



NYSAC

NEW YORK STATE  
ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES



**Farming Task Force**

THE FUTURE OF FARMING IN  
NEW YORK STATE:  
A REPORT TO GOVERNOR-ELECT  
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NYSAC

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# BLUE RIBBON TASK FORCE ON THE FUTURE OF FARMING IN NEW YORK STATE



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A special thanks to the following experts who contributed their time and expertise to the deliberations of the Blue Ribbon Task Force and helped make this report possible.

Robert Smith, Farm Credit East  
Julie Suarez, New York Farm Bureau

Rick Zimmerman, Zimmerman, Gottwals and Associates

# NYSAC Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Future of Farming

## SOWING THE SEEDS

The agriculture industry remains a top contributor to the New York State economy, providing critical jobs, revenues and food for the state and beyond. This industry is worth saving for our generation and for those that follow.

Unfortunately public policy decisions of the last few decades have put the long-term economic viability of our farms at risk. In response, in February 2010 New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC) President Thomas J. Santulli, the Chemung County Executive, created the NYSAC Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Future of Farming in New York State. The Task Force has been charged with looking at the challenges facing our farms from the county perspective.

The Task Force members asked themselves the simple question: "What can we do, as county leaders, to support the future of farming in our communities?"

This report begins to answer that question. It is not the "end all and be all" for agriculture policy in New York State, but it is a beginning of the discussion from the county point of view. The Task Force tackled some of the difficult challenges facing the agriculture industry including farmland preservation, environmental policies, dairy pricing and marketing.

Some of the issues that this report does not address include fruit and vegetable production and processing, meat processing, breeding farms and the link between game farms and the agriculture industry. The Task Force will take up these topics in the future.

### New York's Dairy Industry in Crisis

"New York's Dairy farms are a vital part of the State economy. In 2007, New York's dairy farms generated \$2.3 billion in revenue, supporting more than 20,000 farmers and employees as well as many local businesses that supply or provide services to dairy farms. Like most small businesses, dairy farms have been hit particularly hard in this recession, largely as a result of low milk prices,"

Hon. Thomas P. DiNapoli,  
NYS Comptroller, March 2010

## TENDING THE FIELDS

On March 15, 2010, the NYSAC Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Future of Farming in New York State convened to discuss agriculture in New York State. Task Force members focused the discussion on four priority areas: Protecting Farmland for Future Generations, Access to Nutritious Foods, Protecting Soil and the Environment and Strengthening the Farm Economy and Milk Pricing. Task Force members were then asked to recommend short-term, intermediate-term, long-term priorities that should be advocated for in the State legislative process and then analyzed for broader state-wide, long-term recommendations.

## IMMEDIATE NYSAC ADVOCACY

In terms of short-term advocacy efforts, the Task Force recommended:

- Restoration of funding for the NYS Department of Ag & Markets local assistance programs ([Appendix B, page 12](#)),
- Restorations to the Environmental Protection Fund ([Appendix B, page 12](#)), and
- Strong opposition to the Farm Labor Fair Practices Act ([Appendix A, page 11](#))

The 2010-11 State Budget cut funding for nearly all agriculture local assistance programs. Among the most severe cuts was \$2.84 million cut from the Farm Viability Institute (FVI) and 226,000 from the Center for Dairy Excellence, which will be administered by a grant program through the Department of Agriculture and Markets, not through FVI as in previous years. Other program funding was swept entirely, including Northern NY Agricultural Development, Maple Producers Association, NYS Wine Marketing and Promotion, and funding for the Organic Farming Program. ([Appendix A, page 11](#)).

In terms of the Farm Labor Bill, we are pleased to report, working along side New York Farm Bureau, the original Farm Labor Fair Practices Act was never allowed out of Committee, thus preventing

a full vote in the NYS Senate. The Senate did take up a similar bill during an extraordinary session on August 3, 2010. The house voted down S.8223 (Espada) by a vote of 28 ayes to 31 nays. This bill would have extended many of the same provisions to farm workers as the Farm Labor Fair Practices Act and would have inflicted debilitating harm on farms and farm owners. This was a close vote in the Senate and the issue will continue to be on the legislative agendas for some in the State Capitol. NYSAC continues to monitor this matter and will work with the Farm Bureau and other organizations in support of the future of farming in New York.

## ONGOING NYSAC ADVOCACY

With respect to “intermediate and long-term” goals, the four priority areas have been consolidated into two as a way to more effectively communicate and succinctly advocate the county position as it relates to matters important to New York’s farming communities. In this consolidation, all prior contributions and suggestions of the task force have been included.

For the purposes of NYSAC’s ongoing efforts, the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Farming will focus first on developing policy as it relates to Strengthening the Farm Economy, and second, on Protecting Farmland for Future Generations. Having a profitable farm sector will enable farmland protection and generational transfer or succession.

Within New York’s diverse agricultural economy, farms will evolve generally in two directions. Some will expand in size, hoping to stay efficient and remain a low cost producer of a commodity. Other farmers will adopt a business model that allows them to earn a greater share of consumers’ dollars. These farms will likely participate in direct-marketing or value-added opportunities. The work of this Task Force is therefore farm-size neutral and focuses on overall farm profitability. If NYSAC is successful in this effort, the agricultural industry will receive a significant complement to their public policy efforts and substantially enhance their overall success in achieving their objectives.

## STRENGTHENING THE FARM ECONOMY

When we begin to consider strengthening New York’s farm economy, the dairy industry rises to the top. New York State ranks 3rd nationally in dairy production (behind California and Wisconsin) and the dairy industry represents nearly two-thirds of all agricultural gross receipts.

### Fast Facts:

#### NY DAIRY PRODUCTS

“Milk is New York’s leading agricultural product and is produced all across the state. Milk sales account for one-half of total agricultural receipts. Production in 2005 was 11.7 billion pounds with a preliminary value of \$1.91 billion,”

Hon. Thomas P. DiNapoli,  
NYS Comptroller, March 2010

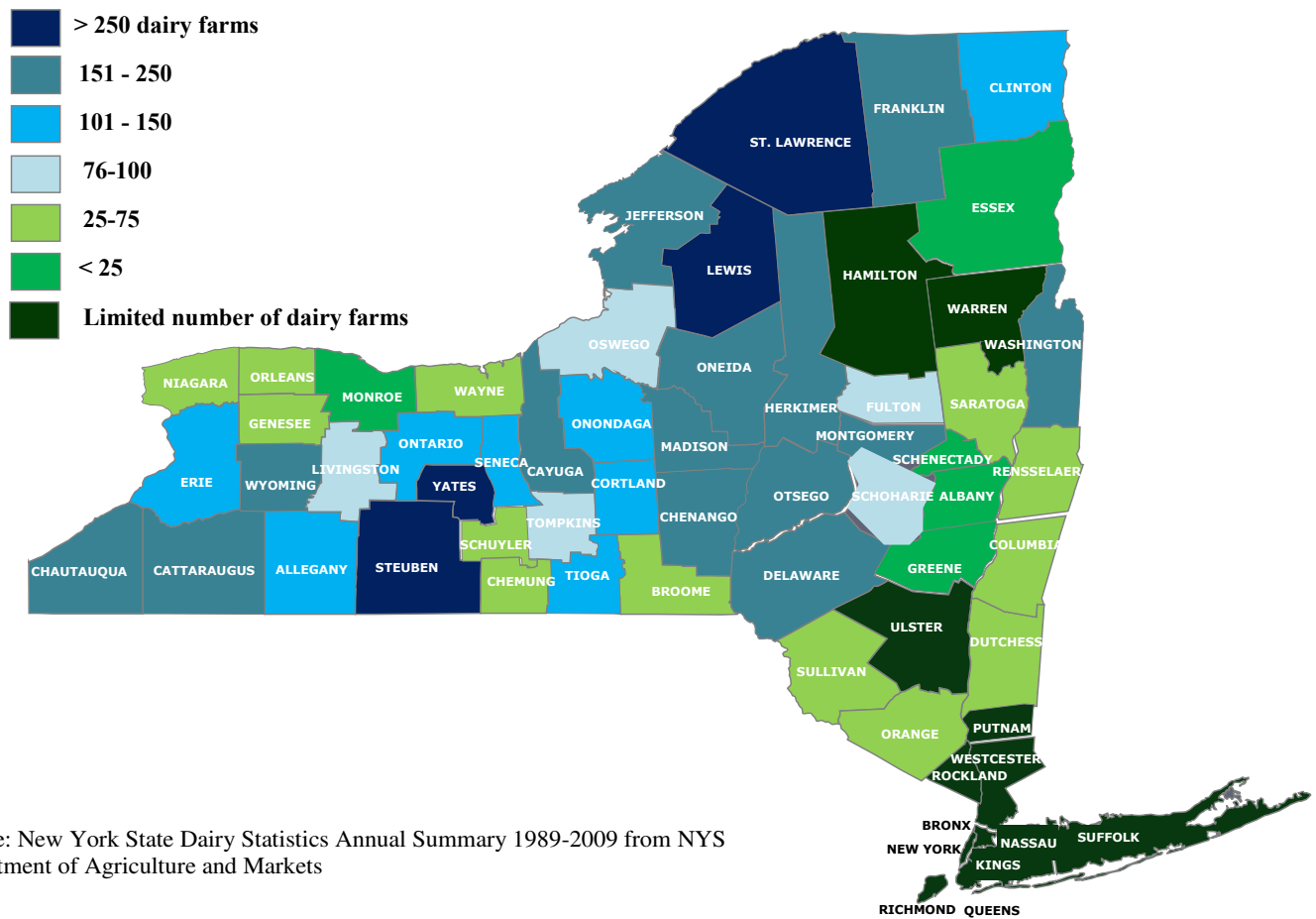
## FEDERAL FARM ACTION NEEDED NOW

Across the state, meetings have taken place over the last 18 months as dairy farmers have incurred staggering losses in their businesses and on their balance sheets, including roundtable discussion and a meeting on March 29, 2010 at Genesee Community College, hosted by US Senator Charles Schumer and US Department of Justice Officials. These meetings have resulted in the development of several key issues: price discovery, market transparency and overall federal milk market order reform. Three sections of the 2008 Farm Bill address these specific dairy policy issues: Sections 1510, 1509 and 1507.

## ENFORCE THE 2008 U.S. FARM BILL

1. Revisions to Section 1510 would require mandatory reporting to USDA by any milk processor who receives more than 500,000 lbs. of milk daily. Further, milk-handlers would be required to report actual production and inventory of processed products on a daily basis rather than a weekly basis which is currently required. Additionally, the frequency of USDA audits would increase from an annual occurrence to quarterly. These measures would provide USDA with a much more accurate accounting of the

## Number of Dairy Farms by County as of 2007



true “supply and demand” for all dairy products in this country. This proposal would also allow USDA to become less reliant on the “thinly traded” Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME), in their analysis of the value of milk products.

2. Enforce Section 1509 of the 2008 Farm Bill which requires the USDA to establish a Review Commission on Federal Milk Marketing Orders. The Congressional intent for this commission was to consider reducing the number of milk categories or “classes” from four to two. Essentially, Class I would represent the price paid for fluid milk and Class II would be the price paid for all other manufactured dairy products. The intent behind this proposal is to ensure competitiveness and transparency in dairy pricing and competitiveness for dairy products, both domestically and worldwide.
3. Enforce Section 1507 of the 2008 Farm Bill which adds an assessment of 7.5 cents per hundredweight (cwt) on imported dairy products.

Recognize this amount is half of what U.S. dairy producers pay (\$.15). Many importers and International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA) contend the reporting requirement in this law used to evaluate the milk equivalent for the assessment is onerous and unfair. The U.S. dairy industry contends “fairness” is an issue, as well as they are paying for market promotion and advertisement (ie. Got Milk!) for all dairy products sold in the U.S., including imported products. The USDA rule to administer this program is currently being disputed at the World Trade Organization; the U.S. Trade Representative is representing the U.S. dairy industry perspective.

## STRENGTHEN THE US FARM BILL

There are other dairy policy measures that should be considered in the development of the 2012 Farm Bill. One recommendation is the expansion of daily-electronic reporting for additional dairy products. Currently USDA only requires reporting for butter,

cheddar cheese, non-fat dry milk and whey. The U.S. dairy industry contends these four commodities represent too small a sample and may not reflect broad supply and demand conditions. Therefore, the NYSAC Blue Ribbon Task Force recommends removing the Dairy Price Support Program as a way to encourage innovation with our milk processors, developing products such as milk protein concentrates (MPC), a product the worldwide market and domestic food and beverage manufacturers truly desire. Lastly, supporting the establishment of a two-class system to price milk would address alignment issues for food and beverage makers and move milk to the highest value use, and significantly improving market transparency.

These policy recommendations would be advocated here in New York State with our individual members of Congress, and also at the federal level with the National Association of Counties (NACo). Like NYSAC, NACo has an agriculture and rural development committee structure.

## NEW YORK STATE NEEDS TO LEAD THE WAY

With regard to state specific efforts, reduced funding for dairy industry support infrastructure is harmful. The Task Force recommends the full restoration of funding for programs such as the New York Farm Viability Institute (NYFVI), which is the mechanism through which all research and development is funded; and the Center for Dairy Excellence (CDE), which coordinates consulting expertise for individual farmers. A full list of these programs of importance to farms and of concern for this Task Force is listed in Appendix B, page 12.

## REGIONAL WELL BEING

The Task Force also supports a regional effort designed to nurture the growth and profitability of the dairy industry in the Northeast. The Northeast Dairy Leadership Team is a three-state coalition of organizations and state governments focused on enhancing the profitability of the dairy industry throughout the Northeastern United States.

## GROW FARM TO MARKET PROGRAMS TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO NY FOOD

A growing number of farmers have embraced direct marketing as a way to earn a larger share of the consumer dollar. A number of direct marketing opportunities exist throughout New York and are found through traditional farmer's markets, regional markets, wholesale markets and direct delivery to food service institutions, and the Green Market Program in New York City. Direct marketing provides farmers a higher return per unit of product sold because they are providing more services, such as bringing fresh produce to consumers' communities, than those who rely on other businesses to perform those functions. Additionally, direct-marketing provides the forum for consumers and farmers to communicate directly, thereby establishing a personal relationship over a personal issue such as food. The Task Force supports the continued development of direct marketing programs and infrastructure. Specifically, we recommend support for the Farmers Market Grant Program that provides funds for infrastructure development of farmers markets throughout the state. In addition, we recommend strong support for the redevelopment of Hunts Point Terminal Market which offers an invaluable service of supplying the metro NYC region with fresh produce, including produce from New York farms.

### FAST FACTS:

#### NEW YORK VEGETABLE PRODUCTION

The value of vegetables in 2005 totaled \$461 million. Fresh market vegetables rank 6th and processing vegetables are 7th among the states. Leading crops in New York are cabbage, sweet corn and onions."

Hon. Thomas P. DiNapoli,  
NYS Comptroller, March 2010

Other value-added opportunities include various steps of processing raw commodities into popular consumer products. Examples include: cheeses and other dairy products, wines, jellies, jams, maple syrup, apple sauce, cider, and juices, steaks and other meat products. This range of value-added products requires investment of infrastructure necessary for food product processing and therefore creates an opportunity for public economic development dollars to assist in the support of such facilities.

Unfortunately, New York State has significantly underfunded these value-added initiatives because current economic development programs prioritize projects that create jobs. Typically agricultural economic development projects do not create many jobs; rather the investment is made in technology allowing the producer to become more efficient. Therefore, the Task Force also recommends supporting the creation and funding of an agricultural economic development program that is driven by metrics that recognizes the overall wealth creation within a community rather than just the overall job creation count.

## FAST FACTS:

### NEW YORK FRUIT PRODUCTION

“New York’s fruit crop receipts were valued at \$244 million in 2005. Apples and grapes lead New York fruit crops in value,”

Hon. Thomas P. DiNapoli,  
NYS Comptroller, March 2010

## PROMOTING OUR PRODUCE AND A HEALTHY NEW YORK

Proper labeling of products has enhanced consumer confidence, when making healthy-food choices. At the federal level Country of Origin Labeling (COOL), requires retailers such as full-line grocery stores, supermarkets and club-warehouses to notify their customers with information regarding the source of certain foods. New York’s Pride of New York Program was developed to promote and support the sale of agricultural products grown and food products processed within New York State. In addition to the federal and state food marketing promotions, many local or regional “branded” food products, have gained popularity with the purchaser. The Task Force recommends increased Pride of New York advertising to promote New York grown produce and farm products, both across New York State and nationally.

Some consumers seek products labeled as organic when considering a healthy-food choice. The term “organic” can be used to label products when farmers and food processors follow federal regulations contained within the National Organic Program. Organic farming methods emphasize soil health,

biological insect and disease control and natural fertilizers. Organic food processors cannot use synthetic food preservatives or non-organic additives, although there are several exceptions. Even though organic foods grew 16.2% in 2005 in the United States, organic food consumption worldwide remains less than 2% of total consumption.

With any agricultural production and marketing, broad-band access, transportation and energy costs, are important considerations. The digital divide—which separates those who have Broadband Internet access and those who don’t—is a very real phenomenon in New York. Our farmers need Broadband access to stay connected to the processing, production, technology, market and other information they need to stay in tune with the fast-paced, 21st century economy. The Task Force supports efforts to expand broad-band Internet access for all residents of New York as a way to promote and market the business of agriculture.

We oppose, along with the New York Farm Bureau, NYS Department of Transportation truck travel restrictions in the Finger Lakes and across the state, including new oversize and overweight permit conditions imposed in November 2008, which prohibit trucks operating with certain permits from using seven identified highways as well as increased truck inspections in the area. We support immediate investment in repair of critical road and bridge infrastructure to maintain quality access to farm fields and consumers. The Task Force supports these important policies, and will work with the Farm Bureau to help realize their success. The Task Force further calls on the New York State Thruway Authority to encourage farm to market access.

Agriculture is an energy-intensive industry and should support efforts to promote renewable energy policy. Renewable energy produced in the U.S. between 2004 and 2009 grew by about 23% and U.S. renewable energy consumption at the end of 2009 was 8.3% of total energy consumption, up from less than 6% in 2004. Renewable energy resources include ethanol, bio-fuels, bio-mass, outdoor wood boilers, wind, solar, geo-thermal and hydro-electric. The 25x25 supports producing 25% of our nation’s energy use from renewable energy by the year 2025. The 25x25 Vision creates new opportunities for

farmers, ranchers and foresters, and the Task Force supports adopting the 25x25 Alliance renewable energy policy perspectives.

The Task Force further recognizes the important role Outdoor Wood Boilers (OWBs) play on farms, as they are used to heat greenhouses and on dairy farms to heat water for cows. The Task Force calls on the Department of Environmental Conservation to consider the impact new OWB regulations will have on farms and their operating costs.

## PROTECTING FARMLAND FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

The NYSAC Blue Ribbon Task Force readily agreed that protecting farmland for future generations was a critical component to assuring the future of farming in New York State. It was evident to all Task Force members that the State's high quality soils were irreplaceable and that, without effective policies and programs in place, these soils could be lost forever to municipal, commercial and residential development. Given this position, the Task Force acknowledged that regardless of the effectiveness of any farmland protection program, if agricultural production was not profitable, farmers would not stay in business. Therefore the Task Force ratified the statement, that profitable agriculture is one of the best farmland protection mechanisms in existence.

## AGRICULTURE DISTRICTS CRITICAL TO OUR FARMING FUTURE

One of New York State's cornerstone policies for protecting farmland for future generations is the Agriculture Districts Law, Article 25AAA of the Agriculture and Markets Law. This seminal legislation has served the agriculture industry by assuring that agricultural production on agricultural lands is prioritized over other uses including municipal projects. Tax incentives are provided to farmers who keep land in agricultural production and the law provides the Department of Agriculture and Markets authority to forbid local government actions and ordinances that restrict acceptable agricultural practices. Further the law grants the Department of Agriculture and Markets authority to render an opinion about whether a certain practice is agricultural in nature. Such an opinion

can have a significant impact on a threatened or active legal battle. The Agriculture Districts law has served the agriculture industry well for over 40 years and the Task Force acknowledges the critical importance of protecting and strengthening this law for future generations of farmers.

Another state policy that works very closely to the Agriculture Districts Law is Article 25 AAA, New York's Farmland Protection Program. This long standing initiative mandates that the State administer a program that legally protects agricultural lands from conversion to non-agricultural uses. This legal protection involves purchasing the development rights from specific agricultural properties and holding them for perpetuity. Farmers and future landowners are legally restricted from converting farmland to non-agricultural uses. Most often the proceeds from the sale of the development rights are used to reinvest into the farm business, ideally placing the business on sound financial footing for the long term. Developing these lands often comes at a cost to the municipality and the property taxpayers for increased service demands in the form of water, sewer, emergency and other services. The Farmland Protection Program not only preserves the land for future generations of farmers, it also preserves the property tax base for future generations of businesses and homeowners in the county. Since 1996, New York State has appropriated over \$183 million for the farmland protection program, most recently funded through the Environmental Protection Fund. These state dollars have been leveraged with landowner, land trust and federal funds to create a working partnership for assuring that high quality agricultural soils are permanently protected for future generations. The Blue Ribbon Task Force strongly endorses the continued funding of New York's Farmland Protection Program, through the Environmental Protection Fund, at levels that will significantly enhance our ability to protect farmland for future generations. Further, the Task Force encourages counties to develop their own farmland protection program to leverage state funds and play a more direct role in protecting farmland for future generations.

## RIGHT TO FARM LAWS ARE THE RIGHT POLICY

Many towns and counties throughout the state have passed “right to farm” laws that acknowledge the municipality’s recognition of the importance of agriculture and protecting agricultural lands. Further these local laws identify agriculture as the preferred land use and restrict activities that impede or in some way prevent agriculture production. These local initiatives provide an endorsement of the farming community and compliment the State’s Right to Farm Law which is part of the Agriculture Districts Law. The Blue Ribbon Task Force encourages all counties with agricultural lands to establish a right to farm law or strengthen existing laws by adding additional protections against zoning actions, requiring “buffer zones” between farms and residential developments and incentivizing cluster development to minimize impacts on prime agricultural lands. The cost of these buffer zones should be borne by the developer, not the farmer.

The Task Force acknowledges the importance of protecting drinking water wells which is important to towns and central to the rights of all citizens to have access to clean water. The Task Force encourages farmers to continue working with their town officials and residents to ensure the preservation of the rights of all citizens and to work in harmony with the best interests of farms to promote the overall well being of all of those in the community. This “proper balance” of farming and non-farming interests will serve our communities well into the future.

## ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT FUNDS ARE INVESTMENTS IN OUR FARMS

Protecting farmland for future generation also means supporting programs that assist farmers in their ongoing efforts to be stewards of our soil and water resources. Farmers have always been environmentalists because they know that if you don’t take care of the land, the land will not provide a return. Therefore, as agricultural production intensifies due to the constant economic pressure of remaining a low cost producer, environmental stewardship programs become more important for farmers and our communities.

According to the Department of Environmental Conservation, Invasive species are the second most severe threat to biodiversity in New York State. Invasive species crowd out native plants and overtake fields, streams, and farms, threatening farmland viability and the environment. The impact of Invasive species on agriculture has been significant - impacting interstate commerce due to quarantines imposed to stop the spread of invasive pests. Quarantines and eradication efforts cost agricultural producers hundreds of thousands of dollars each year. Specific invasive species outbreaks in New York have included Plum Pox Virus, which impacts stone fruits including peaches, plums and nectarines. Also, the Swede Midge threatens Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, Chinese cabbage, and related crops including the state’s cabbage and broccoli crops, estimated by Cornell University to be worth \$87 million and \$6 million a year respectively.

Further threats to farms include invasive aquatic plants that clog waterways such as the water chestnut infestation in the Oswego River Basin and Eurasian Milfoil infesting Adirondack Lakes and streams. When these waterways become overgrown, surrounding farms have trouble draining properly, causing damage to crops and pastureland. Efforts are underway in New York State to curb the spread of invasive species and identify ways the public can help to ensure these species do not spread and further threaten our farms, fields and streams. In 2007, the formation of the Invasive Species Council unified efforts among the DEC, Ag and Markets, and key nonprofit organizations to identify invasive plant and animal species and take steps to eradicate them from New York. Public outreach campaigns are helping to educate the public about how species are spread, and how to spot and report signs of the most destructive species. Farmers are important partners in these efforts and are on the front lines each day in their fields and pastures helping to identify and eradicate invasive species, preventing further and more widespread damage to farms and the environment.

## CAFO REGULATIONS NEED TO STRIKE A BETTER BALANCE

In addition, state and federal regulations, designed to protect our soil and water resources, have become

much more prescriptive for large animal operations. These so called confined animal feeding operations (CAFO) regulations have substantially increased the cost of production for many farmers, therefore erecting another competitive barrier that our state's farmers must scale.

New York's Agriculture Environmental Management Program (AEM) is a statutorily supported program that has served as a model for progressive incentive driven public policy. This award winning program provides farmers with technical assistance and cost sharing dollars to address soil and water conservation issues. Supported substantially by EPF funds, this program has been an important platform for assisting farmers with CAFO compliance deadlines. The Environmental Protection Fund has provided substantial assistance to farmers, but far more is needed in a timely fashion. Unfortunately, State Budget cuts have curtailed some EPF funding, leaving no money to help farmers fulfill their obligations to CAFO regulations and thus further slowing the pace of CAFO compliance. Meanwhile, despite these funding cuts, strict deadlines remain in place.

Environmental and weather factors further compound the problem for farms. Heavy rain events wash water from fields, bringing manure and nutrient pollution from farms into streams and waterways and contributing to weed growth and damaging water quality. The Task Force recognizes the delicate balance which must be struck to achieve responsible farming activities which ensure minimal impact to water and soil resources. Of predominant importance to the farming community is ensuring that regulations consider the impacts on agribusiness and the economic burden that excessive regulations place on farms and businesses. The economic importance of farming in counties across New York is vitally important to the state. Agribusiness and the associated industries which go along with farming are impacted by farm closures and downsizing. The Task Force urges policymakers to consider the ripple effects which extend beyond farming and impact associated industries which make up a substantial part of the State's economy.

The Task Force supports the following.

1. Significant increases in future EPF appropriations for AEM to meet state and federal CAFO compliance mandates.
2. A moratorium on new CAFO compliance mandates until adequate state and federal funds can be appropriated to assistance farmers with compliance measures.
3. Adequate funding for soil and water conservation districts for providing the necessary technical assistance to farmers to meet CAFO compliance regulations.
4. Continued funding of NYSERDA programs that address new technology related to harnessing renewable resources while dealing with animal waste management issues.

## CONCLUSION

NYSAC's Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Future of Farming has confronted a number of critical topics and significant issues that have a direct impact on New York's agricultural industry.

As an organization of county government leaders, we owe it to our constituents to weigh in on these topics because of the significant economic benefit provided by our state's food and agriculture system. The Task Force provides another voice, that of local government, towards the ultimate goal of improved farming conditions in New York State.

This report, with its series of recommendations, is a first step for this collection of county leaders to help put our State's farming communities back on track for a more stable and prosperous future.





Hon. Thomas J. Santulli, *President*  
 Stephen J. Acquario, Esq., *Executive Director*  
 Hon. A. Douglas Berwanger, *Chairman*

**Memorandum in Opposition**  
**Issued by the NYSAC Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Future of Farming**

S. 2247-B (Onorato) / A. 1867-B (Nolan)

*Enacts the farm workers fair labor practices act, granting collective bargaining rights, workers' compensation and unemployment benefits to farm workers.*

The New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC) and the NYSAC Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Future of Farming have reviewed the above referenced legislation and strongly oppose its enactment into law.

While this bill intends to protect farm workers, its provisions threaten the economic viability of farming in New York State.

Farmers in New York wrestle with many challenges, from animal health issues and disease to insect and weather damage; from complying with federal and State regulations to archaic pricing fluctuations that appear to have no link to the consumer markets. The costs of production on New York farms rise every day with the increasing costs of fuel, machinery and other inputs. According to a recent report by the Office of the State Comptroller, between 1998 and 2007, the number of dairy farms in the State plummeted 27%. The State has lost half of its dairy farms in the last 20 years.

If enacted, this bill would risk the very jobs it aims to protect. Farmers, who are already limited by the seasons they can work their fields and the fluctuations of the weather in their Northeast climate, would be forced to cut hours for their employees to avoid paying excessive overtime wages. If these and the additional constraints in this bill are placed on New York farms, soon there will be fewer and fewer farms to work on in New York.

Our farms need greater support, not government regulations that will put them out of existence. Considering the precarious situation of New York's economy, and given the importance of farming and agriculture in contributing to New York's economic base, this bill threatens to undermine the very economic security of most of the communities in our state.

It is for the above mentioned reasons that NYSAC strongly opposes the enactment of this bill into law.

*The New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC), founded in 1925, is a bi-partisan municipal association representing the 62 counties of New York State. NYSAC is the only statewide association representing the interests of close to 5,000 elected and appointed county officials, including county executives, legislators, supervisors, administrators, commissioners and other county employees who deliver essential services to the public.*



Hon. Thomas J. Santulli, *President*  
 Stephen J. Acquario, Esq., *Executive Director*  
 Hon. Douglas Berwanger, *Chair, Blue Ribbon Task Force*  
*on the Future of Farming*

### **Agriculture Program Funding in the New York State Enacted 2010-11 Budget**

| <b>Item</b>  | <b>2008-9 Enacted Budget</b> | <b>2009-10 Enacted Budget</b> | <b>2010-11 Enacted Budget</b> |
|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Core Diagnostic Lab                                    | \$2,249,500                  | \$2,250,000                   | \$3,750,000                   |
| NYS Cattle Health Assurance                            | \$450,000                    | \$360,000                     | \$360,000                     |
| Quality Milk (Mastitis)                                | \$1,218,600                  | \$1,174,000                   | \$1,174,000                   |
| Johnes Disease   | \$421,100                    | \$480,000                     | \$480,000                     |
| Rabies \$250,000 \$50,000                              | \$235,000                    | \$250,000                     | \$50,000                      |
| Avian Disease  | \$315,000                    | \$252,000                     | \$252,000                     |
| Ag in Classroom  | \$133,500                    | \$112,000                     | \$80,000                      |
| Future Farmers of America                              | \$230,500                    | \$192,000                     | \$192,000                     |
| Ass'n of Ag Educators                                  | \$110,500                    | \$96,000                      | \$66,000                      |
| Farm Family Assistance                                 | \$421,100                    | \$480,000                     | \$384,000                     |
| Integrated Pest Mgt                                    | \$1,000,000                  | \$800,000                     | \$500,000                     |
| IPM Grape Entomologist -- Fredonia                     | \$47,000                     | \$47,000                      | \$0                           |
| Geneva Experiment Station                              | \$508,500                    | \$400,000                     | \$0                           |
| Geneva Exp St Seed Program                             | \$200,000                    | \$200,000                     | \$128,000                     |
| Golden Nematode  | \$98,000                     | \$98,000                      | \$62,000                      |
| Cornell - Phytophthora Research Prog.                  | \$188,000                    | \$88,000                      | \$0                           |
| Ag. Child Care (Migrant)                               | \$5,450,000                  | \$6,521,000                   | \$6,521,000                   |
| Local Fairs  | \$453,000                    | \$453,000                     | \$340,000                     |
| Econ Dev & Farmland Viability ("Grow NY")              | \$1,700,500                  | \$600,000                     | \$0                           |
| Wine / Grape Foundation                                | \$950,700                    | \$951,000                     | \$713,000                     |
| Farm Viability Institute                               | \$4,543,000                  | \$3,242,000                   | \$400,000                     |
| Center for Dairy Excellence/ Farm Viability Institute* | \$715,000                    | \$376,000                     | \$150,000                     |
| Apiary Inspection                                      | \$400,000                    | \$200,000                     | \$0                           |
| NYS Apple Growers Ass'n                                | \$734,400                    | \$275,000                     | \$206,000                     |
| Golden Nematode/Potato Growers                         | \$144,000                    | \$145,000                     | \$0                           |
| Organic Farming Program                                | \$216,000                    | \$192,000                     | \$0                           |
| NYS Wine Marketing and Promotion                       | \$1,692,000                  | \$250,000                     | \$0                           |
| New York Seafood Council                               | \$94,000                     | \$100,000                     | \$0                           |
| Maple Producers Ass'n                                  | \$141,000                    | \$150,000                     | \$0                           |
| Northern NY Agricultural Development                   | \$0                          | \$300,000                     | \$0                           |
| Genesee Valley Farmers' Markets                        | \$0                          | \$0                           | \$3,000,000                   |
| <b><u>TOTAL AG&amp;MKTS LOCAL</u></b>                  | <b><u>\$25,059,900</u></b>   | <b><u>\$21,034,000</u></b>    | <b><u>\$18,808,000</u></b>    |

\*FY10-11 Funding for Dairy Excellence will not be provided to the Farm Viability Institute. Instead, Ag&Mkts will administer its own similar grant program.

On May 28, 2010, funding for the Environmental Protection Fund was swept in an agreement to open state parks in time for the Memorial Day weekend. This agreement also included the creation of an e-waste recycling program. **The final allocation for the EPF in the 2010-11 budget was \$134,000,000, down \$88 million from \$222,000,000 allocated in 2009-10.** Farmland Protection Appropriations fell by over 50% in 2010/11 from previous funding levels:

|                     | <b>2008-9 Enacted Budget</b> | <b>2009-10 Enacted Budget</b> | <b>2010-11 Enacted Budget</b> |
|---------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Farmland Protection | \$23,000,000 <sup>†</sup>    | \$22,054,000 <sup>†</sup>     | \$10,750,000                  |

<sup>†</sup>FY2008-9 and 2009-10 amounts reflect final reduced appropriations after Deficit Reduction Plans.