



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Agriculture, Family Farming Will Grow WITH Senate Budget Plan

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Ritchie 'Young Farmer' Plan, Record Ag Funding Wins Bipartisan Support Senator Ritchie's "Young Farmers NY" plan to secure the future of family farming and encourage more young people to pursue careers in agriculture won bipartisan approval today as part of the Senate's state budget plan that also included nearly \$9 million in new investments in programs to help farmers grow. That amount is the largest increase in support for agricultural research, marketing and education programs in at least six years. Senator Ritchie's Young Farmers NY plan was modeled on successful programs in other states that are bringing young people back to agriculture. "To keep farms growing from generation to generation, we need to break down some of the barriers to young farmers, such as the high cost of farmland and equipment, education and red tape," said Senator Ritchie, who chairs the Senate's Agriculture Committee. "Approval of my Young Farmers plan by the Senate is a step toward ensuring that family farmers will continue to feed New Yorkers into the future." Young Farmers NY included a number of provisions intended to ease the

passage of farms across generations, as well as help beginning farmers start their own successful farm businesses, including:

- a \$5 million revolving loan fund to help beginning farmers purchase land and equipment, and tax credits to encourage retiring farmers to sell their business to another farmer, instead of a developer;
- \$1 million in innovation grants to provide start-up funding for novice farmers
- Farm Savings Accounts to encourage families to save for the purchase of a first farm;
- An apprentice program for beginning farmers, administered by local BOCES;
- Student loan forgiveness;
- Increased funding for high school based ag education.

In addition to embracing the Young Farmers plan, the Senate also approved increased funding for agricultural programs, as well as funding for new initiatives. The \$9 million in added funding is a significant increase, and continues Senator Ritchie's efforts to reverse years of cuts that occurred before she joined the Senate, and which devastated many programs that farmers relied on to improve their bottom line and help their businesses grow. The \$9 million in added funding is a significant increase, and continues Senator Ritchie's efforts to reverse years of cuts that occurred before she joined the Senate, and which devastated many programs that farmers relied on to improve their bottom line and help their businesses grow. "These programs provide research and marketing assistance to farmers to help make their businesses more profitable and sustainable. New York's farm community is poised for tremendous growth, and we all have an interest in ensuring its success. That's why these programs and funding are so critical," Senator Ritchie said. The new and additional funding contained in the Senate budget plan includes:

Apple Growers Association	\$544,000
Dairy Profit Teams at Farm Viability Institute	\$220,000
Farm Viability Institute	\$1.1 million
Genesee Agriculture Academy	\$100,000
Island Harvest	\$20,000
Turfgrass Association	\$150,000
Wine and Grape Foundation	\$287,000
Tractor Rollover Prevention program	\$150,000
Rabies programs at Cornell	\$460,000
Cornell Animal Health Diagnostic Center	\$1.15 million
Berry Growers Association	\$320,000
Corn and Soybean Growers Association	\$75,000
Honeybee research at Cornell	\$50,000
Hops and Barley Research at Cornell	\$160,000
Cornell Maple Research	\$105,000
EEE program	\$175,000
FFA	\$158,000
Horticulture Society	\$500,000
Local Fair assistance	\$160,000
Low-cost vaccine program	\$25,000
Maple Producers Association	\$150,000
Northern NY Agriculture Development	\$600,000
Onion Growers Association	\$50,000
Vegetable Growers Association	\$100,000
Farm Net	\$516,000
Wood Products Council	\$100,000
Christmas Tree Growers	\$120,000
Harvest NY	\$1 million