



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David Carlucci

Preserve, Promote and Grow Local Farms

DAVID CARLUCCI April 15, 2011

(Congers, NY) Senator David Carlucci (D-Rockland/Orange) announced today important legislation that will preserve, promote and grow New York's local farms. The Senator was joined by farmers, members of the agriculture community and renowned Chef Peter Kelly at the Dr. Davies Farm in Congers.

"Preserving New York's farmland and promoting our fine agricultural products is a top priority," Senator Carlucci said. "While New York farmers have risen to meet the many challenges they face in a globalized agricultural economy, they can still use the help that New York State can provide. The package of bills I have introduced will preserve farmland, promote the importance of locally grown produce and grow local farms throughout the State."

Agriculture is a vital part of New York's economy. Agriculture production returned approximately \$4.7 billion dollars in 2009 and employs tens of thousands of workers. New York is a national leader in the production of a wide variety of crops, including apples, pears, cherries, onions, cabbage, and grapes. New York is also a leading producer of milk and cheese, is a leading maple products producer, and is the nation's third largest wine maker.

All of these superb New York products are brought to us by the small family farms that dominate New York agriculture, with our average farm size being half of the national average. Many of our small family farms are taking the lead in organic farming techniques, and the number of farmers markets across the state is growing.

Nearly one-quarter of New York's land area is used as farmland. In 2010 approximately 7 million acres of land was used by 36,300 farms. Since 2001, New York has lost 1,200 farms and 660,000 acres of land. Farming is generally done by small family businesses. In 2007, the average farm size was smaller than 200 acres and in 2007, approximately 80% of farms received less than \$100,000 in farm income. Due to tight profit margins many farmers are forced to supplement their incomes by selling portions of their land off for development.

Senator Carlucci's bill to make the onion the state vegetable has received a lot of press recently bringing focus onto New York's Agricultural Economy.

Makes the onion the state vegetable

Agriculture is a vital part of New York's economy. Onions, in particular, are a valuable crop to New York State. Most of New York's onions are produced in the black dirt region in Orange county. By making the onion the state vegetable we will increase awareness of how valuable onions are for the state's agricultural economy and increase funding for onion research as well as bring attention to local farms.

Provides incentives for restaurants to buy locally grown produce.

Senator Carlucci is introducing legislation that would allow restaurant owners who purchase locally grown produce to receive a tax credit on their purchases. We need to work to help promote locally grown produce from around the state. The best way to do this is to provide incentives for locally owned restaurants to purchase locally grown produce. This will

create a powerful mechanism that will assist in building a stronger economy locally and to keep our communities the best place to live and work.

For produce purchased from a farm within 100 miles of the establishment, the restaurant will receive a tax credit. For every \$1,000 in purchases from farms within that radius, restaurants will receive a tax credit of \$100.

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