

**RESOLUTION URGING THE NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE
TO SUPPORT THE STATE'S FARMLAND PROTECTION PROGRAM
AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION FUND**

WHEREAS, agriculture is a significant contributor to New York's economy; and,

WHEREAS, farms provide jobs, support local businesses and are part of industry sectors that have a \$23 billion economic impact annually in New York; and,

WHEREAS, farms comprise 7 million acres of land in New York, roughly 25% of the state's land base; and,

WHEREAS, farmers have a strong track record of pro-active environmental stewardship in New York; and,

WHEREAS, rapidly changing economic conditions threaten the future viability of New York's agricultural industry; and,

WHEREAS, 26,000 acres of farmland are developed each year in New York; and,

WHEREAS, the State of New York established a Farmland Protection Program in 1992 to assist towns and counties in developing and implementing local agricultural and farmland protection plans; and,

WHEREAS, over \$3 million has been awarded by the Farmland Protection Program to 50 counties and 52 towns to assist in the development of local agricultural and farmland protection plans; and,

WHEREAS, the Farmland Protection Program has awarded more than \$173 million to help farmers, local governments and land trusts permanently protect 74,000 acres on 303 farms; and,

WHEREAS, demand for Farmland Protection Program funding has been strong due to the program's popularity, with a record 181 farms seeking \$156 million in state funding to protect 49,500 acres in 2008; and,

WHEREAS, funding for the Farmland Protection Program is allocated from the state's Environmental Protection Fund (EPF), a dedicated fund whose principle funding source is a state Real Estate Transfer Tax (RETT); and,

WHEREAS, the Governor and State Legislature must take steps this year to protect New York's valuable farmland and strengthen the future for farms across New York;
now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the **(INSERT NAME OF TOWN OR COUNTY)** does hereby urge state lawmakers to support New York's farmers, the state's agricultural economy and protection of

valuable farmland by supporting funding for the Farmland Protection Program and Environmental Protection Fund; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the **(INSERT NAME OF TOWN OR COUNTY)** does hereby oppose drastic cuts to the Farmland Protection Program and Environmental Protection Fund, as outlined in the Governor's FY 2010-11 Budget Proposal; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the **(INSERT NAME OF TOWN OR COUNTY)** is hereby directed to forward copies of this resolution to Governor David Paterson, Senate Republican Leader Dean Skelos, Senate Democratic Leader Malcolm Smith, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, **[INSERT STATE ASSEMBLYMEMBERS AND SENATORS WHO REPRESENT YOUR TOWN OR COUNTY]**, and the American Farmland Trust.