



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Betty Little

Little, Senate colleagues propose plan to boost agriculture

BETTY LITTLE March 6, 2013

| ISSUE: **AGRICULTURE**

A bipartisan group of state senators has proposed a plan to strengthen New York's agricultural industry by providing targeted tax relief and increasing state financial support for programs expanding markets for New York-grown products.

"Agriculture is a bright spot in our state's economy, a \$5.2 billion industry important to all of us," said Little, a proponent of the measure.

"As farmers in Albany this past week explained, years ago they competed against each other locally and domestically. Today they are competing against farmers in New Zealand, China and all over the world. State government needs to be mindful of that fact, the competitive factors in the global marketplace, and more helpful to ensure New York is a place where a farmer can make it profit, particularly at a time when they are seeing escalating fuel and feed prices."

Among its provisions, the Senate's 'Grown in New York' plan would: reduce taxes on farmers by creating a two-percent assessment cap on agricultural lands, restoring the 18-a energy tax to its pre-2009 level and increasing the Estate Tax Threshold for farms from \$1 million to \$5 million; support Governor Cuomo's proposal to review state regulations that limits the size of some dairy farms; support the creation of "food hubs" located in growing regions of the state to facilitate access to New York City markets; and seek budgetary support for maple promotion, the Farm Viability Institute and funds to help growers recover from damage from storms and invasive species.

New York Farm Bureau President Dean Lincoln said: "NY Farm Bureau has long held to the proven belief that when you grow New York farms, you grow New York's economy. The efforts put forth today by Senate Republican Leader Skelos, Senate Agriculture Committee Chair Ritchie and their conference colleagues will do just that."

For more information about the "Grown in New York" proposal, visit Senator Little's webpage at little.nysenate.gov.