



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

State of Ag: Ritchie Releases Annual Agriculture Report

Patty Ritchie

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Report Details Advancements, Investments and New Initiatives in Farming

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An innovative plan aimed at preserving the future of family farming, increasing investments in vital agriculture programs and a renewed push to encourage people to “eat local,” are just several of the highlights included in the 2014 Annual Report of the Senate Agriculture Committee, released today by the committee’s chair, State Senator Patty Ritchie.

“Throughout 2014, my colleagues and I worked diligently to grow our state’s largest industry by doing things like repealing costly mandates affecting farmers, restoring and increasing funding for vital programs and launching new initiatives like Young Farmers NY,” said Senator Ritchie, who was just reappointed as Senate Agriculture Committee Chair last week.

“By doing this, we laid groundwork that has positioned us for even further growth in the year to come. Last year was extremely productive for our committee, and I’m looking forward to us accomplishing even more in 2015 when it comes to continuing to grow agriculture and supporting New York’s hardworking farmers.”

Highlights included in the report—which is [available here](#), include the following::

- The launch of Senator Ritchie’s innovative “Young Farmers NY” program, which aims to protect our state’s agriculture industry by providing young people with resources and incentives to enter careers in farming or agribusiness;

- Final passage of a bipartisan bill that directs the state Agriculture Commissioner to find ways to support aging farmers;
- The adoption of a State Budget that includes significant support for vital agricultural programs;
- Final passage of legislation to increase the amount of locally grown and produced foods purchased by state agencies;
- New efforts to protect people and animals from deadly diseases like EEE, Lyme, West Nile and rabies through increased funding for preventative programs as well as the creation of the “21st Century Workgroup for Disease Elimination and Reduction,” a group comprised of experts in diseases, infection and public health tasked with pushing for the development of effective vaccines against diseases.

As a freshman Senator, Senator Ritchie was first named Chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee in 2011 and has served as its leader since then. In this role, she led the charge to increase funding for critical agriculture programs by more than \$21 million above the Executive’s recommendation, launch new initiatives to protect the future of agriculture and cut red tape and to help ensure farming remains New York’s largest industry.