
NEW YORK STATE

Monthly Harvest



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The Department wishes a very happy Mothers' Day to all the wonderful moms across New York!

Commissioner Ball Kicks off National Beef Month

Commissioner Ball visited Dinosaur Bar-B-Que in Syracuse today to kick off National Beef Month, joining the New York Beef Council and the New York Beef Producers Association in announcing the launch of the New York Beef Passport. The New York Beef Passport gives consumers the opportunity to explore the best beef dishes in New York State, support local businesses and beef producers, and win exciting, themed prizes. The beef industry in New York is a critical component of the state's agricultural sector.



Department Celebrates 100,000 Acres of Farmland Conserved



This Earth Week, [Governor Hochul announced](#) that the Department's Farmland Protection program has officially protected over 100,000 acres of valuable and at-risk farmland. The program helps counties, municipalities, soil and water conservation districts, and land trusts conserve land for agricultural use. Preserving New York farmland helps ensure a strong food supply chain and protects jobs and our environment for generations to come. Commissioner Ball celebrated the milestone by visiting Mulligan Farm, a fourth-generation dairy

farm in Avon, New York, which, through seven conservation easements between 2008 and 2021, has protected a total of 1,800 acres of land so far.

The Department is thankful for its partnership with the state's land trusts, land conservancies, and its farmers who work every day to protect our precious natural resources and who helped us achieve this significant milestone.

FreshConnect Fresh2You Program Launches

Commissioner Ball was joined by New York State Office of General Services Commissioner Jeanette Moy and farmer Ron Bulich of Bulich Creekside Farm at the Empire State Plaza farmers' market to announce an exciting new initiative that will double the buying power for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients at farmers' markets across the state: the FreshConnect Fresh2You program.



The FreshConnect Fresh2You initiative will now provide SNAP beneficiaries at participating farmers' markets with \$2 checks for every \$2 spent as part of the SNAP program, up from \$2 for every \$5 spent. Any farmer or vendor who is selling a SNAP-eligible food item at any farmers' market, farm stand, or mobile market operating in New York State may accept a FreshConnect Check and

now take part in the Fresh2You initiative. Checks can be used to purchase dairy, produce, meats, fish, eggs and more.

The FreshConnect Fresh2You initiative is part of the long-standing FreshConnect Checks Program, which is administered by the Department. It will help ensure New York families in need can continue to put fresh, healthy food on the table, despite the recent reduction of federal SNAP benefits that were part of pandemic relief efforts. [Learn more.](#)

Protecting Water Quality and Soil Health Around the Finger Lakes



Last month, the Department joined the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to announce \$370,000 for the Finger Lakes Cover Crop Initiative. The initiative helps support farmers' use of cover crops to reduce erosion, implement watershed management plans, and protect water quality in and around the 11 Finger Lakes: Conesus, Hemlock, Canadice, Honeoye, Canandaigua, Keuka, Seneca, Cayuga, Owasco, Skaneateles, and Otisco.

Commissioner Ball said, "I'm proud that agriculture is at the table in the work that New York is doing to combat climate change, which includes our record investments in clean water. This cover crop initiative will protect our precious natural resources and provide help for farmers to develop more sustainable operations."

New York State's Soil and Water Conservation Districts from Cayuga, Chemung, Cortland, Livingston, Onondaga, Ontario, Seneca, Schuyler, Steuben, Tompkins, and Yates counties will work with farms in these watersheds to implement cover crop projects. This work is an expansion of the highly successful Eastern Finger Lakes Cover Crop Initiative, which implemented nearly 5,000 acres of cover crops between 2018 and 2021. At the direction of Governor Kathy Hochul, New York State has been working with Soil and Water Conservation Districts, as well as Cornell Cooperative Extension to build and expand farmer-led soil health coalitions and promote policy changes to improve the health of land and water.

For farmers who are interested in learning more about cover crop implementation, please contact a local county Soil and Water Conservation District: <https://agriculture.ny.gov/soil-and-water/soil-water-conservation-district-offices>

Governor Hochul Launches Statewide Bond Act Listening Tour

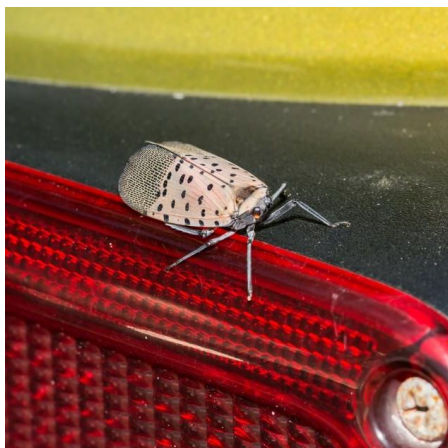
New York State has always been a leader in environmental efforts, and last year, voters overwhelmingly voted to pass the \$4.2 billion Clean Water, Clean Air and Green Jobs Environmental Bond Act of 2022, which invests in efforts to mitigate climate change, preserve our waterways, and create new green jobs. As part of New York State's celebration of Earth Week, Governor Hochul announced a statewide educational listening tour for the public to learn more about the Bond Act and weigh in on how to best implement this critical funding.



The landmark legislation is the largest environmental bond in state history and the first in New York since 1996. The Bond Act will make \$4.2 billion available for environmental and community projects that also support job creation and a substantial investment in the Clean Green Schools initiative that will serve more than 1,000 under-resourced public schools. Recognizing that vulnerable populations are disproportionately affected by negative environmental and climate change impacts, at least 35 percent of Bond Act benefits will be directed toward disadvantaged communities.

The listening tour will give New Yorkers the opportunity to weigh in on how this critical legislation will help clean up our waterways, conserve our ecosystems, and implement best practices that protect our natural resources while supporting our farmers.

Spotted Lanternfly Update



The Department recently provided an update on the Spotted Lanternfly (SLF) in New York State, discussing the State's efforts to combat this invasive species that can be devastating to New York agriculture. The Department confirmed early emergence of SLF in New York City in mid-April and is asking for the public's continued help in controlling the spread of the population and urging agribusinesses, particularly New York grape growers, to be vigilant and contact their local Cornell Cooperative Extension for information on potential treatment options.

Watch the media availability [here](#).

Spotted Lanternfly is a destructive pest that feeds on more than 70 plant species, including plants and crops that are critical to New York's agricultural economy, such as grapevine, apple trees, and hops.

First found in New York State on Staten Island in August 2020, the population has been observed in a number of areas, including all NYC boroughs, Long Island, Ithaca, Binghamton, Syracuse, and Buffalo. The Department is working closely with its partners on the state and federal levels on measures to combat the population, control its spread to other areas of New York State, and protect New York's agricultural crops. For more information, including how to report SLF found on the east end of Long Island or in Upstate New York, visit <https://agriculture.ny.gov/spottedlanternfly>.

Clinton County Animal Response Team Holds Training for Volunteers

County Animal Response Teams (CARTs) provide rapid, professional assistance to animals at the local level during natural and man-made disasters and emergencies. They are a critical part of disaster recovery efforts and are often entirely volunteer-based. [In March](#), the Clinton County Animal Response Team held a training for experienced volunteers and newcomers looking to join the team. If you are interested in joining a CART, you can learn more about your county's organization [here](#).



Casey McCue Voted in as Chair of the National Conference on Interstate Milk Shipments



Earlier this month, dairy stakeholders from across the nation met in Indianapolis, Indiana for the 38th annual National Conference on Interstate Milk Shipments (NCIMS). The Department's Division of Milk Control and Dairy Services Director, Casey McCue, was nominated and unanimously voted in to be the Chair of the NCIMS.

Please join us in congratulating Casey as the new NCIMS Chair!



Celebrations Continue for Taste NY's 10th Anniversary

Commissioner Ball continued New York's 10-year anniversary celebration of Taste NY last month with an event at the North Country Welcome Center. The event brought together regional agricultural, tourism, and supporting partners to introduce visitors to the New York farmers and producers whose products are available at the Welcome Center. Vendors sampling at the event included Black River Valley Natural, Churchill Farms, Rock and Jam, and Sackets Harbor Coffee Roasters.

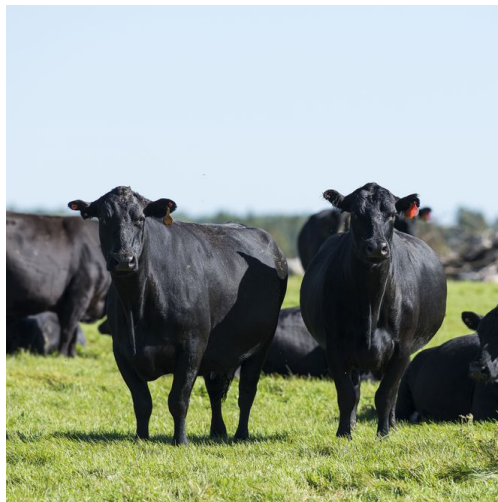
Taste NY is the state's official 'eat local, drink local' program. The celebration marked the third in a series of events that are planned across the state in recognition of the 2023 10-year milestone and the Taste NY program's success over the last decade, including \$200,000 in sales at the North Country Welcome Center since its opening in 2018. The next two events are planned in the Capital Region this month and in the Southern Tier in June. Stay tuned for more updates and ways to get involved in the fun!



NYS Grown & Certified *updates*

NYS Grown & Certified Celebrates Beef Month with Six New Certified Producers

As we celebrate May as Beef Month, we're excited to announce that we have six new beef participants in the New York State Grown & Certified program, for a total of 67 participants. The beef industry is a critical contributor to New York State's economy, boasting approximately 12,800 cattle farms across the state with nearly 1.48 million cattle that generate nearly \$345 million in annual sales.



We encourage all eligible New York beef producers to join the NYS Grown & Certified program, which requires participating producers to adopt food safety standards and enroll in an environmental management program. Additionally, NYS Grown & Certified participants may automatically be qualified to participate in the State's Farm-to-School and Nourish NY programs.

For the complete list of requirements for beef producers and information on how to join the program, visit our [website](#).

Current Funding Opportunities

Check out our current funding opportunities:

- [RFA 0263 - Municipal Agriculture and Farmland Protection Planning Grants](#)
 - Applications are taken on a rolling basis.
- [RFA 0262 - County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Planning Grants](#)
 - Applications are taken on a rolling basis.
- [RFA 0181 - Source Water Buffer Program](#)
 - Applications are taken on a rolling basis.

For more information on these or other funding opportunities, [please visit our Funding Opportunities page](#).

Spotlight: Burly Brothers Land & Cattle Co.

National Beef Month, celebrated every May, provides an opportunity to shine a spotlight on New York's beef producers. Nestled on the border of Western New York and the Finger Lakes regions, Burly Brothers Land & Cattle Co, a New York State Grown & Certified participant, has been in the agriculture business for more than 60 years. The farm and butchery joined the NYS Grown & Certified program in March 2022. The fourth-generation family business sprawls across 710 acres in Attica. At the Butcher Shop, they process and sell fresh, local farm raised meat from their farm and others in the area. All pork



and beef are processed under full USDA inspection, which allows farmers to sell their meat in individual cuts. Customers benefit as well: they know they're buying meat that was produced and prepared at the highest quality. For more information, visit the Burly Brothers' Facebook page @BurlyBrothersCountryButchery.

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