance for farmers to develop plans and implement economically achievable site specific best management practices.

b. Cost sharing, technical assistance and educational resources necessary for the success of this program.

c. Incentives for government agencies to work together and with academia and the private sector to ensure simplicity and coordination.

4. Any regulations related to animal feeding operations, including those related to nutrients, chemicals and pathogens, should be based on sound science.

5. Clarification to the definition of “point source” pollution to exclude runoff as a result of natural drainage patterns on agricultural land and from manure spreaders.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND EXTREME WEATHER

Climate change is projected to have major implications for agriculture in New York, including a longer and hotter growing season, less snowfall, more extreme rain fall events and other significant weather challenges. New York has already gained five additional growing degree days over the past decade, which has implications for crop production, including double cropping. While climate change will bring challenges, opportunities will accrue in the form of new markets and new crop possibilities.

WE RECOMMEND:

1. Support for the Climate Resilient Farms program administered by NYS Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the Department of Agriculture and Markets, to help farmers gain access to resources to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions while adapting to climate change.

2. Collaborative engagement with Cornell Cooperative Extension’s Disaster Education Network, (EDEN) designed to help facilitate rapid response by industry, extension personnel, state and local emergency management and other pertinent agency personnel to handle hazard and emergency situations within the farm and natural resources community caused by extreme weather events.

- 3. Support for impactful research and extension from the Cornell Soil Health and Resiliency Program, designed to assist farmers in improving their climate resiliency, including managing soil health, water resources, agronomic practices and livestock facilities in a way that improves farmer profitability and adaptability to the challenges of climate change.**
- 4. Support for the active inclusion of farmers in the advisory structure of the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) and that farms be viewed as part of the climate solution.**
- 5. Support for the development of a policy framework to reach the economy wide net zero goals of the CLCPA that actively pays farmers for practices that provide ecosystem services and technologies that sequester or reduce GHG emissions.**
- 6. Any state soil health legislation that is created should include mechanisms to drive increased voluntary adoption of conservation and soil health practices on all farms through innovative support and funding.**

POLLINATORS

Insects that pollinate agricultural and horticultural crops play a critical role in assuring that the annual plant life cycle, including fruit development, is completed successfully. New York's agricultural and horticultural industries are extremely dependent on sufficient pollinators for the plethora of crops grown each year. In addition, the apiary industry is a significant element of the food and agriculture system, generating over \$5 million per year in sales from honey products.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Continued study of the complex scenario leading to pollinator decline. Further we recommend that best management practices be developed and employed to manage honeybee colonies and the environment where they are deployed, to minimize the various risks. We do not support banning specific pesticides due to their alleged relationship with pollinators.**
- 2. Support for increased funding for the Cornell Honeybee Research and Extension program.**
- 3. Support for implementation of the Pollinator Protection Plan.**
- 4. Support for a pollinator disease diagnostic program at the NYS Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory.**
- 5. Encouraging the chemical pesticide industry to research, develop and relabel pesticides that are not harmful to honey bees and other insects/pollinators beneficial to the environment.**
- 6. Support for continued study and funding of the Honeybee Colonies Report, in light of the potential economic disaster as a result of the decline in pollinators.**
- 7. Support for the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets Bee Registry.**

----- AGRICULTURAL LABOR -----

LABOR

Agricultural working conditions and employment differ drastically from those of other industries and other states. Such factors as crop perishability, the influence of the weather and unpredictable working hours result in a unique situation that requires suitable regulations. A trained and available workforce is also important to the future of the agricultural industry. Fruit, vegetable, nursery and greenhouse producers have for many years used the federal H2A program to secure a harvest workforce when local help is unavailable.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Opposition to reducing farmworker overtime requirements below 60 hours per week.**
- 2. Family members of farm owners of all NY farms, regardless of the legal business structure, should be exempt from overtime and day of rest provisions.**
- 3. Salaried farm employees, assigned management responsibilities, should be exempt from overtime and day of rest provisions.**
- 4. Guest workers, employed through the federal H-2A visa program, should be exempt from overtime and day of rest provisions.**
- 5. H-2A employees should not be subject to wage deductions for paid family leave or disability insurance if they are unable, for whatever reason, to take advantage of these benefits.**
- 6. Doubling the current workforce retention tax credit for farmers and make it permanent, to better offset the scheduled escalation of the state's minimum wage and impact of the Farm Worker Fair Labor Practices Act.**
- 7. Opposition to any mandatory paid medical leave requirements on employers.**
- 8. Opposition to the mandated carry over of accrued sick leave time from year to year for all employees. This should be up to the employer and employee to be agreed upon.**
- 9. The value of meals, housing, utilities and other allowances, provided as a condition of farm employment, should be disconnected from the minimum wage calculation and should be valued at the market rates for the respective benefits. Further, farm employers should have the option to charge for the fair market value of non-cash benefits provided that the deductions do not depress total wages below the minimum wage.**
- 10. Support for continued funding of a state supported agricultural labor specialist provided for in the Cornell Agricultural Workforce Program, to provide educational programs to farm owners and managers, for the purpose of enhancing the overall human resource skills of farm owners and managers.**
- 11. Opposition to minimum wage above the federal level and support the establishment of a training wage.**
- 12. To ensure the protection of farm employees' civil rights and personal property, we support the concept of a registry, administered by the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, for the purpose of identifying the legitimate organizations and individuals who serve the farmworker population. Information, such as locations served, services provided, type of farmworker population served and anticipated visitation schedule should be provided to the Department upon completion of this registration. The Department would provide a list of registered organizations which could be posted on the farm.**
- 13. Maintain an active Agriculture Employer/Employee Advisory Board to the New York State Department of Labor, and New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, with a focus on the Division of Immigration Policies and Affairs (DIPA).**

14. A knowledge and understanding of agriculture practices be required for any Agriculture Labor Program Staff in the Division of Immigration Policies and Affairs (DIPA) within the New York State Department of Labor.
15. The New York State Department of Labor Division of Immigrant Policies and Affairs (DIPA) rebalance its mission to support both farmers and farm workers to assure that agriculture remains a viable, profitable and safe industry for growers.
16. Opposition to NYS mandating agricultural employers' usage of the federal e-verify program.
17. Workforce Investment Act funding within the Department of Labor should be used to train employees for agricultural work, rather than redirecting employees outside of agricultural work.
18. New York State inspection agencies be required to use federal standards when making inspections on any businesses and operations which qualify for federal jurisdiction and inspections.
19. Opposition to placing a value on farm labor housing to determine the unemployment insurance premium.
20. Continued efforts to enhance the State Workers' Compensation Insurance system through action on the following issues:
 - a. Opposition to removal of funds from the State Insurance Fund
 - b. Elimination of exorbitant lump sum awards for minor injuries
 - c. Creation of provisions for employer deductibles
 - d. Improvement of administrative efficiency
 - e. Development of a joint employer/worker's compensation insurance board definition of independent contractor.
 - f. Maintain an agricultural representative to the Workers Compensation Advisory Board.
 - g. Opposition to Workers Compensation assessments and using the money to balance the state budget.
21. State and federal youth work standards should be the same and more flexible.
22. Opposition to blatant racial profiling and abusive enforcement tactics by law enforcement agencies for immigrant and full-time farmworkers.
23. Support for continued research and extension at the NYS College of Agriculture and Life Sciences on the issues related to farm labor supply and management and state and federal policy impacts on the farm labor force.
24. Opposition to skyrocketing business related taxes and fees, such as paid family leave insurance.

FARMWORKER HOUSING

Clean, comfortable and economical labor housing serves agricultural producers and their employees equally well. The availability of such housing improves the ability of New York producers to compete for help in an increasingly tight job market.

WE RECOMMEND:

1. Support legislation or regulation for housing allowances being updated and calculated as part of employee wages. Support for increasing the employee dollar housing allowance to a level reflective of current housing costs. Further, an inflation adjuster should be incorporated into state policy to keep this allowance fact in sync with current economic conditions.
2. Given the funding cap of the Farmworker Revolving Loan Fund, administered by the NYS Department of Housing and Community Renewal, has been increased to \$15 million and the maximum size of each farmworker housing project increased to \$200,000, ensure prompt availability and disbursement of funds and efficient administration of the program to help make needed improvements to

worker housing. Further, community organizations, agriculture labor cooperatives, as well as individual farmers, should be recognized as qualified applicants to this revolving loan program.

3. A cost share program be established to allow agricultural producers to construct seasonal housing.
4. State agencies that regulate farmworker housing develop uniform standards.
5. Support for the ability to charge for rent on a year-round basis to year-round workers.
6. Support for the ability to request a security deposit for employer furnished housing, at a rate based on prevailing practice.

----- GENERAL ISSUES -----
AGRICULTURAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

Agriculture is a leading New York industry with the health and safety of the agricultural workforce being critical to its long-term viability. Agriculture as an industry has one of the highest work related fatality rates of any industry both nationally and statewide. Health and safety remains one of the industry's primary concerns.

WE RECOMMEND:

1. Support for the state's coalition of agricultural health and safety organizations to address illness and injury in agriculture.
2. Support for a state funded agricultural health and safety specialist position.
3. Support for the state's Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health (NYCAMH), which researches the causes of health and safety problems and provides education and intervention programs aimed at reducing occupational risk.
4. Continuation of funding and support of the NYS ROPS Rebate Program.

LIABILITY AND PRODUCT LIABILITY

The number of liability claims and the dollar amount of awards on claims continue to increase, resulting in exorbitant premiums and a restrictive insurance market. Many municipalities and individuals are unable to obtain liability insurance or the necessary coverage at a reasonable cost.

WE RECOMMEND:

1. Legislation to restore fairness, balance and common sense to New York's tort litigation system through comprehensive reform of the civil justice system.
2. Support for adding all forms of outdoor recreation to the General Obligations Law, Section 9-103.
3. Repeal sections 200, 240 and 241 of the NYS Labor Law, which places absolute liability on a property owner for construction workers employed by a contractor.

ANIMAL DISEASES

A strong Animal Health Diagnostic Center must be maintained so that New York's animal industry can continue to receive the vital health services required to assure animal health and well-being and protect the public health, water and food supply.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Secure funding for the increased cost of operational management of the new NYS Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory building.**
- 2. Continued funding of the NYS Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory to support the NYS Cattle Health Assurance Program, Quality Milk Production Services and the Avian Disease Program.**
- 3. Monies be allocated to the N.Y.S. Department of Agriculture and Markets for the condemnation and indemnification for farm animals, where necessary, for disease control.**
- 4. Support for increased state funding for the rabies oral vaccination program for research of new vaccines and control leading to elimination of raccoon rabies. Also leveraged funding and support from USDA, APHIS, Wildlife Service and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources/Canada. (The North American Rabies Management program).**
- 5. State funding for the Division of Animal Industry, NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, to manage new or re-emerging diseases and to protect the human and animal health of the state through the NYS Cattle Health Assurance Program.**
- 6. Support for the testing, control and elimination efforts for the equine industry, specifically Equine Infectious Anemia, West Nile Virus, Equine Viral Arteritis, Equine Herpes Virus (neurotropic form) and contagious equine metritis.**
- 7. The development of a statewide arthropod born disease monitoring and control program to minimize animal and public health concerns.**
- 8. Provide funding for surveillance and elimination of feral swine in New York State.**
- 9. Sustained annual state funding for the new joint aquaculture and marine animal diagnostic laboratory system between Cornell University and SUNY Stony Brook.**
- 10. Support for continuation of New York State and national programs to control and further eliminate Johnes Disease, bovine tuberculosis and Salmonella Dublin.**
- 11. Support for funding for the avian disease program to respond to the global outbreak of Avian Influenza and to keep New York State poultry Influenza free.**
- 12. Encourage the cooperative efforts of the Departments of Environmental Conservation, Agriculture and Markets and Health, veterinarians and wildlife biologists to coordinate the control of diseases that are common to domestic animals and wildlife that have significant public health or animal agriculture production implications. This includes funding for DEC to maintain a staff veterinarian to work with the NYS College of Veterinary Medicine.**
- 13. Increase awareness and transparent development of policies to address antimicrobial resistance on New York State farms.**
- 14. Opposition to legislation that would further restrict the use of antimicrobials and antibiotics beyond federal regulation.**

ANIMAL WELL-BEING

Animal well-being is a human responsibility that encompasses proper housing, management, nutrition, disease prevention and treatment, responsible care, humane handling and, when necessary, humane euthanasia. Farmers in New York are using properly researched and industry tested animal husbandry practices. Guaranteeing the health and well-being of animals provides the farmer an economic return in the form of wholesome, high quality foods valued by consumers.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Opposition to moving the animal cruelty statute to the Penal Law.**
- 2. Support voluntary enrollment of New York cattle herds in the New York State Cattle Health Assurance Program and the National Dairy FARM Program.**
- 3. All state agencies be encouraged to prosecute illegal actions such as trespassing and property damage to the full extent of existing laws.**
- 4. Opposition to legislation that gives animal rights organizations or any public agency the right to establish standards for the raising, handling feeding, housing or transportation of livestock, poultry, aquaculture and fur bearing animals. We also oppose any legislation that would pay bounties to complainants.**
- 5. The State Veterinarian have jurisdiction over all complaints dealing with cruelty to farm animals. Humane societies should not be empowered to enforce complaints related to farm animals and horses. Further, only officers and employees of the Department of Agriculture and Markets should enforce farm animal cruelty statutes.**
- 6. The Department of Agriculture and Markets provide educational materials and statutes on animal cruelty to local law enforcement agencies and organizations.**
- 7. Support the rights of farmers to engage in scientifically acceptable animal husbandry practices in the management of their herds and flocks.**
- 8. Support for full funding to implement the Animal Cruelty Education Bill.**

DIVERSITY, EQUITY INCLUSION IN THE AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY

In the 2017 Census of Agriculture, systemic inequities in our agricultural system were highlighted which have led to less than 2% of farmers in New York state identifying as people of color. We support policies that foster a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive agricultural industry that provides opportunities for all to be successful in farming New York state.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. State agriculture lending and granting priorities should include those inheriting family farms as well as particular groups such as, but not limited to, veterans, young farmers and members of the Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) community.**

REGIONAL AND NATIONAL ISSUES RECOMMENDATIONS

NATIONAL FARM, FOOD AND TRADE POLICIES

National policies have a significant influence on the agriculture and food industries in New York State.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Continued support for federal legislation and regulation that would bring consistency in labeling standards throughout the United States.**
- 2. Support for full funding of the Federal Farm Bill. Of special interest to New York State agriculture are:**
 - a) support for programs and policies that will help New York farm businesses to enhance profitability and competitiveness and to gain a greater share of the consumer food dollar,**
 - b) support for sound federal farm programs including effective dairy policies that will strengthen New York's dairy industry,**
 - c) support for expansion of the USDA value-added producer grant program that helps provide funding for projects that create improved market opportunities for farm businesses,**
 - d) support for specialty crop program assistance as part of the Farm Bill and mandatory funding for this program.**
 - e) support for federal conservation programs including the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program, and the Farm and the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program.**
 - f) support for incentives to encourage further development of bio-fuels as part of an Energy Title in the Farm Bill.**
 - g) support for the Farmer Market Nutrition Program including Women, Infants and Children Supplemental Income Program (WIC) and senior nutrition programs; and**
 - h) support for the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI), Specialty Crops Research Initiative (SCRI), Federal Capacity Funds, and the Agricultural Genomes to Phenomes Initiative.**
 - i) increased USDA funding for competitively awarded agricultural research.**
 - j) The USDA Farm Service Agency amend the definition of "eligible farm businesses" with regard to farm programs authorized through current and future farm bills. Specifically, the amended definition should accommodate the various legal farm business structures currently in use today and address how Section 179 deductions are factored into determining adjusted gross income.**
- 3. That federal farm programs and disaster assistance support all farms equitably regardless of size.**
- 4. Support for rapid resolution of current trade disputes and return to multinational trade agreements.**
- 5. Ongoing support for the Child Nutrition Act and increased opportunities for the consumption of healthy agricultural products, including dairy/milk products in our school system.**
- 6. Support for pest and animal disease detection through APHIS and the National Animal Health Laboratory Network.**
- 7. Support for technical assistance to assist businesses and funding for state agencies to implement and provide education on Food Safety Modernization Act compliance.**
- 8. Support for a strong crop insurance program as an important risk management tool necessary for today's farm businesses. Furthermore, we support efforts to improve the program and expand crop insurance availability for more farm crops in underserved areas such as New York.**

9. Support for increased federal formula funds into the land grant education research and extension systems, specifically Smith-Lever and Hatch Act appropriations.
10. Support for legislation that would require manufacturers of digital electronic parts to offer for sale diagnostic and repair information in the same manner as such manufacturer provided such diagnostic and repair information to such manufacturer's repair channel.
11. Increased federal funding for export promotion programs administered by USDA Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS).
12. Support for the concept of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher programs in the 2018 Farm Bill, which modifies several Department of Agriculture (USDA) Programs that address conservation, credit, rural development, research and education, and crop insurance to authorize additional assistance for beginning farmers and ranchers.
13. Support for the development of clear rules of compliance by the Department of Justice for the Americans with Disabilities Act Title III (ADA). Furthermore, a grace period for implementation is necessary once these rules have been established. We support New York State passing law to address frivolous lawsuits without compromising the underlining goal of the ADA.
14. Support for continued study and funding of the Honeybee Colonies Report, in light of the potential economic disaster as a result of the decline in pollinators.
15. Support for continued Covid-19 relief, including but not limited to, funding and implementation of the Farmers Food Box Program, Paycheck Protection Program, EIDL, CFAP, and state and local assistance.

NATIONAL DAIRY POLICY

The economics of the dairy industry rests upon effective national policy which establishes minimum prices and marketing conditions for milk producers. Milk producers are provided a level of income adequate to maintain sufficient production capacity to meet anticipated consumer needs.

WE RECOMMEND:

1. Continued support for the USDA Federal Milk Market Order (FMMO) system. Support improving price discovery in FMMOs by using a "basket" of several price discovery tools that will more accurately reflect market conditions, and supply and demand dynamics.
2. Support for a tariff rate quota similar to the non-fat dry milk quota for milk protein concentrates and casein.
3. Opposition to any changes in dairy standards that encourage manufacturers to displace milk protein, undermine consumer confidence in the quality of dairy products and have a negative impact on farmer prices.
4. Accurate classification by the U.S. Customs agency of dairy protein blends.
5. All dairy farm safety net programs treat all size farms equitably.
6. USDA and FDA should adequately and strongly enforce the WTO rules regarding out of quota production of milk by Canadian farmers, and disallow export of such milk through the Dairy Export Permit Program, until such time as free and fair trade in fluid and processed dairy products is allowed between the U.S. and Canada.
7. Opposition to misbranding of food items (such as soy drinks) that are imitations of standardized dairy products.

FARM CREDIT SYSTEM

The Farm Credit System is America's largest cooperatively owned lender and is a vital source of credit to agriculture and rural America. A strong Farm Credit System helps meet the credit needs of farmers, agricultural cooperatives and other rural businesses and enhances exports of U.S. agricultural goods.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Support for continuation of the Farm Credit System as a cooperative lender with an independent regulatory agency (Farm Credit Administration) and under the jurisdiction of the House and Senate Agriculture Committees. As financial services legislation is considered, we oppose new regulatory approaches that will add additional costs to the Farm Credit System or undermine the ability of Farm Credit to serve its customers. We support the efforts of the Farm Credit System to access financial markets to ensure an adequate supply of capital to agriculture.**
- 2. Support for legislative and regulatory actions to expand Farm Credit lending authority for agriculture, small rural businesses, and rural communities.**
- 3. Opposition to any changes to federal and state tax provisions for Farm Credit Institutions that could adversely affect the farmer-owners of Farm Credit Cooperatives.**
- 4. Opposition to restrictions by Congress or regulatory agencies on the Farm Credit System's ability to serve the equine industry and other rural, farm and forest product related businesses.**
- 5. The exemption of financial institutions such as Farm Credit from proposed consumer data privacy legislation related to maintaining and sharing consumer data, given that as regulated financial institutions there is some customer data they are required to maintain and they are already prohibited from sharing such data.**

IMPORTED PRODUCTS

We support the continued Federal APHIS and USDA inspection process for all imported agricultural products, including the inspection of food products for the presence of pesticides not currently labeled by the U.S. EPA.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. That the federal inspection system be strengthened to assure that imported agricultural products meet standards, risk analysis or assessments equal to those set for domestic products and protect U.S. agriculture and the environment from exotic pests and diseases.**
- 2. All imported food and horticultural products in markets and food stores be clearly and prominently labeled as imports indicating the country of origin.**
- 3. Strict enforcement ensuring that all imported plants, plant product and their shipping materials are certified as pest and pathogen free.**

STANDARDS FOR CONTROL AND ERADICATION OF BRUCELLOSIS AND BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS

The State-Federal brucellosis and bovine tuberculosis eradication programs must maintain a uniform code for eradication, surveillance and prevention of these diseases. Standards for surveillance during interstate shipment of wildlife and livestock including all farmed, zoological or pet ruminants and swine must be maintained.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Present national standards for control and eradication of brucellosis and bovine tuberculosis must be strengthened by applying scientifically supported methods that lead to eradication.**
- 2. Adequate funding for the continuation of the programs.**
- 3. Support for the new multi-state initiative on Mycobacterial diseases in animals for research on bovine tuberculosis and Johne's disease.**

LIVESTOCK HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY ISSUES

The agriculture industry is very committed to a healthy and safe food supply.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. All available measures should be taken to ensure a safe U.S. food supply and to promote animal and human health issues based on sound science discovered through our national research institutions and to ensure consumer confidence in the safety of our food. Before a drug is approved for use in beef or dairy cows, feasible testing needs to be commercially available to detect that drug in milk at farms and plants within a few hours before the milk is co-mingled with other milk or can be processed.**
- 2. USDA work to maintain a solid animal health infrastructure and surveillance system to ensure a safe U.S. meat supply.**
- 3. Equitable cost share measures to producers should be available.**

FARM LABOR

One of the most serious problems facing American agriculture is the lack of a stable labor supply. Revisions are needed to federal programs to ensure that production agriculture has an adequate supply of qualified labor.

The current H-2A Temporary and Seasonal Alien Worker Program is cumbersome, slow and costly for farmers to utilize. As a result of our failed guest worker program, it is estimated that over 50% of the agricultural work force nationwide is comprised of undocumented workers.

Failure to enact federal immigration legislation to address the farm labor issue will force farms out of business, reduce overall U.S. employment and result in an increase in food imports from foreign sources.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 1. Support for the framework laid out in the Farm Workforce Modernization Act of the 116th Congress.**
- 2. Oppose mandatory E-Verify legislation that fails to provide a permanent and effective agricultural temporary guest worker program that includes adjustment to legal status for current farm workers.**
- 3. Strong support for federal immigration legislation which provides for a workable, easy-to-use agricultural guest worker program administered by the US Department of Agriculture and a program to allow adjustment to a legal status for current farm workers.**
- 4. Opposition to immigration enforcement actions, including I-9 audits, that undermine farm labor availability and place the continuation of farms in jeopardy.**

5. **Support permanent enactment of the Dream Act.**
6. **All farms, including dairy farms, be fully eligible for agricultural guest worker programs, including the H-2A program.**
7. **Opposition to increased immigration enforcement measures and fines on producers.**
8. **Elimination of the 50% time period rule.**
9. **Review and revamp of the USDA NASS Wage Survey and its relationship with the adverse wage rate and H2A pay rates, in order to be more reflective of the agricultural wage rate.**
10. **Opposition to DOL regulations requiring farmers to pay transportation costs of migrant farm workers from their permanent residence to the employer's place of business.**
11. **Support for major reform of the Legal Services Act of 1974 and making Legal Services and its grantees accountable to the executive branch. We are not opposed to a reasonable program to provide legal assistance for persons with incomes at or below the poverty level.**
12. **Growers' concerns be considered when scheduling inspections and interviews in harvest season.**
13. **A compliance period should be allowed to correct cited violations before fines are imposed.**
14. **Support for the H-2B program and an increase in the number of authorized workers.**
15. **Support for the exclusion of agricultural guest workers from coverage requirements under the federal health care provisions.**
16. **Support for clarifying the definition of seasonal worker (STARS Act) for the purposes of calculating Affordable Care Act compliance.**
17. **Opposition for expanding implementation of the Migrant Seasonal Protection Act to employees of livestock farms.**

FARM SERVICE AGENCY

New York is a major agricultural state and deserves commensurate service in the delivery of federal farm programs. In order for FSA to provide service to counties across New York, adequate staffing levels, modern information technology and funding are necessary.

WE RECOMMEND:

1. **Appropriate level of funding for FSA staffing and offices.**
2. **Additional funding levels for Farm Service Agency Farm Loan guaranteed lending programs and support for changes to expand eligibility for all business structures to be used by farmers.**

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

New York State farmers and agribusinesses are dedicated to environmental protection. Sound environmental practices are key to successful farming and good management. Farmers may be threatened by having recreational or industrial development proximate to farmland and have a need for adequate protection for normal farming practices.

WE RECOMMEND:

1. **The EPA ensure that any dredging process does not adversely impact local agriculture.**
2. **Opposition to including agricultural operations within the Clean Air Act and State and Federal Superfund Laws.**
3. **New York State should be recognized for its sizable contributions to water quality in the Chesapeake Bay. Any regulations enacted by EPA for the Chesapeake Bay should take into account the state's considerable efforts to protect water quality and provide needed funding for any required additional improvements.**

4. **Support legislation that amends the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to clarify Congressional intent regarding the regulation of the use of pesticides in or near navigable waters.**
5. **Support efforts by EPA to replace the 2015 Waters of the US section of the Clean Water Act.**

EMERGING AND FOREIGN ANIMAL DISEASE

The USDA and the Department of Homeland Security need to continue to enhance the Ames, IA and Plum Island, NY facilities in order to meet the demands for safeguarding animal health.

WE RECOMMEND:

1. **Continued support for federal funding to provide improved infrastructure and staffing in both facilities**
2. **Support for continued implementation of the recommendations of the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture and related industry recommendations to enhance U.S. animal health safeguards.**
3. **Encourage the maintenance and enhancement of support for funding of the National Animal Health Laboratory Network.**
4. **Support for the National Bio and Agri-defense Facility in Manhattan, Kansas.**

BIOTERRORISM

The Homeland Security Act opened an opportunity for necessary funding to combat acts of agro-bioterrorism. Agriculture has not received adequate attention from this federal act. An estimated 70% of the potential bioterrorism diseases and 100% of the chemicals would affect both humans and animals. Crops/other agricultural commodities would also be affected.

WE RECOMMEND:

1. **The USDA, Department of Homeland Security, federal and state legislatures, and the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) support a plan of action for agro-bioterrorism and increased funding to federal and state Departments of Agriculture from the Homeland Security Act to combat acts of agro-bioterrorism.**

FEDERAL TAXES

The successful transfer of farms from one generation to the next is vital to American agriculture. Farm families often invest their earnings into increasing and improving their farm real estate and have relatively little cash that can be used as part of the estate to pay estate taxes. Estate taxes can force the farm to sell off part of its farm real estate to pay the estate taxes.

WE RECOMMEND:

1. **Support for Congressional action to eliminate the estate tax. If that is not feasible, we recommend continuation of the current exemption level with adjustments for inflation going forward.**
2. **Continued support for bonus depreciation and Section 179 expensing.**
3. **The continuation of Section 199/199A in any future tax reforms.**
4. **Opposition for changes to the federal tax code that would require agricultural businesses, including LLCs, C Corps, S Corps and partnerships, to use the accrual method of accounting rather than the more common cash-basis method.**

- 5. Continued support for the current timeline for depreciation of agricultural equipment and machinery from seven years to five years.**
- 6. Support for the Student Agriculture Protection Act, which will exclude up to \$5,000 from gross income from the sale of personal agricultural property produced or raised by the student agriculturist.**

Cash Receipts of Selected New York State Products

<u>Value of Production</u>	<u>\$1,000 Dollars</u>
Dairy Production	\$2,858,058
Cash Crops (Corn/soybeans/other)	\$486,616
Fruit/Apples/Grapes/Berries	\$418,970*
Hay	\$388,102
Vegetables (potatoes/other)	\$378,658*
Greenhouse/floriculture	\$385,792*
Cattle and Calves	\$276,247
Poultry and eggs	\$96,949
Equine	\$33,727*
Maple syrup	\$26,404
Sheep Lamb and Wool	\$17,112
Honey	\$15,365
Hogs and Pigs	\$2,285
<hr/>	
Total	\$5,384,285,000

Source :

2019-2020 USDA New York Annual Statistics

Bulletin and 2017 USDA Agricultural Census

*2019 Data was unavailable, 2018 data was used

Economic Impact: Agriculture is a vital part of the New York State economy! The value of agricultural production at the farm level is in excess of \$5.4 billion according to the 2019-20 USDA Agricultural Statistics Bulletin. About 21% of the state's land area or 6.9 million acres are used by the 33,400 farms to produce a very diverse array of food products. The economic impact of agricultural production in New York goes well beyond the farm gate to New Yorkers employed in rural, suburban and urban locations in food processing and distribution. These jobs would not exist without New York agricultural production. According to Farm Credit East's *Northeast Economic Engine* report, **agriculture and related processing and input businesses generate an economic impact of \$37.2 billion in New York and provide employment for over 160,000 people.**

How Leading New York Products Rank Nationally

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Products</u>
1	Creamed cottage cheese, low-fat cottage cheese, yogurt
2	Apples, maple syrup, snap beans, cabbage, sour cream
3	Corn for Silage, Calves, Total Italian Cheese
4	Milk Production, Milk Cows
5	Total Cheese, Squash, Cherries
6	Christmas Trees
7	Oats, Sheep & Lambs, Sweet Corn
8	Onions
10	Honey

**New York Farms
Number, Acres, and Value; Selected Years**

Year	No. of Farms	Acres Per Farm	All Land in Farms	*Value land/buildings	
	<u>(000)</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Mil. Acres</u>	Total <u>Mil. \$</u>	Per Farm <u>Thou. \$</u>
1985	44.0	207	9.10	7,462	170
1995	38.0	208	7.90	10,112	266
2000	37.5	205	7.67	11,011	290
2001	37.5	204	7.66	11,643	310
2002	37.0	207	7.66	12,333	333
2003	37.0	205	7.59	13,005	351
2004	36.0	208	7.49	13,528	376
2005	35.6	206	7.35	14,496	407
2006	35.0	208	7.27	15,375	439
2007	36.4	198	7.20	15,984	439
2008	36.6	194	7.10	17,040	456
2009	36.6	194	7.10	17,040	466
2010	36.3	193	7.00	16,800	463
2011	36.0	194	7.00	17,150	475
2012	36.0	194	7.00	18,677	526
2013	35.5	202	7.18		
2014	34.7	202	7.00		
2015	34.2	205	7.00		
2016	33.8	207	7.00		
2017	33.4	207	6.90	22,172	663
2018	33.4	207	6.90		

*excludes operator dwellings – note that these figures were last updated in the 2017 USDA Census of Agriculture, and some data not available for years between census collection years

Thank you to our 2021 Gold Sponsors ...



FARM CREDIT EAST



“Agriculture is our wisest pursuit, because it will in the end contribute most to real wealth, good morals, and happiness.”

... Thomas Jefferson