



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jen Metzger

Governor Signs Senator Metzger's Food Supply Chain Bill

JEN METZGER December 3, 2020

| ISSUE: **FOOD SUPPLY, AGRICULTURE, COMBATING COVID-19 AND PROTECTING NEW YORKERS**



Albany, NY... New York State will look at strategies designed to strengthen the state's food supply chain under a bill (A10607/**S8561**) sponsored by Senator Jen Metzger and Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo signed into law this week. A diverse group of stakeholders will provide guidance and recommendations on New York's food supply and related supply chain logistics in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is Senator Metzger's 31st bill signed into law.

"One of the lessons of this pandemic is the need to strengthen our regional food systems to help reduce our vulnerability to disruptions in national supply chains while supporting local farms and food businesses and becoming more self-reliant," **said Senator Jen Metzger (SD-42).**

"We need to re-evaluate state policies in light of what we've learned, build on innovative initiatives like Nourish NY, and bring new ideas to the table. I'm pleased that this legislation was signed into law at this opportune moment to capitalize on and to build back stronger."

"On Wednesday, my committee co-hosted a budget hearing that focused on recent food supply chain disruptions," **said Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo (AD-123), Chair of the Assembly Agriculture Committee.** "The pandemic exposed weaknesses in the system that we must address for future disruptions and for long term sustainability. There is no reason we should ever see producers disposing of food while our grocery stores and pantries struggle to keep up."

Pursuant to a chapter amendment that will need to be passed when session reconvenes, the Commissioners of Agriculture and Markets and Economic Development, will work with Cornell, the state's land grant university, to issue a report by December 1, 2021. The original version of the bill called for the creation of a new working group.

Under this new initiative, representatives from affected industries and organizations will meet with government officials to offer recommendations to improve NY's food supply chain. The effort will include representatives from organic and conventional farming, food processing, retail food businesses, foodservice, wholesalers, distributors, food transporters, labor, emergency food providers, academia, local state and federal agencies, and others. All regions of the state will be considered, along with the interests of minority, women, and small and family-owned businesses. Finally, the report will include recommendations regarding potential changes to laws, rules, and policies, along with feasibility and associated costs.

"Our state's farmers faced new challenges, like all New Yorkers, in dealing with the pandemic and its impacts. It forced us to quickly adapt and deal with supply chain issues while we continued to work hard to produce the food we all need. New York Farm Bureau commends the work of our Agriculture Committee Chairs for addressing future needs with this legislation, and we look forward to engaging with our fellow stakeholders to have a stronger, more resilient food system that supports us all," **said David Fisher, New York Farm Bureau President.**

"I can think of no better time than now, when we remember unanticipated shortages at grocery stores and distressingly long lines at food assistance providers, to focus on improving resiliency and accessibility of locally produced farm and food products. This valuable legislation will benefit farmers, food processors, and consumers, by recommending ways to strengthen and invest in a more robust farm and food system in New York for the years to come. I applaud Assemblymember Lupardo and Senator Jen Metzger's leadership, and Governor Cuomo and Commissioner Richard Ball in supporting this important legislation. I know all of my colleagues at Cornell College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and our Cornell Cooperative Extension partners look forward to the dialogue and work ahead," **said Julie Suarez, Associate Dean for Land-Grant Affairs.**

Throughout this pandemic, Senator Metzger has been actively working with farms and food producers to provide assistance as they adapt to the crisis, and has bolstered initiatives like the state's farm to food bank program, Nourish NY, that support the purchase of New York farm products while at the same time addressing growing food insecurity. In June, she introduced a bill ([S8504](#)) that would double funding for the program using \$25 million of unallocated funding from the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020 or other future federal stimulus funding.

Senator Metzger has also been vocal about the need to strengthen New York's food systems in her role as Chair of the Senate's Agriculture Committee, and [in her recent COVID-19 online series](#), went into great detail on how the pandemic's disruptions to agriculture have only further illustrated the delicacy of the supply chain and the need to address it.

Jen Metzger represents the 42nd Senate District, which includes all of Sullivan County and parts of Delaware, Orange, and Ulster Counties. Senator Metzger serves as Chair of the Agriculture Committee and sits on the Environmental Conservation, Education, Health, Energy and Telecommunications, Local Government, Women's Issues, Domestic Animal Welfare, and Legislative Commission on Rural Resources Committees.

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RELATED LEGISLATION

2019-S8561A

- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
 - In Committee Senate
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
 - On Floor Calendar Senate

- - Passed Assembly
 - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
-

Establishes a New York food supply working group

June 16, 2020

Senate Floor Calendar

Sponsored by **Jen Metzger**

Do you support this bill?