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No Farms No Food Rally, March 15th – Albany, New York
Farmers, Food Advocates, Environmentalists, Local Governments
Join Together to Lobby Legislature

American Farmland Trust is helping organize a No Farms No Food Rally and Lobby Day at the New York State Capitol in Albany March 15th. Farmers, food advocates, environmentalists and local governments across the state from Buffalo to New York City are joining together to tell state legislators that protecting farmland and supporting the agriculture provides food security, clean drinking water, open space, jobs and a strong economy for all New Yorkers.

Severe and disproportionate cuts to New York's farm, food and environmental programs have been proposed in Governor Paterson's 2010-2011 state budget. Some cuts eliminate programs that help farmers make a good living and give consumers access to local foods, such as the Farmers Market Grants program and the New York Farm Viability Institute. Other programs have been slashed. The Farmland Protection Program, the premier state program for protecting irreplaceable farmland from development, may be shut down for at least two years.

Current funding for farms and food represent far less than one percent of the state's \$130 billion budget, yet are being targeted for severe funding cuts. There are other solutions to the state's budget crisis than to disproportionately cut programs that provide support to the farm and food system, which contributes more than \$23 billion annually to New York's economy. Farms are small businesses that employ thousands of New Yorkers while purchasing goods and services from countless hardware stores, veterinarians, contractors, banks, equipment dealerships and other local businesses and

paying millions of dollars in local property taxes to school districts, towns and counties across the state.

The No Farms No Food Rally will kick off in Meeting Room One of the Empire State Convention Center at 9:30 Monday, March 15th where attendees will receive informational packets and hear speakers talk about farmland protection, nutritious foods and public health and the importance of farms to the economy. Attendees will break into small groups and make pre-scheduled visits with legislators between 11 and 3:30.

To register for the No Farms No Food Rally and receive additional information please e mail American Farmland Trust's New York office at newyork@farmland.org, or call (518) 581-0078, or go to www.farmland.org/newyork.

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