

NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Sen. Farley Reports Senate Passes Bill to Get Locally-Grown Produce to Senior Citizens

HUGH T. FARLEY May 9, 2013

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State Senator Hugh T. Farley (R – Schenectady) reported the New York State Senate recently passed legislation (S2149) that would create a farm-to-senior program to promote the purchase of New York State farm products by senior centers and other institutions for the aging.

The program would replicate a similar effort, the farm-to-school program, which was established in 2002 to enable schools to purchase locally-grown farm produce for school children. The bill would give that same access to seniors.

This bill would help facilitate a working relationship between the state Department of Agriculture and Markets, the Office for the Aging, local senior centers and institutions for the aging for the purchasing and promotion of farmers' products. This would include the development of a promotional event called "The New York Golden Harvest: Seniors Week" to connect local agriculture and foods to seniors at senior centers, farms, farmers' markets and other locations in the community.

The state would also work on maximizing the use of government funding for senior meals to purchase nutritious, locally produced foods to benefit the health of seniors and the local economy. One method to achieve this could be through the creation of a website to easily identify sellers, buyers, and available products for senior center food service directors and marketers of New York farm products.

The bill was sent to the Assembly.