



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Rich Funke

Senator Funke Secures Grant to Support Agriculture Industry Through Youth Outreach Program at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Monroe County

RICH FUNKE September 18, 2018



On Monday, September 17, 2018, New York State Senator Rich Funke and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Monroe County announced new funding for the 4-H Youth Outreach Program at Cornell Cooperative.

A \$45,000 state grant secured by Senator Funke will allow youth to learn about additional agricultural programs in areas that include: the exploration of agriculture-related careers;

the connection to food, nutrition, and consumer choices; as well as natural resources, conservation, stewardship, human populations, and land use issues.

*“The overarching goal of Agriculture in the Classroom education is to help students understand the value of agriculture and the role it plays in our everyday lives no matter where they live,” said **Executive Director Andrea Lista**. “Agricultural literacy is important for everyone – for the student who lives in the City of Rochester as well as the student who lives in Penfield or any one of our suburbs or rural areas of Monroe County. Senator Funke has a long-standing history of advocacy for agriculture in Monroe County and we are very appreciative of the funding he has allocated in support of this program.”*

All youth programs at Cornell Cooperative run through the 4-H. Agriculture in the Classroom in particular targets students in grades 4-12; however, it is available for students in K-12. Educators work with participating school districts to select and implement the curriculum that best meets the needs of both districts and students. It also serves as a pipeline for potential agribusiness students into local community colleges and universities.

*“When we support programs that focus on agriculture, we are supporting an industry that helps reduce poverty, provide food for those in need, and fresh products for families,” said **Senator Funke**. “In Monroe and Ontario counties especially, agriculture supports thousands of families in rural communities. Agriculture in the Classroom is an excellent way to educate our youth about this vital industry while encouraging them to also explore it as a career option.”*

Established in 1985, New York Agriculture in the Classroom (NYAITS) is a partnership among Cornell University, the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, the New York State Education Department, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and the New York Farm Bureau. The mission is to foster awareness, understanding, and appreciation of food and fiber production, while helping educators, students, and their communities learn about and engage with agriculture and food systems.

This year, Senator Funke was part of the successful effort in the New York State Senate to increase funding for agriculture programs by \$3 million over last year.