



Annual Report 2025

New York State Senate Standing Committee on
Agriculture

Senator Michelle Hinchey

Chair

Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins
President Pro Tempore
NYS Senate Majority Leader



CHAIR
AGRICULTURE

COMMITTEES
CULTURAL AFFAIRS, TOURISM,
PARKS AND RECREATION
ENERGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
FINANCE
INTERNET AND TECHNOLOGY
TRANSPORTATION

THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK



MICHELLE HINCHEY
Senator, 41ST District

MEMBER
LEGISLATIVE WOMEN'S CAUCUS
LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION ON
RURAL RESOURCES
SELECT MAJORITY TASK FORCE ON
MINORITY AND WOMEN-OWNED
BUSINESS ENTERPRISES
JOINT SENATE TASK FORCE ON
OPIOIDS, ADDICTION AND OVERDOSE
PREVENTION
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CANNABIS

January 5, 2026

The Honorable Andrea Stewart-Cousins
Temporary President and Majority Leader
New York State Senate
Albany, NY 12247

Dear Leader Stewart-Cousins:

I am pleased to share the Annual Report of the New York State Senate Standing Committee on Agriculture for the 2025 Legislative Session. As Chair, I'm proud to guide our efforts to support this vital industry. Agriculture is not only a cornerstone of New York's economy, but also vital to our daily lives — ensuring our food security, preserving our natural resources, and supporting regional resilience in the face of a changing climate.

During the 2025 Session, the Agriculture Committee met five (5) times and reported thirty-three (33) bills. As Chair of the Committee, I worked to elevate the importance of our agricultural community through a variety of farm tours, forums, and panels that brought together farmers, elected officials, and community stakeholders. I thank my colleagues who served on the Committee for their efforts, and I thank you for the continued support from you and the Majority Conference members to grow and strengthen this crucial industry within our State. Furthermore, a sincere thank you to our partners across New York, including elected officials at all levels of government and stakeholders within this community, for their continued partnership in creating a resilient and sustainable food system from field to fork.

New York has a pivotal role to play in ensuring the future and safety of our country's food supply, along with the protection of our natural environment. Our work over this last year reflects efforts to grow sustainability while increasing access to land, knowledge, and capital for those interested in this field. I look forward to the opportunities in next year's Session to build on our success and to ensure that New York's agricultural economy can grow well into the future.

Sincerely,

Michelle Hinchey

Senator Michelle Hinchey



2025 LEGISLATIVE SESSION REPORT

NEW YORK STATE SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

**Senator Michelle Hinchey,
Chairperson**

Committee Members

Senator Samra G. Brouk

Senator Patricia A. Fahy

Senator Nathalia Fernandez

Senator Christopher J. Ryan

Senator Lea Webb

Senator George M. Borrello –
Ranking Member

Senator Pamela A. Helming

Senator Peter Oberacker

Committee Staff

Grant Hart - Counsel

Malik Dare - Principal Analyst

Mischa Sogut - Legislative Director and
Committee Clerk

COMMITTEE JURISDICTION AND OVERVIEW

The New York State Senate Standing Committee on Agriculture has legislative oversight responsibilities for issues concerning the State's agricultural sector and food supply chain. The Committee routinely deals with legislation that impacts the Department of Agriculture and Markets, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and farm organizations.

During the 2025 Legislative Session, one hundred eleven (111) bills were referred to the Committee for its review. Of these bills, thirty-three (33) were reported from the Committee, thirty (30) were passed by the Senate, and six (6) passed in both houses. This work was conducted through a series of five (5) Committee meetings. A list of all bills that were reported from the Committee is provided at the end of this report.

As Chair, I hosted four marquee events at the Capitol. On April 29, 2025, we hosted Animal Advocacy Day, in partnership with Senator Martinez, welcoming pet and animal resource groups to Albany to connect with legislators. Working with the New York Brewers Association, on May 6, 2025, we invited fifteen (15) craft breweries, from Long Island to the Adirondacks, to the Legislative Office Building to share samples of their products and advocate for legislation relevant to their businesses. Shortly following this, we worked with the New York Wine Policy Institute to welcome 20+ wineries to the Capitol on May 18, 2025, to discuss legislation affecting wine production in the State and to sample their products. To cap off this Session, on June 5, 2025, dairy producers gathered in the Well to celebrate Dairy Day and June as the upcoming Dairy Month.

Aside from the legislation highlighted later in this report, this year's Enacted Budget fully funded the final expansion of universal school meals. After years of leading the fight to make this a reality, the Legislature and Governor finally delivered on the promise to ensure every school across New York State can now offer free breakfast and lunch to all students. This final expansion will help end food insecurity in schools, reduce stigma for students, and save families an average of \$165 per child per month on grocery costs.

In addition to our agricultural policy work in Albany, I visited and toured a diverse number of farms and agricultural facilities across the State. On July 17, 2025, I toured Kalleco Nursery Corp's garden center in Tillson, where we talked about the importance of engaging young people in agriculture and how conservation-minded gardening practices can lead to healthier soil and support for pollinators. A few months later, on September 15, 2025, I visited Branchwater Farms, toured their farm and distillery operation, and discussed with them what New York State is doing to promote health and guidance in the absence of federal leadership, especially regarding avian influenza (H5N1).

On October 24, 2025, I had the privilege of speaking at the Columbia County Farm Bureau's annual dinner in Kinderhook. We shared details about some of our work through the Agriculture Committee, the importance of advocating with leaders at every level of government about the challenges farmers are facing today, and the opportunities we have to strengthen the industry and New York's food supply.

On November 17, 2025, I visited SUNY Cobleskill to announce the launch of the SUNY Agritech Center. The Center, which evolved from discussions I had in 2023 with SUNY Chancellor King, is a statewide, multicampus collaborative project to make the State University of New York (SUNY) a leader in the agricultural space through academic and program development and partnerships with agriculture businesses and the community. This includes expanding outreach to promote youth engagement in agriculture, developing and deploying new technology and sustainability solutions, including to address climate impacts on farming, coordinating cross-campus academic initiatives, and training and job placement opportunities. At the launch event, I participated in a panel with SUNY statewide leadership, agriculture business representatives, students and staff from various SUNY and other academic agriculture programs. I and other State elected officials then got a tour of research and production facilities across diverse sectors, including fish and meat production and greenhouse vegetable models designed to build farm climate resilience, improve pest and disease management, and ensure development and sustainability of New York agriculture.

Throughout the year, I met with numerous stakeholders to hear the issues concerning the broad range of agricultural sectors, from groups that promote the next generation of farmers and farm leadership like FFA to producer advocates, including dairy, craft beverage, and specialty crop organizations, to groups like the American Farmland Trust that work to protect New York's irreplaceable agricultural land.

In addition to informational meetings, I hosted and took part in several outreach and advocacy events such as an August event hosted by Farm to Institution

New York State (FINYS) in Rotterdam Junction to discuss with farmers and producers how we can expand the amount of locally grown foods that are served in institutions such as schools, hospitals and colleges with the ultimate goal of every public food dollar being used to feed New York kids and support New York farms.

On October 29, 2025, I hosted a virtual farmer listening session and roundtable with Assembly Agriculture Committee Chair Donna Lupardo to hear directly from farmers about how new policies from the federal administration and the USDA are set to impact their businesses. Farmers from around the State shared with us the impact of these federal policies on their farms, including how cuts to long-standing grants, loans and programs will impede their growth and stall plans already in the works, whether they will be able to access and afford health insurance due to the commitment to let subsidies lapse, and how changes to input costs and the market are impacting their overall businesses.

My days were also filled with opportunities to meet with the next generation of leaders in agriculture. In February, Assemblywoman Lupardo and I hosted FFA students in Albany during their Advocacy Day. Later in the year, on July 24, 2025, I joined the Greene County community in opening the Greene County Youth Fair, and a couple of days later, on July 30, 2025, I attended the opening of the Ulster County Fair, and toured the Youth Building and 4-H projects there. I also hosted Saugerties High School students at one of our Agriculture Committee meetings to show them the legislative process and our Committee in action. These events, in addition to all the above work, showed firsthand the promise of New York agriculture leading us into the future.

COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS

The following key bills were acted on by the Committee in 2025:

- **S.6286A Hinchey/A.7584A Lupardo** - This legislation creates a standardized definition for agrivoltaics establishes the agrivoltaics viability pilot program within the farmland viability program to provide grants to identify the best practices and strategies for dual-use solar energy projects that protect soil health during construction and decommissioning of solar arrays, utilize sustainable agricultural production practices, monitor any benefits solar energy may have on farms and to the state, track economic viability, study the commercialization of dual-use solar energy projects, and encourage equitable engagement of stakeholders. As New York continues to take action against climate change and work to meet the goals of the CLCPA, it is important that an energy crisis is not exchanged for a food crisis. Solar energy production and agriculture do not need to be mutually exclusive and can work together in a dual-use model, helping facilitate a transition to a renewable energy economy with-profitable farms generating energy and food. This bill works to understand and optimize agrivoltaics, incentivizing pilot implementation through grants.
- **S.1783A Hinchey/A.6825A Woerner** - This legislation prohibits sellers of liquified petroleum from charging consumers certain fees including; a “special usage fee” or more than nominal value if they use less than a minimum amount of petroleum set by a seller, for liquified petroleum that is not actually delivered, a fee of more than labor costs or nominal value for ending service before their contract with the petroleum seller has ended, a tank rental fee after the seller has disconnected the customer’s service or a delivery fee if a consumer runs out of petroleum due to the seller’s failure to deliver. Companies selling propane in New York charge numerous hidden fees, many of which are excessively burdensome for consumers and work contrary to our ambitious climate goals. There can be exorbitant fees to cancel service or to have a propane tank removed, making it exceedingly expensive for consumers to end their contracts with their current provider. By prohibiting petroleum gas companies from charging these unnecessary fees, this bill would remove some of those barriers and put money back into people's pockets.

- **S.4754 Bailey/A.124 Cruz** - This legislation establishes the office of urban agriculture. The creation of the Office for Urban Agriculture will support and help facilitate various efforts to create and uphold urban agriculture structures around the state. The office will serve as a resource for residents by creating an interactive website that provides information and resources with regard to urban farming, available state or municipality owned-land available for use/cultivation, and provide direction regarding assisting in promulgating urban agriculture efforts. Urban agriculture creates an avenue for urban communities, with limited access to fresh produce, to produce their own fresh, healthy foods for their residents.
- **S.1784 Hinchey/A.5505 Lupardo** - This legislation would require owners of real property to inspect vacated properties within three days of the owner being notified that it is vacant to check to see that no animals were left abandoned in the home and would require the landowner to notify animal control, police or SPCA in order for the animal to be removed or cared for until such time as it can be removed. Oftentimes when people are forced from their homes it is due to financial reasons or a change in lifestyle or re-location. These types of reasons for vacating a home can occasionally lead individuals to make hasty and desperate decisions for their pets. This bill would ensure that any pets that may have been left behind can be brought to a new home.
- **S.1239E Kavanagh/A.1556E Kelles** - This legislation would ban dangerous additives like FD&C Red 3, Potassium Bromate, and Propylparabens from all foods in New York, impose stricter prohibitions on chemicals in school meals including banning various synthetic dyes (including Red 40, Yellow 5, and others) from school foods, and require transparency from food manufacturers about ingredients currently hidden from public view. Under current federal law, companies are allowed to determine on their own whether the ingredients in their foods are generally recognized as safe and therefore whether they have to disclose to the FDA that it is in their product. This bill would close that loophole in New York by requiring companies to disclose their ingredients to the Department of Agriculture and Markets and requiring the Commissioner to make this information publicly available. This will keep chemicals that are linked to cancer and other harmful side effects out of everyone's food in New York State.

TWO HOUSE BILLS

BILL	SPONSOR	SUMMARY	SIGNIFICANT ACT
S.01373	SERRANO	Relates to voluntary contributions in support of municipal animal pounds or shelters.	Chaptered 420
S.04911	HINCHEY	Exempts processors of syrup made from tree sap or honey who do not purchase syrup made from tree sap or honey from others for repackaging, and who do not combine syrup made from tree sap or honey with any other ingredients capable of supporting the growth of infectious or toxigenic organisms from certain licensing requirements for food processing establishments.	Chaptered 424
S.06330	HINCHEY	Defines therapeutic agriculture for the purposes of community gardens as the use of agricultural activities as a means of promoting physical, mental and emotional well-being, rehabilitation and therapy for certain individuals.	Substituted By A.2185 - Vetoed Memorandum 39
S.07359A	MAY	Directs the commissioner of agriculture and markets, acting by and through the department of economic development, in cooperation with the department of environmental conservation, to establish a New York native plants designation, and offer seals or logos identifying native plants as grown in New York state and certified for their quality, for product labeling, advertising, and displays.	Chaptered 702

SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

BILL	SPONSOR	SUMMARY	SIGNIFICANT ACT
S.00197	MARTINEZ	Enacts "Tucker's law"; removes the provision that provides that any term of imprisonment for a violation of aggravated cruelty to animals may not exceed two years.	Passed the Senate
S.00397	MYRIE	Relates to false or misleading advertisements of food and food products; provides factors to determine whether an advertisement is false or misleading; provides for enforcement and a private right of action.	Passed the Senate
S.00592	HINCHEY	Establishes the New York state youth in agriculture and entrepreneurship summer employment program to provide students with the opportunity to be educated on the agricultural industry and alternative career paths and to provide agricultural work experience and entrepreneurship work experience.	Passed the Senate
S.00593	HINCHEY	Includes certain land that is owned or rented as a farm operation for the production for sale of crops, livestock or livestock products as land used in agricultural production.	Passed the Senate
S.00703	KRUEGER	Eliminates the requirement that injury be serious with respect to aggravated cruelty to animals.	Passed the Senate
S.00879A	MAY	Establishes the "garden protection act", protecting the rights of individuals to cultivate home vegetable gardens, native plant gardens, and/or pollinator gardens.	Passed the Senate

S.01239E	KAVANAGH	Enacts the "food safety and chemical disclosure act"; prohibits certain food additives and food color additives; provides that in an action to enforce compliance, the recognition by the federal food and drug administration of any of these substances as safe may not be alleged as a defense; establishes requirements for the reporting of GRAS (generally recognized as safe) substances.	On Calendar 854 Opposite House
S.01373	SERRANO	Relates to voluntary contributions in support of municipal animal pounds or shelters.	Chaptered 420
S.01529	PARKER	Establishes a tax credit for farmers who maximize carbon sequestration potential through a "carbon farming" land management strategy; directs DEC to develop regulations related to certifying the amount of carbon sequestered or emissions reduced.	Passed the Senate
S.01741	MARTINEZ	Provides that the penalty for the abandonment of animals is a misdemeanor, punishable by imprisonment for not more than one year, or by a fine of not less than five hundred dollars nor more than one thousand dollars, or by both. Criminal Sanction Impact.	Passed the Senate
S.01743	MARTINEZ	Requires certain peace officers to issue an appearance ticket, summon or arrest and bring before the appropriate court any person offending the provisions of article 26 of the agriculture and markets law.	Senate Rules
S.01783A	HINCHEY	Prohibits the misrepresentation or collection of certain fees related to the delivery, usage, and storage of liquified petroleum.	Passed the Senate

S.01784	HINCHEY	Relates to the inspection of property that has been vacated for abandoned animals; requires property owners and lessors to inspect such property within three days and to immediately notify the appropriate authorities when such person finds an animal which appears to be abandoned.	Passed the Senate
S.03026	GIANARIS	Restricts the performance of surgical devocalization procedures on dogs and cats; prohibited for reasons of convenience in keeping or handling a dog or cat.	Passed the Senate
S.03277	SKOUFIS	Establishes a process for designating transfer-on-death beneficiaries for farming implements involving filing a document with the commissioner of agriculture and markets.	Passed the Senate
S.03578A	CLEARE	Requires the department of agriculture and markets to facilitate and expand an initiative to promote opportunities for farm ownership to farmers who are black, indigenous and people of color; requires the department to submit a triennial report to the governor and the legislature regarding such initiative.	Reported to Senate Finance
S.04041	PERSAUD	Establishes the sanitary retail food store grant program to provide funding to retail food stores that fail inspections to correct deficiencies if such stores are unable to sustain the costs to immediately correct critical deficiencies, are located in food deserts, and would otherwise be unable to stay in operation due to their inability to meet and maintain sanitary standards.	Reported to Senate Finance

S.04162	BAILEY	Expands the FreshConnect program, which provides rebates for the purchase of local produce to certain people, to include local produce sold in supermarkets and grocery stores.	Passed the Senate
S.04754	BAILEY	Establishes the office of urban agriculture.	Passed the Senate
S.04755	BAILEY	Establishes the farm ownership succession planning program to provide farm owners with a succession planning toolkit that can be used by such farm owners who plan on selling or closing their farm.	Passed the Senate
S.04911	HINCHEY	Exempts processors of syrup made from tree sap or honey who do not purchase syrup made from tree sap or honey from others for repackaging, and who do not combine syrup made from tree sap or honey with any other ingredients capable of supporting the growth of infectious or toxigenic organisms from certain licensing requirements for food processing establishments.	Chaptered 424
S.05159	COMRIE	Requires the community gardens task force to conduct an assessment of all community gardens located on publicly owned land in the state to facilitate each garden's designation as a critical environmental area.	Passed the Senate
S.05488	COMRIE	Permits microchipping of certain animals possessed by animal protective associations and rescue organizations.	Passed the Senate

S.05513	HINCHEY	Expands agricultural tourism to include, but not be limited to, the production and processing of grapes, grains or other crops used to create alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages in an on-farm brewery, winery, cidery, meadery or distillery, the production and processing of fiber such as sheep or alpaca wool, and the production of processed food commodities, including but not limited to ice cream, jams, baked goods and similar items.	Passed the Senate
S.06286A	HINCHEY	Establishes the agrivoltaics viability pilot program to provide grants to identify the best practices and strategies for agrivoltaics and dual-use solar energy projects that protect soil health during construction and decommissioning of solar arrays, utilize sustainable agricultural production practices, monitor any benefits solar energy may have on farms and to the state, track economic viability, study the commercialization of dual-use solar energy projects, and encourage equitable engagement of stakeholders.	Passed the Senate
S.06330	HINCHEY	Defines therapeutic agriculture for the purposes of community gardens as the use of agricultural activities as a means of promoting physical, mental and emotional well-being, rehabilitation and therapy for certain individuals.	Substituted By A.2185 - Vetoed Memorandum 39
S.06573A	HINCHEY	Requires municipal employees to attempt to identify and notify the owners of a deceased dog or cat recovered on public roads by such municipal employees.	Passed the Senate

S.06848	WEBB	Directs the department of agriculture and markets to increase the number of regional farmers' markets for the direct marketing of foods and produce produced in the state.	Passed the Senate
S.07359A	MAY	Directs the commissioner of agriculture and markets, acting by and through the department of economic development, in cooperation with the department of environmental conservation, to establish a New York native plants designation, and offer seals or logos identifying native plants as grown in New York state and certified for their quality, for product labeling, advertising, and displays.	Chaptered 702
S.07618.A	HINCHEY	Requires certain labelling to be used to indicate the safety Consumer Protection dates and quality dates of food items; requires the department of agriculture and markets to educate consumers about such provisions.	Reported to Senate

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