

## **GOVERNOR CUOMO ANNOUNCES \$15 MILLION AGRICULTURAL AND COMMUNITY RECOVERY FUND**

### ***Fund Will Help Farmers and Rural Communities Recover from Hurricane Irene***

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced that he has created a \$15 million Agricultural and Community Recovery Fund to help rebuild the agricultural industry in farming areas impacted by Hurricane Irene.

"I have seen first-hand the devastating damage to many New York farms as a result of Hurricane Irene and we must do all we can to help these farmers and our rural communities recover," Governor Cuomo said. "New York's agricultural industry is an important part of our state economy and the storm wreaked havoc on farms that many New Yorkers depend on for their livelihood. This fund will help New York's farming community rebuild and recover."

The money provided by the fund will be used for soil and water conservation districts to assist in rebuilding agricultural infrastructure, mitigation of stream banks, drainage and sewer rehabilitation, vineyard restoration and other projects necessary for rebuilding the agricultural industry in hard hit farming areas. Darrel Aubertine, Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Markets, and Matthew Driscoll, President and CEO of the Environmental Facilities Corporation, will work with the New York Farm Bureau and local governments to prioritize projects that will have the greatest impact on restoring damaged communities.

The money will be provided from the Upstate Agricultural Economic Development Capital Fund and the Department of Homes and Community Renewal's Community Development Office.

Darrel Aubertine, Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Markets, said, "Farmers that have seen widespread damage from Hurricane Irene should know that New York is here to help. Our agriculture community is a vibrant and robust part of our state economy, and I commend Governor Cuomo for establishing this fund to help farmers get back on their feet after this devastating storm. I look forward to working with farms across the state as we recover from Hurricane Irene."

U.S. Senator Chuck Schumer said, "Tropical Storm Irene blew down crops, put fields underwater, killed livestock, spoiled milk and ruined feed. Farmers from the Hudson Valley and the Capital Region up to the North Country have a long road ahead to get their farms back on track, and I will push to bring as much federal aid to New York as possible. I am pleased that Secretary Vilsack, who really cares about New York's farmers, is here to see the damage wrought first-hand, and look forward to working together to help our farms recover from this devastating storm."

U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, a member of the Senate Agriculture Committee said, "This storm destroyed farms across New York and we must help them recover. New York farms are renowned for their fresh produce and quality dairy products. We will do all we can to make sure agricultural communities across the state have the tools they need to rebuild. This fund established by Governor Cuomo will provide needed resources to farms impacted by the storm,

and I look forward to continuing to work together to help New York's farming community."

Congressman Paul Tonko said, "This storm had a devastating impact on farms, crops, livestock and families across New York State, hurting our robust agriculture industry and destroying the local economies of rural communities. New York farmers are second to none, and we will do everything we can to help them recover. I thank Governor Cuomo for establishing this fund that will help our farmers rebuild after Irene."

Additional news available at [www.governor.ny.gov](http://www.governor.ny.gov)

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