



## NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources

## Inside This Issue:

## Remarks From the Chair

Welcome to the Winter 2022 issue of Rural Futures!

We worked hard in 2021 to support rural New Yorkers, and I am looking forward to building on that progress this session. This year, we will continue to support our local farms as they struggle with economic, labor, and market issues, promote an Office of Rural Development, and bridge the gap in rural housing and broadband to expand educational, healthcare, and other opportunities for our rural communities. Many groups have reached out to me as Chair of the Commission, and I am proud to have sponsored bills to build telecommunications and create a more efficient public transit system. I am pleased that Governor Hochul signed my bill to reinvigorate the Erie Canalway recreation commission.

This winter, we have seen wild fluctuations in temperature, causing freak tornadoes in the Midwest in December, high winds and power outages in upstate New York, and continuing challenges to our freshwater resources. As COVID and labor shortages continues to challenge our healthcare system, rural hospitals especially need help. I hope that the Reimagining Long-Term Care Task Force bill that the Governor just signed into law will help our state find better ways to support healthcare for rural seniors. The federal census results show that while some metropolitan areas have grown, rural New York's population has been declining, and as a result, we need to find ways to bring people up to live in our most rural communities. Our authors in this issue talk about the kind of big changes we need to keep our rural communities thriving in the wake of climate change and COVID-19.

As always, the Legislative Commission on Rural Resources is happy to hear your feedback, your ideas, and your own experiences.

**Senator Rachel May**

Co-chair, Legislative Commission on Rural Resources



*Rachel May*

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## Winter 2022 Rural Futures

### NEWS OF INTEREST ABOUT RURAL NEW YORK STATE

A Publication of the NYS Legislative  
Commission on Rural Resources

The NYS Legislative Commission on  
Rural Resources is a joint bipartisan  
commission of the State Legislature  
with a mission to promote the  
viability of rural communities.



**Senator Rachel May**  
**Senate Chair (53rd)**

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## What is Rural?

Dear Friends,

Rural communities are integral to New York's economy, but, despite their everyday contributions to helping the state thrive, many of them have faced insurmountable inequities for far too long. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic took hold across the state, rural communities were chronically underfunded and lacked critical resources, including access to lifesaving emergency services. As our state turns to a new chapter and looks toward the future, the Legislative Commission on Rural Resources is prepared to take on the longstanding issues impacting rural New Yorkers.

During the 2021 legislative session, commission members fought hard to secure critical new laws that addressed major obstacles facing rural residents. This includes newly enacted legislation I sponsored like the New York State Rural Ambulance Services Task Force (Ch. 778 of 2021) and the Comprehensive Broadband Connectivity Act. These laws will require a study that identifies the unique barriers to accessing emergency medical services, high-speed broadband, and propose solutions.

Although these passed measures will ultimately positively impact rural economic growth, employment opportunities, and health and safety, we still have much more work left to do. As we kick off the 2022 legislative session, the Commission on Rural Resources will continue working to expand affordable housing options, create jobs and new opportunities, and ensure the next generation of farmers are ready to take the reins.

Despite the unprecedented challenges we've faced over the last two years, the Legislative Commission on Rural Resources will keep working to address the issues that matter most to rural families and make sure those that call upstate home have all the resources they need to thrive.

**Assemblyman Angelo Santabarbara**

NYS Assembly Chair of Commission on Rural Resources



# Rural Futures

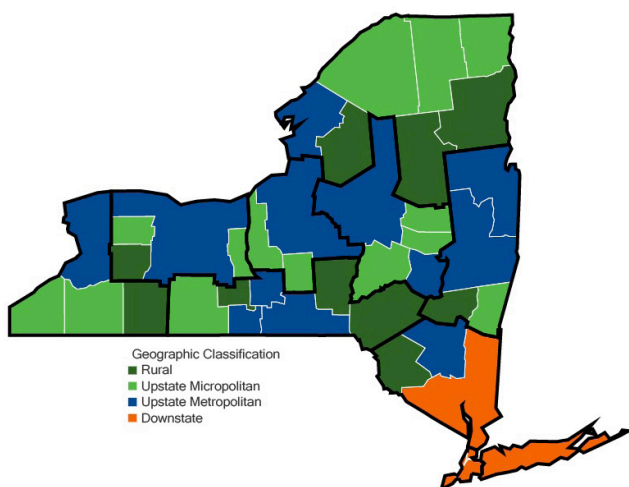
*If you have any suggestions  
for upcoming editions,  
please email the Commission at  
[ruralres@nysenate.gov](mailto:ruralres@nysenate.gov)*

# Rural Devastation: A Roadmap to Economic Resilience in Rural New York

By Trevor McDaniel, Policy Director and Counsel to the Legislative Commission on Rural Resources

Let's begin at the beginning; what makes an economy rural? One hundred years ago, rural economies revolved around agriculture. In the 1920s, 80 percent of rural Americans lived on farms, and today, the number of rural Americans living on farms is at about 20%. Agriculture is still a significant employer in rural economies, but rural economies are more than farmland.

(For this article, "Rural Economy" is defined as a county with less than 150,000 residents.)



\*Image provided by the Empire Center at <https://www.empirecenter.org/publications/nyc-downstate-suburbs-account-for-most-of-nys-2018-19-population-dip/>

The primary economic driver in most of NY's rural counties is agriculture. Agriculture feeds New Yorkers, but we need to examine how to make rural New York resilient to shifting crises. Studies have shown that building a stable and resilient economy is contingent on a diverse economy. We can make rural New York more resilient to change by creating a more diverse economy. An economy that includes a broad infrastructure base to enable long-term stability, medium-term building into new or underutilized sectors, and short-term aid to struggling sectors.

**Once NY truly makes broadband available everywhere, a world of remote work possibilities opens up.**

For years, rural hospitals have been shuttering, scaling down operations, and laying off employees. Underfunding the healthcare services necessary to rural economies has left rural New York especially devastated by the pandemic.

There is a need for businesses that aren't hurt so drastically by the looming climate catastrophe or reduced supply chains. We can build these communities

only with serious investment to make broadband as widely available and dependable as electricity. Once NY truly makes broadband available everywhere, a world of remote work possibilities opens up.

Law firms can operate in smaller communities at a fraction of the cost of operating in major metropolitan areas and pair the reduced cost with the potential for remote court as a permanent solution, and firms can reduce their billable hours. The pandemic showed us that telework is a possibility for growth. Companies can reduce their costs by relocating, not overseas,

	Share of Population (2018)	Average Annual Population Growth (2010-2018)	Share of Population in Rural Areas (2010)
Downstate NY	68.1%	0.23%	1.9%
Upstate Metropolitan Statistical Areas	24.9%	-0.13%	24.1%
Upstate Micropolitan Statistical Areas	5.0%	-0.45%	57.6%
Rural Counties	2.0%	-0.56%	76.7%

\*Data provided by the Rockefeller Institute of Government at <https://rockinst.org/blog/introducing-new-yorks-rural-economies/>



## Rural Devastation: *(Continued from page 3)*

but to rural New York. It is cheaper to live in rural communities than to live in large metropolitan areas; the ubiquity of Zoom has enabled a significant growth in people relocating.

Building factories in rural New York can bring good jobs to communities that are hurting and struggling to come back from the recession over a decade ago. Active union training and apprenticeship programs to staff those factories make finding a workforce ready for today's challenges much more manageable. Labor has an integral place in building strong communities, with each well-paying union job; the local benefit to economies explodes and flourishes.

A single, statewide entity to put all state and federal program knowledge into one cache of information: We need a **Rural Development Corporation**, vested with the authority to perform active outreach, compile the aid programs available at state and federal levels, and provide application aid services to help rural New Yorkers understand the applications. There is a federal rural development program, but rural New York needs a specific statewide office for rural development.

With a single entity to centralize Rural Development, robustly and consistently funded, and with satellite offices across the state, we can create a resource that rural communities can turn to for grant programs, rely on for knowledge, and provide community-driven options. A strong base for programming is necessary for the continued success of any rural development program.

This department can provide scholarship opportunities for students who leave school and work in underserved sectors in rural communities. A grant program to help students identify and start working in a desperately needed sector will help. Active job placements and career services outreach in the higher education system will help prevent the spread of "brain drain" in rural communities.

The next step is to enable community-driven growth by letting rural communities fund the programs they specifically need.

One program with moderate success is the Regional Economic Development Councils, or REDCs. The problem with the REDCs is that every region competes for the same pool of money. Instead, what we need is a formula-driven program, where the emphasis is on geographic locations within the state that do not have the same access to private

capital or equity as larger metropolitan areas. With this solution, rural communities receive discretionary funding to support their economies by diversifying their economies. The pool should be available to each municipality to use upon applying for it with a plan for the areas in which their local economy needs.

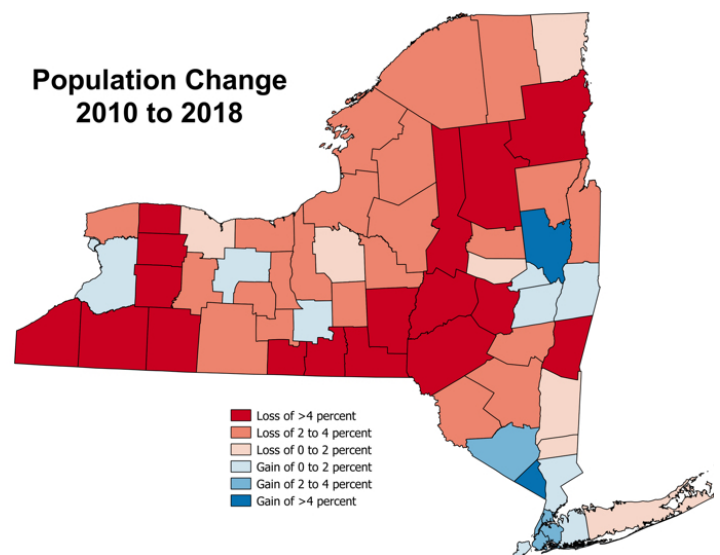
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**Farms are at risk of closing due to increasing overhead costs and the inability to raise prices enough to remain competitive.**

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Short-term stability in struggling industries is crucial now, especially with the rapid and massive changes to their economies. Farms are at risk of closing due to increasing overhead costs and the inability to raise prices enough to remain competitive. In the short term, the legislature needs to make subsidies to farmers available in the budget to help keep NY farms in business. By helping to offset farm production costs, the legislature can make good on its promises to help farmers continue providing jobs and sending money back into their local economies.

A centralized entity to manage outreach and provide support to rural communities; legislative changes in the way we promote economic development; and short-term stabilizing the leading employers in rural New York are what we need. These measures work to put people in rural New York, keep our smaller economies thriving, and enable them to bounce back from economic hardships.



## Rural New York Needs a Comprehensive Plan

*Article Courtesy of Mike Borges, Executive Director of the Rural Housing Coalition of New York*



As the Executive Director of the Rural Housing Coalition of New York, my first priority is to ensure that the Rural Preservation Companies (RPCs), the local non-profits that provide housing services in rural areas, receive the funding and assistance they need to carry out their missions.

Rural Preservation Companies conduct housing repair and counseling services to the most vulnerable residents living in rural communities, such as the elderly, disabled, and economically disadvantaged. The RPCs provide financial counseling to first-time homebuyers, provide emergency home repairs for the elderly seeking to remain in their homes, and install wheelchair ramps for disabled veterans.

In addition to these much-needed services, RPCs also undertake the rehabilitation of dilapidated structures, both residential and commercial, and turn them into homes for residents with limited incomes. The RPCs also construct new apartment buildings to serve a community's need affordable housing options, however, they are limited in these efforts by inadequate public support.

But what Rural New York really needs is a comprehensive plan that addresses not only rural housing needs, but the other obstacles preventing the revitalization of these areas of the state that are lacking in economic opportunities, quality educational offerings, easily accessible healthcare, and 21st century infrastructure.

As a former planner for municipal and county governments, I learned first-hand the value of having a comprehensive plan, a holistic strategy, to meeting a community's challenges and opportunities. This comprehensive plan for Rural New York needs a point person in state government that has been lacking for the past 27 years since the Office of Rural Affairs was defunded by the Pataki Administration. The Office of Rural Affairs would serve as the focal point for gathering input from rural communities, identifying challenges and opportunities, and developing a comprehensive plan that addresses them.

The 24 most rural counties in the state (as defined by the USDA with populations of 65,000 or less) combined, have lost 5% of their population and 2% of their housing units between 2010 and 2020 according to the US Census, while New York State has gained 4% in population and 5% in housing units during the same time period. These raw numbers dramatically show the need for a different and more comprehensive approach to addressing the needs of Rural New York.

Not only does Rural New York need an Office of Rural Affairs dedicated to coordinating state efforts to revitalize rural communities, but dedicated funding streams and investments are also necessary if revitalization efforts are to be realized. Other states and the federal government have dedicated programs and funding for rural initiatives and New York State should follow suit.

State policymakers have the opportunity this coming year to begin the process of investing in Rural New York by ensuring that the next 5-year Capital Housing Plan includes dedicated funding for both affordable rental housing and owner-occupied housing that is appropriately sized for rural communities and utilizes innovative designs to bring down costs and reduce carbon footprint.




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## Rural Education Needs a Helping Hand

*David Allen Little, Executive Director of the Rural Schools Association of NYS and the Rural Schools Program at Cornell University*

Taking the good with the bad seems to have become the norm lately. The pandemic and politics have combined to create an otherworldly and disquieting environment for everyone-and perhaps particularly for us in rural education. Challenges we've faced for what seems like forever are being addressed simply because they've gotten so bad and the pandemic put a spotlight on them. Think rural broadband, the exodus from rural communities, increased poverty. Now, because things got too bad to ignore, we have increased federal and state financial resources and a massive federal effort to bring broadband to everyone.

I've spent most of my career working under the philosophy that it's more important to tell you what you need to know, rather than what you might like to hear. That can sometimes get pretty gloomy. But I recently heard Prof. Ben Winchester from the University of Minnesota speak about the benefit of focusing on the positive aspects of rural life. His stance is that we are our own worst PR reps. We talk constantly about our challenges; transportation, isolation, lack of employment, no broadband, distance to healthcare and on and on... Why would folks want to join us for that? Instead, why aren't we highlighting what we love about rural life? The beauty of the land, the feeling

of close-knit community, the resourcefulness, the whole concept of neighbors helping neighbors in need.

Prof. Winchester feels that we are at a critical juncture in the development of rural life, where people no longer want to live in cities where they are increasingly subject to violent crime and virulent illness. Technology has made it possible to leave your urban office behind and recreate it in your home "out in the sticks." Who wouldn't want to work from the Finger Lakes, Catskills, Adirondacks, Tug Hill Plateau, Southern Tier, Niagara Frontier, Hudson Valley, etc. if you can still make a good living for your family? As that possibility becomes more available, we are in the position of leading the charge for rural revitalization-if only we could collectively address the longstanding and well-known impediments.

Now, as a result of the pandemic, our leaders know those issues, they've joined us in our concern about them and they currently have the resources to address them. So despite the current challenges of COVID and polarization, it's possible to change the path of rural communities and create the future we all want and all children certainly deserve. It's nothing short of fulfilling the American Dream. There are specific pressure points where state policy can help, like housing shortages, broadband access and economic development. Jacques Cousteau once famously said that before someone will work to save something, they have to learn to love it. So, before we can expect our state to take major steps to help rural issues, we need to do the work of telling them why we love rural New York. There's a lot to love, so let's do our part to tell our story to those who may want to love rural New York too.

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## Rural Hospitals Struggle, A Call to Action is Made

*Article Courtesy of Sara Bollinger, Director of Strategic Development, NYSARH*

Rural residents have a shorter life expectancy than their urban counterparts by over two years! Much of rural New York has been classified as 'medically underserved' and 'health professional shortage areas.' This means there are fewer providers than needed to serve the population. The shortages are especially severe for mental health, medical specialists, obstetrics and dentists. The providers that do practice in rural communities may still be many miles away from residents' homes.

This difficulty with access to care is exacerbated by demographic variables. Rural residents are older and have less formal education than urban residents and frequently work in jobs that are more hazardous. On average, rural residents also have lower incomes. These factors make it more difficult for rural residents to prevent and treat chronic conditions such as heart disease, cancer, COPD and diabetes, the leading causes of premature death.

The New York State Association for Rural Health celebrated its 20th Anniversary by hosting the first Rural Health Symposium on Social Determinants of Health. "NYSARH's longevity is its commitment to our mission to improve the health and well-being of rural New Yorkers and their communities," stated Helen Evans, NYSARH Board President. President of the National Rural Health Association, Alan Morgan, reported on the national landscape, followed by an informative policy panel with state representatives featuring Legislative Commission on Rural Resources Chair Senator Rachel May (53rd District), Assemblywoman Carrie Woerner (District

113), Assemblywoman Marjorie Byrnes (District 133), and Senator Daniel Stec (45th District). NYSARH then welcomed nationally recognized speaker Dr. Donna Beegle, who inspired and educated participants with proven models for better health outcomes for people living in poverty.

NYSARH would also like to announce its 2021 Annual Award recipients:

Dr. Gary Ogden Rural Practitioner of the Year Award:  
**Dr. Collins Kellogg, North Country**

Outstanding Rural Health Program of the Year Award:  
**Mobile Crisis Assessment Team, Hudson Valley**

Senator Patricia McGee Rural Health Award:  
**Jack Salo, South Central NY**

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# Iroquois Healthcare Association Calls for State Investment to step Health Care Staffing Crisis

*Article Courtesy of Kevin Kerwin, Esq., Deputy Vice President for Advocacy and Government Relations, Iroquois Healthcare Association, Inc.*

Never has the health care workforce shortage in Upstate New York been so abysmal. Hospitals across Upstate have done more with less for longer than anyone can remember all while striving to maintain the safety of staff and patients as their paramount goal. When will it end?

Upstate hospitals are continuing to actively recruit for all positions in their hospitals. The overall average position vacancy rate currently stands at 13.5%, almost double the average vacancy rate at the beginning of the pandemic in 2020. Upstate hospitals are actively recruiting for over 10,000 open positions. Vacancy rates for registered nurse positions have never been higher at 18.3%, which is triple the average vacancy rate just 6 years ago. Upstate hospitals are currently recruiting for over 3,000 registered nurse position openings.

More than ever before due to the lack of applicants for vacant positions, hospitals in Upstate central and northern New York have had little choice but to turn to traveling nursing agencies paying exorbitant hourly rates that are nothing more than unscrupulous price gouging.

This has had a horrific domino effect for hospitals, with employed nurses fleeing hospitals for the short-term monetary gain of travel nurse service, increased overtime costs in the millions of dollars, and hospitals out bidding each other for traveling nurses – once again leaving smaller hospitals and those with fewer resources at the bottom of the pile.

When will it end?

With COVID-19 once again spiking with the highly transmissible Omicron variant, vaccine mandates further reducing low staffing levels, elimination of elective surgeries—along with that the elimination of an important revenue source for hospitals, and little financial assistance from policymakers, Iroquois Healthcare Association hospitals and others across the state have few options to manage pandemic response. As of November 22, hospitals were directed to revoke religious exemptions to the vaccine mandate and fire or furlough staff that still refuse the vaccine. Then came the directive to increase staffing or risk the State shut down of elective surgical procedures. This is a devastating combination of nonstop hits for our hospitals. Devastating!

All that said, the Iroquois Healthcare Association supports vaccination efforts. In fact, one way to help is to ensure all New Yorkers get vaccinated. This will effectively reduce the number of hospitalizations

What's more, hospitals are required to comply with new legal staffing ratios that some hospitals in rural less populated communities will just never be able to meet. One size does not fit all in New York State, especially for our Upstate hospitals. This is why, as the State sits with a projected \$3 billion surplus, the Iroquois Healthcare Association is urging Governor Hochul, Majority Leader Stewart Cousins, and Speaker Heastie to immediately invest \$1 Billion in hospitals for recruitment and retention so that they can address this workforce crisis and plan for a future beyond the pandemic.

There is no more time to wait for relief. The time to act is in the rearview. With every passing day we continue to hear from hospitals and their staff about the need recruit more staff and new ways to retain and recognize the staff that we have. A long-standing challenge. Upstate New York hospitals need policy makers to act and do so swiftly. In addition to making financial assistance immediately available, Iroquois calls on Attorney General James

to take immediate steps to stop the price gouging by traveling nurse agencies. Moreover, the State should continue to fund Workforce Investment Organizations (WIO) and expand WIO's purview to acute care. Thereby leveraging the investment made by the State in the WIOs to innovate health care recruitment and retention. Iroquois runs the only statewide WIO, IHA WIO, and is poised to extend its work using its Caring Gene © campaign and artificial intelligence strategies to acute care recruitment and retention activities.

We need relief for the safety and health of hospital staff, patients and all New Yorkers!

*The Iroquois Healthcare Association (IHA) is a regional healthcare trade organization representing 50 hospitals and health systems in 32 counties of Upstate New York. IHA is the leading resource for facilities and professionals bringing quality health care to the region. For more information, please visit [www.iroquois.org](http://www.iroquois.org).*

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# Round Table Addresses the Future of the Dairy Industry in New York

Article Courtesy of Alyssa Kealy, Director of Member Services and Industry Relations for the Northeast Dairy Producers Association



The dairy industry is a huge economic driver in New York State. Milk is the largest agricultural commodity, accounting for over \$2.5 billion in sales. The climate, fertile soils, plentiful water, and proximity to large populations of consumers position New York as an ideal location for dairy farming. However, a challenging business environment, labor shortages, and increasing regulatory burden on farms, dairy processors, haulers, and affiliated industries is causing many to consider future investments outside the Empire State.

In November, the Northeast Dairy Producers Association (NEDPA) and Cornell PRO-DAIRY, hosted the New York Dairy Roundtable. This event gathered representatives of dairy industry key players, including dairy farmer leaders, cooperatives, processors, haulers, support businesses and legislators, to discuss and identify the challenges and opportunities impacting the long-term viability of the dairy industry in New York State. Commissioner Richard Ball, along with representatives from the Senate and Assembly Agriculture Committees heard directly from the people in the trenches. Major areas of discussion included workforce development, business uncertainty, regulatory burdens, infrastructure bottlenecks, industry consolidation, and an ever-evolving public perception of farming.

Significant labor shortages span across the dairy industry, and increasing and uncertain labor regulation compounds the issue. Wage Board hearings considering lowering the overtime threshold conclude on January 20th; thus, farms are still awaiting news on labor regulations that will impact their 2022 payroll. Milk is priced at the federal level; thus, dairy farmers are unable to adjust the price for their milk to help absorb additional labor costs. Young farmers on the panel shared their apprehension as they consider the future of farming in New York State. The crippling uncertainty surrounding labor has resulted in the postponement of investments and critical management decisions on many farms. On-hold include investments that would help meet climate change mitigation goals and keep renewable energy sources in New York. Maintaining the overtime threshold at 60 hours will provide some stability as farms make decisions that will impact their businesses for generations to come. We are fortunate to have the Cornell Agriculture Workforce Development program, led by Dr. Richard Stup, to help navigate workforce challenges. This program will continue to be invaluable to dairy's current workforce and that of the future.

**Milk is priced at the federal level; thus, dairy farmers are unable to adjust the price for their milk to help absorb additional labor costs.**

New York farms, processors and haulers are held to higher regulatory standards than surrounding states in many areas including labor, environmental and transportation. Without incentives for compliance, this puts us at a competitive disadvantage both nationally and globally. If we are to remain an agricultural leader in this country, we must make New York's business environment less burdensome and focus on improvements and incentives to keep our farms and processors in the state. Without investing in our current dairy plants, some processors may choose to devote resources outside of New York. As an example, updating rural infrastructure and building in-land ports would enable dairy processing plant expansion and modernization, and in turn, help combat current inefficiencies and reduce transport costs.

**Most people today are generations separated from the farm, clouding their mental image of farming with outdated and inaccurate depictions.**

Most people today are generations separated from the farm, clouding their mental image of farming with outdated and inaccurate depictions. As the industry consolidates and technology develops, farms and agribusinesses have continued to grow and evolve. One area that is often overlooked yet critical to the viability of the dairy industry, is improving the perception of farming and connecting lawmakers with the businesses they regulate. We encourage state legislators to visit family farm businesses throughout the state to see firsthand how they operate and witness the great work they are doing every day. Additionally, farmers need to share their stories with the public and represent themselves as the innovative businesses they are, while holding tightly to values like being stewards of the land, caretakers to their animals, and family businesses who employ dedicated teams of skilled staff.

With fewer growing up immersed in farming, education will be an essential component to developing our future workforce. Garnering interest in modern agricultural careers and providing training opportunities will be critical to enhancing skillsets and filling workforce voids on farms, in milk hauling trucks, and in processing plants.

The New York Dairy Roundtable was a launch point of collaborative work between the dairy industry leaders and key legislators to work towards tangible solutions. Key participants from the roundtable discussion will reconvene as a panel at the Northeast Dairy Managers Conference on March 9, 2022, to discuss the progress made and opportunities for further collaboration. We must continue to work together towards solutions that make New York a great place to farm.

To learn more about the Northeast Dairy Managers Conference presented by NEDPA and Cornell PRO-DAIRY, visit: <https://cals.cornell.edu/pro-dairy/events-programs/conferences-seminars/northeast-dairy-management-conference>

NEDPA is an organization of dairy producers and industry partners, committed to an economically viable and consumer conscious dairy industry. Our members represent over half the milk produced in the state and are pillars of their rural communities.



# The Economic Impact of Losing New York Farms

Article Courtesy of Renee St. Jacques, Associate Director of Public Policy, New York Farm Bureau

**From 2012-2017 the state lost about 2,100 farms, according to the 2017 United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agriculture Census.**

Year after year, the number of farms in New York declines. From 2012-2017 the state lost about 2,100 farms, according to the 2017 United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agriculture Census. That is the largest decline of farms in 20 years and triple the national average of a three-percent loss. Farms are an important part of the culture in the community and the loss of these farms emotionally and financially impacts the communities where they reside. These farms provide local, nutritious food, but that is not the only benefit.

Farms are an important business for local communities. They provide jobs and in fact, New York farms hired over 55,000 employees according to the 2017 census. When farms close their doors, jobs are lost and those employees must find employment elsewhere, sometimes in another state. Farms also contribute to the economy of local communities by supporting other businesses and contributing to the local tax base that supports schools and public safety. Farmers purchase services from veterinarians and farriers along with buying supplies from local feed stores and agricultural equipment suppliers.

Table 1. Economic contribution of agriculture on the New York State economy, aggregate agricultural industry sectors, 2019. Table provided courtesy of Todd Schmit

Industry Output (\$ million)	Direct <sup>a</sup>	Indirect <sup>b</sup>	Induced <sup>c</sup>	Total	Implicit Multiplier <sup>d</sup>
Agricultural Production	5,245	1,860	1,248	8,353	1.59
Agricultural Support Services	413	62	316	791	1.91
Agricultural Manufacturing	37,982	14,597	9,050	61,629	1.62
All Agricultural	43,640	11,716	9,828	65,184	1.49
<b>Employment (jobs)</b>					
Agricultural Production	52,483	8,158	7,241	67,882	1.29
Agricultural Support Services	10,588	236	1,836	12,660	1.20
Agricultural Manufacturing	100,077	72,802	52,802	225,682	2.26
All Agricultural	163,148	49,263	57,273	269,683	1.65
<b>Labor Income (\$ million)</b>					
Agricultural Production	975	573	492	2,039	2.09
Agricultural Support Services	367	21	125	513	1.40
Agricultural Manufacturing	6,621	4,789	3,581	14,991	2.26
All Agricultural	7,963	4,436	3,889	16,289	2.05
<b>Total Value Added (\$ million)</b>					
Agricultural Production	2,437	1,066	834	4,337	1.78
Agricultural Support Services	323	37	211	571	1.77
Agricultural Manufacturing	9,525	8,367	6,077	23,969	2.52
All Agriculture	12,285	7,421	6,599	26,305	2.14

Source: IMPLAN 2021

a Direct effects represent total activity (sales, employment, labor income, value added) by respective industry.

b Indirect effects represent all activity by the backward-linked supply chain industries.

c Induced effects represent industry activity due to spending out of labor income in the directly and indirectly affected industries.

d The implicit multiplier is calculated as the total effect divided by the direct effect.

(Continued on page 10)

## The Economic Impact of Losing New York Farms: *(Continued from page 9)*

A report by Professor Todd Schmit of the Charles H. Dyson School of Applied Economics Management at Cornell University, titled "2021-04 The Economic Contributions of Agriculture to the New York State Economy: 2019 Todd Schmit", gives information on the economic contributions of agriculture in the state economy. According to this report, New York agriculture directly contributed \$43.6 billion in total industry output and \$12.3 billion in gross domestic product to the state's economy from 2014-2019. In a community, farms directly and indirectly impact the local businesses which results in backward-linked supply chain business-to-business transactions. One of the conclusions of the report is that \$1 in output in agriculture generates an additional \$0.49 in back-ward linked non-agricultural industries.

The numbers show how essential agriculture is to the state's economy. In many areas of state, agriculture is a key driver of local economies. For example, in Washington County local farms produce more than \$135 million in agricultural sales annually, according to the 2017 census. Direct economic contribution from agricultural production in the county is estimated at over \$224 million annually. Losing farms leads to economic loss. Also, this rural community has a proud history of farming and the loss of that piece of the county's culture will not only lead to less locally produced food, but also the knowledge of how the food gets to the table.

According to the 2017 census, there were 33,438 farms in New York State. The loss of more farms directly impacts the local and state economy along with the lives of the people in those communities. Agriculture is part of New York's culture, and more action needs to be taken to stop the loss of farms in the state.

**In many areas of state, agriculture is a key driver of local economies.**



## OUTCOMES from 15 November 2020 - 14 November 2021

**754** open farm cases,  
representing **171,194**  
**acres**  
**289** new farm cases  
of follow up survey  
respondents indicated they  
were still involved in farming **94%**  
**203** beginning farmers assisted  
\*farming for 10 years or less

### Between 2018 (pre-COVID-19) and 2021

farms showing high  
personal/family stress  
has increased by **85%**

farms showing high  
financial stress  
increased by **31%**



## Grants and Funding

### Adirondack Special and Urgent Needs Fund

Agency: Adirondack Foundation

Type: Grant

Source: Private

Website: <https://www.adirondackfoundation.org/granting/apply-grant/special-urgent-needs>

Description: This provides grants to build sectors in response to crises, in the time of COVID-19, those areas are childcare, low-wage workers, and food insecurity.

Applications related to the costs of reopening to the public will be considered.

Priority will be given to organizations providing the following essential services: child or elder care, education, healthcare, and emergency services.

Amount: Grants range between \$250-\$5,000

Matching requirement: None

Special requirements: Applicants must be a 501(c)(3) organization or be a public agency or municipality within the Adirondack region.

Application period: Applications accepted year-round

Contact: Andrea Grout, [andrea@adkfoundation.org](mailto:andrea@adkfoundation.org)

### Entergy Micro Grants

Agency: Private

Type: Grant

Source: Private

Website: [https://www.entergy.com/our\\_community/micro\\_grant\\_guidelines/](https://www.entergy.com/our_community/micro_grant_guidelines/)

Description: Entergy Micro Grants provide funding for smaller projects/organizations in the areas where Entergy conducts business. Grants may be used for projects that impact: Arts and culture, Community improvement/enrichment, Economic development, Education and literacy, Environment, and Healthy families

Amount: Up to \$1,000

Matching Requirement: None

Special Requirements: Communities within Entergy's service area in Arkansas, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New York, and Texas

Application Period: Application accepted year-round

Eligibility: Grants will be made to the following types of organizations: Nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations, Schools, hospitals, governmental units, and religious institutions that hold nonprofit status similar to that of 501(c)(3) organizations, State or local governments if funds are used for exclusively public purposes, Volunteer fire departments that are tax exempt under section 501(c)(4) of the Tax Code, War-veterans organizations that qualify as 501(c)(19) tax-exempt entities

Contact: See Program Website

### John May Farm Safety Fund

Source: Public-Private Partnership

Website: <https://www.nycamh.org/programs-and-services/john-may-farm-safety-fund.php>

Description: The John May Farm Safety Fund provides financial assistance for New York farmers to improve safety on their farms. Past Projects have covered: repairing broken fences, mitigating drainage problems, replacing outdated machinery, purchasing and installing power take-off (PTO) shields, fixing

unprotected drop-offs, and repairing unsafe electrical systems

Amount: Awards will not exceed 50% of the estimated total cost of the project, with a maximum award amount of \$5,000. The number of awards and the award amount will be determined on a first-come, first-served basis. Projects must be completed in 1 year.

Matching Requirement: None

Special Requirements: None

Application Period: N/A

Eligibility: Residents of New York, full or part-time active farmers, and annual gross receipts between \$10,000 - \$349,999 or a dairy farm that has fewer than 700 milking cows

Contact: 800.343.7527 [jmfsf@bassett.org](mailto:jmfsf@bassett.org)

### Conservation Innovation Grants

Agency: USDA NRCS

Type: Grant

Source: Federal

Website: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/cig/>

Description: The Conservation Innovation Grants are aimed to help encourage the development and implementation of innovative conservation practices on agricultural land. About 10% of the funding for these grants is designated towards historically under-served and veteran farmers.

Amount:

Matching requirement: 50% or more of total cost of the project.

Special requirements: Must be eligible for Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP).

Application period: See website

Contact: NRCS Service Center Office in Waverly at 607-565-3454 or NRCS Horseheads Program Delivery Point at 607-739-2009

### Companion Animal Capital Projects Fund

Agency: NYS Dept. of Ag & Markets

Type: Grant

Source: State

Website: <https://agriculture.ny.gov/animals/rfp-0255-2021-2022-companion-animal-capital-projects-fund>

Description: Grant funds are available for the costs of capital projects including construction, renovation, rehabilitation, installation, acquisition/expansion of buildings, and equipment necessary for the secure containment, care, and adequate health of shelter animals.

Amount: Between \$50,000 and \$500,000 depending on the size of the municipality, not to exceed 75% of the total project cost

Matching requirement: 25% or 50% of total cost of the project in cash.

Special requirements: Municipal and incorporated not-for-profit pounds, shelters and humane societies are eligible applicants. Such entities must be a pound or shelter for dogs established and maintained pursuant to section 114 of the New York Agriculture and Markets Law.



# Rural Futures | Winter 2022

## NEWS OF INTEREST ABOUT RURAL NEW YORK STATE

### Upcoming Events!

#### Wild Lights at the Wild Center

**Time:** 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

**Host/Presenter:** The Wild Center

**Date:** Fridays and Saturdays from November 26, 2021 through February 26, 2022, open every day during President's Week (February 18-26)

**Location:** 45 Museum Dr., Tupper Lake, NY, 12986

#### Rural Issues Forum

**Time:** 1:00-3:00pm

**Host/Presenter:** Rural Housing Coalition of New York

**Date:** January 19, 2022

**Location:** Hearing Room A, Legislative Office Building, 198 State St., Albany, NY 12210

#### Nave Law NYS Winter Fair

**Time:** Varies, closes at 10:00pm

**Host/Presenter:** Nave Law Firm

**Date:** February 4-6, 2022

**Location:** Expo Center at the New York State Fairgrounds

#### Winter Farmer's Market at Baltimore Woods

**Time:** 10:00am-1:00pm

**Host/Presenter:** Baltimore Woods Natures Center

**Date:** Every second Saturday of the month from November 2021 to April 2022

**Location:** 4007 Bishop Hill Road, Marcellus, NY, 13108

#### Kasoag Lake Vintage Snow Festival

**Time:** 10:00am

**Host/Presenter:** Kasoag Lake Tavern

**Date:** February 19, 2022

**Location:** 603 County Route 30, Altmar, NY, 13302

#### Lake George Winter Carnival

**Time:** 12:00pm-7:00pm

**Host/Presenter:** Lake George Winter Carnival Committee

**Date:** Every weekend in February

**Location:** Lake George, NY

#### Chili Bowl Luncheon

**Time:** 12:00pm-3:00pm

**Host/Presenter:** View Arts Center

**Date:** February 19, 2022

**Location:** 3273 State Route 28 Old Forge, NY 13420

#### New York Farm Show

**Time:** 8:30am-4:00pm

**Host/Presenter:** Northeast Equipment Dealer's Association

**Date:** February 24-26, 2022

**Location:** New York State Fairgrounds, Syracuse, NY

#### Saratoga Beer Week

**Time:** 6:00pm-8:00pm

**Host/Presenter:**

**Date:** February 25-26, 2022

**Location:** Saratoga Springs City Center, 522 Broadway, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866