

NO FARMS, NO FOOD

STRONG FARM AND FOOD ECONOMY · HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT · NUTRITIOUS FOOD

INCREASE CONSUMERS ACCESS TO NUTRITIOUS FOODS GROWN IN NEW YORK

New York's farmers and consumers are also on the forefront of a national movement towards stronger local or regional food systems. Fresh milk, fruits, vegetables and meats from New York farms can increasingly be found at the state's 400+ farmers markets, schools and institutions, grocery stores, restaurants and other venues. New York is well-positioned in this movement as the state is a leading producer of more than 20 fruits, vegetables and dairy products, while being home to more than 19 million consumers.

Stronger connections between farmers and consumers in New York will provide important economic benefits, while offering another avenue for addressing important public health concerns. Providing incentives to enhance markets will both benefit underserved communities and farmers seeking markets for their products.

Farmers Market Grants Program

New York has approximately 1,000 farmers participating in nearly 400 farmers' markets located throughout the State. The State's Farmers' Markets Grant Program has awarded \$995,400 to 63 farmers' market facility improvement projects since the program began in 2000. Farmers' markets benefit city, suburban and rural residents by allowing them more access to fresh food. They also help farmers enhance their revenues margins by enabling them to sell directly to the consumer.

Budget Message: Restore funding from the \$0 to the \$150,000 in the 2009-10 State Budget.

Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Access Program

The Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program (HPNAP) provides critical funding to food pantries, soup kitchens and other food providers to purchase nutritious food, including fresh produce from farms in New York. Last year, over 178,000 pounds of fresh vegetables were purchased from local farms and provided to NYC food pantries.

Budget Message: Restore funding from \$29.7 million to the \$33 million in the 2007-08 State Budget.

NY Fresh Checks

The NY Fresh Checks program provides food stamp consumers with an incentive to purchase food from farmers markets by doubling the value of the food stamp dollar. This program is a benefit to both low income New Yorkers and New York's family farmers. Low income communities are often the ones most in need of access to nutritious food, especially children in these communities, and NY Fresh Checks is an excellent way of ensuring that they receive nutritious food.

Budget Message: Appropriate \$250,000 in funding for a state NY Fresh Checks program.