



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michelle Hinchey

Hinchey Delivers \$1 Million for Cornell's Hudson Valley Research Laboratory

MICHELLE HINCHEY July 11, 2024



Senator Michelle Hinchey Secures Funding to Transform HVRL into State-of-the-Art Lab Focused on Sustainability, Accessibility, and Future-Proofing for the Next Generation of Agricultural Research in the Hudson Valley

HIGHLAND, NY — Senator Michelle Hinchey today announced that she has secured \$1 million in state funding to modernize the Hudson Valley Research Laboratory (HVRL), a vital agricultural research hub that supports fruit and vegetable farmers in the Hudson Valley and across the region by increasing scientific understanding and innovation.

Founded in 1923, the Hudson Valley Research Lab is a 100-year-old partnership between Cornell

University and local farmers. HVRL scientists develop tailored solutions to help farmers address climate resilience, disease and pest management, organic production, and support for the region's craft beverage industry. The \$1 million provided by Hinchey will help transform the lab into a state-of-the-art facility concentrated on sustainability, accessibility, and future-proofing for the next century of agricultural research. Upgrades include high-efficiency HVAC systems, ADA compliance, new fume hoods with automatic air quality functions, heat exchangers, a new roof, flooring replacement, a ground mount solar system to power the facility and demonstrate agrivoltaics, cold storage updates, and asbestos removal.

Senator Michelle Hinchey said, "The Hudson Valley is one of our country's most important agricultural regions, especially as the Climate Crisis devastates food production across other key agriculture states. The innovation coming from Cornell's Hudson Valley Research Lab, in partnership with local growers, is a beacon of hope in the face of these stark uncertainties for the future of our food supply, but to sustain its leadership in advanced research, the lab needs significant infrastructure upgrades. I'm proud to deliver a major investment to transform this facility into a state-of-the-art lab that will support vital, cutting-edge research to help New York farmers throughout their growing seasons and keep New York at the forefront of sustainable innovation."

Jared Buono, Director of the Cornell Hudson Valley Research Laboratory, said, "This funding from Senator Hinchey comes at a crucial time for the region, which is often the frontline for invasive pests and crop disease in New York state. Having a state-of-the-art facility will allow us to more innovatively and effectively deliver science-based solutions to Hudson Valley farmers."

Sarah Dressel, HVRL Board President and owner of Dressel Farms in New Paltz, said, "The value of the science that happens in the lab to commercial agriculture is priceless. HVRL is the heartbeat of the region's farming and this investment will ensure that it can help carry Hudson Valley agriculture into the future."

Chris Smart, Family Director of Cornell AgriTech and Associate Dean of Cornell CALS, said, "This generous funding from Senator Hinchey will help us fulfill our Land-Grant mission in one of New York state's most important agricultural regions. We are grateful to be able to enhance our Lab in order to better meet the needs of Hudson Valley growers."

The Hudson Valley region is renowned for high-quality fruit and vegetable production, yielding specialty crops and value-added products sold locally and globally. Growers in this unique microclimate grapple with some of the most demanding crop conditions, facing challenges due to warmer temperatures, climate-related crop diseases, rising infestations of invasive species, and proximity to major markets. The Hudson Valley Research Lab, originally constructed in 1964 and expanded in 1974, needs substantial updates to meet advanced research standards across these areas. Senator Hinchey's \$1 million investment will support growers who rely on its research and the long-term viability of New York agriculture.

Senator Hinchey announced the funding on Wednesday, July 10, after touring the HVRL with board members, farmers, and Cornell faculty. Farmers Sarah Dressel (HVRL Board President), Kim Wagner (HVRL Board Vice President), Tim Dressel from Dressel Farm, Kevin Clark from Rosehill Farm, and Joy and Jeff Crist from Crist Brothers Orchards were among the attendees. Cornell leaders Chris Smart (Goichman Family Director of Cornell AgriTech and Associate Dean of Cornell CALS), Jared Buono (Director of HVRL), and Julie Suarez (Associate Dean of Land-Grant Affairs and Director of Translational Research) were also present alongside Deanna Fox (CEO of the New York Farm Bureau).

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