



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Ritchie, Agricultural Advisory Council Explore Ways to Cut Energy Costs for Farmers

PATTY RITCHIE May 17, 2013

| ISSUE: **AGRICULTURE, ORGANIC FARMING, DAIRY, LIVESTOCK**



State Senator Patty Ritchie joined with members of her Agricultural Advisory Council in Watertown this week to explore energy savings that would benefit the farming community.

Featured at the Thursday meeting was a presentation by National Grid, where a representative from the utility outlined ways farmers can save on energy bills.

“Electricity costs for farmers—especially dairy farmers—are very high,” said Senator Ritchie.

“That’s why it’s so important to find ways to cut energy bills so our hardworking farmers can boost their bottom lines, run successful operations, and create jobs.”

In this year’s State Budget, Senator Ritchie led the fight to roll back the 2009 energy surcharge, which will save farmers—as well as residential and business customers—millions of dollars on their electric bills.

At Thursday’s meeting, Senator Ritchie announced she would work with National Grid and other local agriculture leaders to host a workshop later this year to increase awareness of energy saving programs and opportunities for farmers.

In addition, the panel reviewed legislative proposals including legislation that would give beginning farmers access to viable agricultural land as well as legislation that would help farmers find better ways to cut runoff pollution on their farms.

Formed in 2011, the Agricultural Advisory Council—comprised of leaders in the industry from Central and Northern New York—is tasked with identifying challenges and opportunities for growth in the agriculture industry which can be passed on to the Senate Agriculture Committee, which Senator Ritchie chairs.

Members of Senator Ritchie’s Agricultural Advisory Council include:

- Eric Behling: Oswego County
- Nancy Weber: Oswego County
- Terry Wilbur: Oswego County
- Faye Beckwith: Oswego County
- Mark Akins: St. Lawrence County
- Jon Greenwood: St. Lawrence County
- Keith Pierce: St. Lawrence County
- Allan and Mary Kelly: St. Lawrence County
- Dr. Jack Zeh: St. Lawrence County
- Jim Curtis : St. Lawrence County
- Jay Matteson: Jefferson County
- Ron Robbins: Jefferson County
- Larry Rudd: Jefferson County
- Phil Randazzo: Jefferson County