



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

## **Senator Young Announces Progress WITH Aid to Local Grape Growers**

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ALBANY – In the wake of devastating weather-related damage to local fruit crops, Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I – Olean) announced significant progress has been

made this week with obtaining a federal disaster relief declaration, and with the introduction of a bill to provide tax credits to farmers faced with crop losses.

Senator Young organized 22 other Senators to ask Governor Andrew Cuomo's help for growers across the state whose crops were damaged by freezing temperatures. As a result, Governor Cuomo has sent a letter to the US Department of Agriculture asking for a disaster declaration.

"The Governor's request to the federal government is the first official step in obtaining a federal disaster relief declaration. The declaration will allow farmers in need of extra help to qualify for grants and loans. This aid will ease the difficult burden facing our growers and ensure that our agriculture sector remains a vital part of the state economy," Senator Young said.

Senator Young also sponsors a newly-introduced bill that would provide farmers with a personal income tax credit of 35 percent of the value of their damaged crops. Eligible crops are fruits including grapes, apples, peaches, cherries and berries; vegetables including tomatoes, snap beans, cabbage, beets and onions; and potatoes and dry beans.

"With such widespread damage locally and across the state, it is important to take actions that help repair the economic fallout. A tax credit needs to be part of the overall solution," Senator Young said.

A previous trip to Fisk Farm in Dunkirk and ongoing conversations with owners James and Karen Fisk, as well as other growers, highlights the need to support local farmers.

"There's not going to be anything worth harvesting. Even with crop insurance, there may not be enough money to cover the costs this year, let alone running the farm next year," James Fisk said.

"The income tax credit and a federal disaster relief declaration will help farmers look beyond the crisis they face this year and provide a framework for planning for recovery in upcoming years," Senator Young added.

"Our agricultural producers are the mainstay of our upstate economy. We need to do

everything we can at the state and federal levels to help mitigate their losses and keep them operating and producing crops to meet demand for our products around the world,” she said.