



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David J. Valesky

## Senator Valesky Introduces Legislation to Bring Local Food to Senior Facilities

DAVID J. VALESKY May 30, 2012

| ISSUE: **AGING, AGRICULTURE, SENIOR CENTERS, SENIORS**

State Senator David J. Valesky (D-Oneida), Chairman of the Senate Aging Committee, recently introduced legislation to establish a farm-to-senior program to facilitate and promote the purchase of New York farm products by senior centers and other institutions for the aging, such as Social Adult Day Programs, County Area Agencies for the Aging and Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities.

“Connecting senior centers and similar institutions with New York farmers is beneficial across the board,” Senator Valesky said. “Ideally, it will result in the availability of nutritious, locally grown foods to benefit both the health of seniors and the state’s agricultural economy.

The legislation (S.7452) directs the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets to gather information from the Office for the Aging regarding senior centers and other aging institutions interested in purchasing New York-grown farm products. This information would be made readily available to interested farmers, farm organizations and businesses that market farm products.

In addition, the legislation creates a promotional event, New York Golden Harvest: Seniors Week, to promote New York agriculture and foods to seniors at senior centers, farms, farmers’ markets and other aging institutions.

The successful Farm-to-School program, signed into law in 2002, encourages expanded access to New York agricultural products in schools. Senator Valesky’s new legislation would provide the same access for aging institutions, facilitating a working relationship between the Department of Agriculture and Markets and Office for the Aging for the purchase and promotion of New York agricultural products.

The legislation was unanimously approved by the Aging Committee today.