June Is Dairy Month: Farming, A Family Tradition

DARREL J. AUBERTINE   June 2, 2010

| ISSUE: **AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**
| COMMITTEE: **AGRICULTURE**

NY Milk Important for Healthy Families, Multi-Billion Dollar Industry Vital to a Strong Economy

ALBANY (June 2, 2010)—State Senate Agriculture Committee Chair Darrel J. Aubertine today announced "June as Dairy Month" heralding the benefits of drinking milk and the role of the state's dairy industry as a key component to a strong economy in New York.

"Milk is an important part of a healthy diet and a healthy dairy industry in New York supports a strong economy," Sen. Aubertine said. "In this economic downturn, the dairy farmers have struggled with low milk prices that do not cover their costs but have continued

to put wholesome, nutritious milk on the shelves and in the products we enjoy with our families. We should all take the time to recognize the importance of our dairy farmers throughout the year, but celebrating June as Dairy Month is one way we can bring our dairy industry to the forefront of everyone's mind and our efforts to rebuild New York's economy."

To help promote "June as Dairy Month," Sen. Aubertine sponsored an exhibit called "Farming, A Family Tradition" in the Well of the state's Legislative Office Building in Albany. This exhibit, which is positioned in an area where lawmakers walk from their offices to the Capitol, includes facts about the dairy industry and photographs, many of which were submitted by farmers in the district and across the state.

New York's dairy industry is the foundation of the state's agriculture industry, supporting the infrastructure necessary for farmers in all sectors, whether they produce fruits and vegetables or meat and poultry. Every job on a dairy farm creates another 1.24 jobs in the community and almost two dollars enter into the economy for every dollar generated by the sale of milk. Dairy processing creates nearly five jobs for every job in the plant and generates another $1.26 for every dollar of product sold. According to a 2002 study, each dairy cow has an economic impact of $13,737, meaning that two cows have the economic impact of creating a $27,500 job.

"Milk is not only good for you; it's good for our local economy," Sen. Aubertine said. "Yogurt, ice cream, and cheese can be an important, tasty and nutritious part of a balanced diet. As consumers, we can use our buying power to select the products that use real milk and know that the increased demand for these goods will help our farmers get a better price for their milk. It is important we all stand with our dairy farmers in support of better prices, because in the end, a strong dairy industry helps us all."

Milk is the most nutritious, natural drink available, providing high quality protein that is more complete for muscle growth than vegetable proteins, along with important vitamins and minerals, including calcium, riboflavin, phosphorous, vitamin A, vitamin D, vitamin B12, and pantothenic acid. Studies have shown that despite the fear many dieters have of dairy products, it is linked to improved weight loss results, not to mention many other health benefits, including a decreased risk of osteoporosis, colon cancer, high blood pressure and type-2 diabetes.

Despite attempts to find alternatives to wholesome milk, time and time again, a more thorough scientific review has proven that all natural milk is better for you than processed alternatives. Margarine was once marketed as a "healthy," but the health risks now associated with "trans-fats" contained in these highly-processed products have proven farmers right in their defense of butter. Protein powders and shakes, which often use imported milk protein concentrates and caseinates, not real milk, were recently found by Consumer Reports to contain toxic metallic contaminants, such as arsenic, mercury, lead and cadmium. Meanwhile, basic wholesome dairy foods, most notably yogurt, made from real milk have in recent years has received renewed interest as consumers rediscover their tasty health benefits.