

NO FARMS, NO FOOD

STRONG FARM AND FOOD ECONOMY · HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT · NUTRITIOUS FOOD

HELP FARMERS PROTECT WATER AND THE ENVIRONMENT

New York's farms are key allies in providing clean air and water and growing the fresh, healthy food desired by New Yorkers. As farmers manage roughly 7 million acres of land in New York – roughly 25% of the land in the state – they can play a pivotal role in protecting clean drinking water, mitigating greenhouse gas emissions, providing wildlife habitat and the scenic landscapes enjoyed by the state's residents and tourists.

Environmental Protection Fund

The Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) is a dedicated fund for more than 30 environmental programs that protect the state's air, land and water resources. The fund receives its revenue from the state's real estate transfer tax and supports programs that protect farmland and create parks, promote recycling and protect clean drinking water, support zoos and other community programs that promote a healthy environment. Specific programs funded by the EPF include: Farmland Protection Program, Conservation Partnership Program, Agricultural Nonpoint Source Program and Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Budget Message: Restore funding from proposed \$143 million to \$222 million in FY 2009-10 State Budget.

Agricultural Nonpoint Source Program

The Agricultural Nonpoint Source Program provides cost share funding to help farmers adopt conservation practices to help protect water quality. These practices not only protect water quality, they frequently benefit farm businesses and provide a local economic stimulus by employing area contractors, engineers and other construction professionals. Many of these environmental protections are mandated by regulation and are quite costly for farmers to implement, particularly for dairy farmers facing extremely low milk prices.

Budget Message: Maintain funding as proposed at \$14 million.

Soil and Water Conservation Districts

New York's 58 Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) serve urban, suburban and rural landowners and municipalities, across a variety of sectors – agriculture, recreation, forestry, and contractors. The impact of state dollars invested in SWCDs are multiplied by leveraging federal and municipal matching funds. SWCDs are an efficient use of state funds which are invested in public infrastructure, urban and rural conservation, natural disaster response and on-farm conservation projects.

Budget Message: Maintain funding as proposed at \$3 million.

Integrated Pest Management & Organic Agriculture Programs

Through research, demonstration projects and outreach, the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Program helps farmers use practical and sustainable methods to control pests while minimizing risks to people and the environment. The IPM approach can also be applied in schools, homes and other settings. The Organic Agriculture program assists farmers interested in transitioning to or utilizing organic production methods. The program also educates consumers about organic practices and buying organic farm products grown in New York.

Budget Message: Restore funding from proposed \$0 to \$992,000 in FY 2009-10 State Budget.