



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Dean G. Skelos

Senate Passes “Buy From the Backyard” Act to Boost Local Agricultural Purchases

DEAN G. SKELOS March 19, 2012

The New York State Senate today passed the “Buy From the Backyard Act” to promote the purchase of food grown or produced locally. The bill (S.2468), sponsored by Senator Thomas Libous (R-C-I, Binghamton), requires state agencies with food contracts to buy at least 20 percent of their food from New York sources.

“If every household in New York spent just \$15 per week on local food, we could pump \$5.5 billion into New York State’s economy,” Senator Libous said. “And that’s just households. This bill will help state agencies join in supporting our farmers and stimulating the economy. We’re investing taxpayer dollars right back into our state.”

“Buying local isn’t just a catchphrase – it is a sensible and healthy act that supports hardworking New Yorkers,” Senate Majority Leader Dean G. Skelos said. “This bill demonstrates New York State’s commitment to the quality produce and other food offerings originating in our state and reinforces the importance of agriculture and its tremendous impact on our economy.”

The bill expands upon an existing law, which creates a program that encourages the purchase of local food products by state agencies. Mental health facilities, prisons, universities and state institutions that have food contracts would be required to purchase at least 20 percent that is grown, produced, harvested or processed in New York State.

The bill expands upon Senator Libous's Buy From the Backyard initiative in Broome, Tioga, and Chenango counties, which promotes buying local among consumers and encourages investments in New York agriculture.

The bill has been sent to the Assembly.