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Cooperative Extension
Otsego County

NEWS RELEASE

CORNELL AFFILIATED NEW YORK FARM VIABILITY INSTITUTE

State budget includes \$5 million for New York Farm Viability Institute
<http://www.news.cornell.edu/stories/May06/NYS.budget.NYFVI.kd.html>

The Cornell University-affiliated New York Farm Viability Institute (NYFVI) will receive \$5 million through the 2006 New York State budget to continue producing significant impacts for New York farmers, producers and farm-based businesses.

Institute-funded projects are retaining and creating jobs and enterprises, boosting sales of agricultural and horticultural products and increasing the profitability of farm-based enterprises statewide.

"The institute has consistently proven its merit by the number of success stories told by farmers and producers as a result of the first round of projects," said Steve Griffen, president of the Empire Council of Agriculture Organizations. "The first \$1 million in funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) resulted in more than \$25 million in agricultural investments in New York. These are exactly the results that were hoped for when the NYFVI was created." Institute directors estimate that the first round of grant projects also has added more than 200 jobs to the state's agricultural production sector.

State legislators and Gov. George E. Pataki increased state funding to NYFVI to \$5 million for 2006 from \$3.2 million in 2005. The 2006 funding will allow the farmer-led, not-for-profit institute to increase its ability to explore the opportunities for and overcome the barriers to financial success

for New York's farmers and agricultural and horticultural industries.

The institute funds projects for agricultural enterprises of all sizes and across all commodity areas. Current projects include dairy, maple, sod, grapes, vegetables and fruit trees. Its grant programs provide funds for agriculture innovation, extension innovation and applied research.

N.Y. state Senator and Senate Agriculture Committee Chair Catharine M. Young (57th Dist.) and NY Assemblyman and Assembly Agriculture Committee Chair William Magee (111th Dist.) fully supported the increase in funding for the institute. "There is no question as to the valuable work the institute is undertaking on behalf of all agriculture and agribusiness in New York," Young said.

"The institute has provided accountability for the use of New York State funds. The agricultural community is taking ownership of this organization and realizing its potential for addressing their concerns," added Magee.

All NYFVI-funded projects, selected by the Institute Board with input from farmer review panels, must show farm-level impact and serve as models for other producers. More than 50 farmers were involved in the selection of the 33 projects funded for 2005-06.

The NYFVI was created in 2003 as a result of a collaboration of the Empire State Council of Agriculture Organizations, the USDA Rural Development Program, New York Farm Bureau, Cornell's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets.

"The NYFVI is one of the most innovative new resources for our farm families," said State Agriculture Commissioner Patrick Brennan. "I am pleased that this funding will be able to provide even more support for this exciting new venture, which will help ensure agriculture remains a viable and competitive sector of New York's economy."