



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Senator Ritchie Outlines Senate Ag Priorities

PATTY RITCHIE March 2, 2012

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### **In Address to Jefferson County Ag Leaders, Ritchie Pledges to Help Farms Grow**

New York State Senate Agriculture Committee Chair Patty Ritchie outlined her Senate Agriculture Committee's top priorities.

During remarks to the Jefferson County Agricultural Development Program's Annual Meeting, Senator Ritchie described her plans to help New York's 36,000 farm families compete in the global marketplace. "We produce the best agricultural products in the world right here in New York State, but too much of what we buy is produced on the other side of the continent or the other side of the globe," Senator Ritchie said. "Last year, I found New York State was serving milk from Texas to its own employees."

In 2012, Senator Ritchie said, priorities include:

- Reducing mandates and fees on New York's family farmers by passing her bill "Let New York Farm," which is also New York Farm Bureau's top legislative priority;
- Expanding marketing opportunities for small farms by requiring New York State government agencies to buy more New York grown farm products under the "Buy from the Backyard" bill she cosponsored, and
- Restoring funds to agricultural marketing, research and educational programs facing cuts in the proposed state budget.

Senator Ritchie cited some of the bills she introduced that have already passed the Senate this year as examples of her efforts on behalf of North Country farmers, including a bill that relieves rural sugar shacks from rules that treat them like an industrial waste producer and a measure that helps farmers raising livestock in woodlands.

Senator Ritchie encouraged farmers to take part in her "Survey of Agriculture Professionals," which seeks input on key issues facing the farm community, and is [available here](#).