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## **Testimony for the Joint Senate and Assembly Legislative Budget Hearing on Environmental Conservation**

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Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony on behalf of New York Farm Bureau regarding the proposed extended producer responsibility legislation (EPR).

This proposal would greatly impact New York State's agricultural industry. This legislation would create an entirely new statewide recycling program and shift the program responsibility from private recycling companies and municipalities to "producers". This would include farms and agribusinesses that sell dairy, wine, cider and other packaged goods. Farm producers are unprepared to assume this type of responsibility, from both a management and financial perspective, especially given the current farm economy, the economic impacts of the ongoing pandemic, as well as the increased costs of doing business do to the rise of inflation currently experienced.

We believe legislation containing this level of change and upheaval to the current system, which severely impacts farms and the general business community, needs much more stakeholder input such as legislative hearings as well as an impact study prior to the legislation moving forward. Within this legislation there is a lot of uncertainty and many questions regarding the producer responsibility organizations to be created, the overall costs, as well as how packaging from out of state will be handled.

Additionally, we are concerned with language in the proposal prohibiting farmers, agribusiness, and other industries from increasing the costs of their products to cover the costs of their new recycling responsibilities. If this were to be passed into law, this legislation would create very real negative impact on farm viability, food access and costs all during a time that we are trying to encourage food production and on-farm processing of food products.