



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David J. Valesky

## Senator Valesky's Legislation to Promote Buying New York Products Passes Senate Agriculture Committee

DAVID J. VALESKY February 12, 2013

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Legislation sponsored by State Senator David J. Valesky (D-Oneida) that will build upon a statewide burgeoning "Buy Local" movement by creating a program to recognize restaurants that feature local products passed the Senate Agriculture Committee today.

The legislation (S.2146) will enhance the successful "Pride of New York" program by creating an additional designation for restaurants called "Dine: Pride of New York."

"Our goal is to make these symbols the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval for New Yorkers who want to buy locally and eat locally," Senator Valesky said. "By expanding the Pride of New York program, we will help stimulate our local economies while strengthening the agriculture industry across the state."

New York's agricultural industry is a driving force in the state, accounting for \$31.2 billion in farming and related agricultural activity annually. A report released by the IDC in 2012 found that while direct sales between farmers and consumers have increased through the expansion of farmers' markets, there is much room to grow.

Central New York is already seeing a growing effort to support local products. Many restaurants have adopted a local foods focus, promoting in their menus where the products were grown. At Empire Brewery in Syracuse, locally grown food is highlighted on the menu, where patrons are pointed to 56 different farms or producers that Empire uses.

In addition, Madison County promotes a "Buy Local Week" each summer where local restaurants showcase menu items which contain products grown within the county.

In Senator Valesky's legislation, restaurants must demonstrate that 15 percent of their total ingredients are grown and/or processed in New York State in order to qualify for a Dine: Pride of New York designation.

Restaurants and food sellers who are designated would be allowed to use a logo to hang in their front windows and to use for advertising and marketing purposes. The businesses would also be listed in a directory on the Agriculture and Markets website.