



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

Senator Seward Announces Vital Farm Safety Funding

JAMES L. SEWARD April 18, 2011

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RICHFIELD SPRINGS, 04/18/11 – State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I-Oneonta) today announced that the state budget includes, at his insistence, \$100,000 to protect New York farmers through continuation of the highly successful New York Rollover Protection System (ROPS) Rebate Program.

“Agriculture is our state’s number one industry. It is vital to our economy and our way of life,” said Senator Seward. **“Ensuring our farmers have proper safety equipment is crucial and that is**

why I have strongly supported the ROPS rebate program since its inception.”

The New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health (NYCAMH), a Bassett Healthcare Network program, administers the ROPS program, now in its fifth year, and is about to outfit the 900th tractor with the life-saving rollover protection.

“Our campaign has increased by ten-fold the number of farmers making their tractors safe by retrofitting them with rollover protection systems,” said Dr. John May, director of NYCAMH. “This is important because a farmer’s risk of dying on the job is eight times higher than that of the average American worker.”

Tractor overturns are the primary cause of these fatal and permanently crippling injuries. In the event of a rollover, the use of ROPS and a seatbelt reduces the risk of injury by 99 percent. Use of ROPS without a seatbelt is less effective, but still reduces serious injury by 70 percent. Tractors built after 1985 have built-in rollover protection, but most tractors in use today are older than that.

“We are grateful to Senator Seward and his colleagues in the state legislature for recognizing the need for this program and their continued support even in difficult financial times,” added Dr. May. “In our region we have been blessed with strong legislative concern for the well-being of New York farmers. This has helped make this life saving program an on-going reality.”

“This is an investment not just for me, but for my family,” said Tim Cantwell of Richfield Springs, who with his wife Sue and children 16 year old Michael and 14 year old Meghan, operate a dairy farm that’s been in the Cantwell family over 100 years. The Cantwell family utilized the ROPS rebate program to retrofit two tractors. “I am well aware of the risks associated with farming and want to do all I can to protect myself and anyone else who utilizes the tractors on our farm. While I have always taught and practiced safe farming,

knowing the rollover protection systems are in place provides additional security and peace of mind. I am extremely thankful that Senator Seward and NYCAMH have recognized the importance of providing ROPS at a cost farmers can afford.”

“Farmers deal with countless challenges every day. Anything that can be done to ease their financial burden and enhance farm safety in the process has my strong support. I congratulate NYCAMH on their leadership in this field and stand ready to partner with them moving forward in keeping our New York farms safe and productive,” Seward concluded.

Farmers interested in more information should call toll-free 1-877-ROPS-R4U (1-877-767-7748) or check on-line at ropsr4u.com. The rebate amounts to 70 percent of the cost of purchasing and installing rollover protection on a tractor, a savings of up to \$765.