



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

Farm Bureau recognizes O'Mara as a 'friend' of New York agriculture, farmers

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Elmira, N.Y.—State Senator Tom O'Mara (R-C, Big Flats) has been named to the 2013 New York Farm Bureau "Circle of Friends" -- an honorary organization formed in 1990 by the state's leading farm advocacy organization to recognize state legislators who strongly support agriculture.

The Farm Bureau represents more than 35,000 member farm families statewide.

"I've always been proud to stand up for our local farmers and farm families, and for a regional and statewide agricultural industry that's been such a tremendous foundation of upstate New York's culture and economy. It's a vitally important industry across hundreds of communities and remains a fundamental building block of a strong future," said O'Mara, a member of the Senate Agriculture Committee.

"The New York Farm Bureau 'Circle of Friends' legislative award is based upon your voting record on issues of importance to New York agriculture," Farm Bureau President Dean Norton wrote in a letter to O'Mara informing him of the selection.

"Membership is reserved for only those who actively support the farm families of New York State."

O'Mara said that he was honored to receive the recognition for his consistent support of New York's No. 1 industry. He noted that the farm economy generates more than \$4 billion worth of annual economic activity statewide and provides a livelihood for hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers.

New York Governor Andrew Cuomo recently signed into law legislation O'Mara co-sponsored in 2013 to place a two-percent cap on annual agricultural land assessment increases and deliver long-awaited and badly needed property tax relief

to state farmers.

The new law, long a priority of New York's farm families, was a cornerstone of ["Grown in New York,"](#) a comprehensive economic development strategy for New York State agriculture unveiled by O'Mara and his Senate Republican colleagues earlier this year. O'Mara stressed that he and his colleagues will keep pushing other provisions of their "Grown in New York" plan that focuses on tax cuts, regulatory reform, market expansion and a series of other economic growth initiatives.

O'Mara also serves as one of 10 members – five state senators, and five members of the Assembly – on the joint, bipartisan Legislative Commission on the Development of Rural Resources. The commission, commonly known as the Rural Resources Commission, was established by the Legislature nearly three decades ago to examine the impact of rural communities and industries, especially agriculture, on the state economy and to develop programs and other initiatives to enhance and protect the state's rural resources.