

Farm Bureau, A Retrospect

“Farm Bureau” was founded in 1911 in Broome County, New York by a group of farmers who wanted representation to deal with the changing face of agriculture in their area. They wanted an organization that would fight for their rights, promote and serve agriculture, disseminate educational information and teach them about the best farming practices available to them. Nearly a century later, Farm Bureau is still working to carry out farmer's wishes dealing with the continually changing face of agriculture not only in New York, but in the United States as well. Currently, there are over **5 million** Farm Bureau **members** throughout the United States!

Your Long Island Farm Bureau is working hard on the local level as well. Even with the many changes affecting farming today, Suffolk County remains the largest agricultural county in New York State based on the value of crops we produce. Farm Bureau has been working diligently on many different fronts to keep agriculture a viable industry in Suffolk County.

Over the last three decades, Farm Bureau worked to organize the Purchase of Development Rights program (PDR). This program has preserved forever over 10,000 acres of land in Suffolk County and is still going strong with over 900 acres of farmland added to the purchasing list by local farmers recently.

Farm Bureau works relentlessly this year with all levels of government to secure tens of millions of dollars to continue the purchasing of development rights from East End farms.

Farm Bureau worked to pass into law the voluntary, incentive based Agricultural Environmental Management Program (AEM). AEM has provided 24 million dollars in funding for non-point source pollution control projects on farms.

Farm Bureau worked to eliminate state sales tax on items used in agricultural production saving farmers over \$12 million annually.

Farm Bureau worked to expedite the permitting process for emergency replacement of farmer's wells. In an emergency situation, the well can be replaced in three weeks, potentially saving that farmer's crop.

Farm Bureau worked with LIPA to coordinate a wind power initiative. Five windmills will be placed on operations on the North Fork to provide a reduction in farmer's electrical costs while supporting clean efficient power,

Farm Bureau works with local affairs committees made up of producers to monitor, discuss, and act upon local issues that affect farmers and/or farming.

Farm Bureau worked with a 49 member volunteer task force to write the "Blueprint For Our Future" report, designed to create jobs and preserve the environment with one goal in mind: to strengthen the East End of Long Island.

Long Island Farm Bureau worked on a marketing program with King Kullen Grocery Stores to make available to the public products ("GROWN ON LONG ISLAND") in all King Kullen stores. This arrangement gives shoppers the opportunity to buy local and increase sales for East End farmers.

Long Island Farm Bureau worked to get farmer representation on the Planning Boards of Riverhead and Southold.

These are just a few of the many accomplishments LIFE has achieved through the years. We continue to work on the policies enacted by our farmer members to help keep farming a viable industry on the East End of Long Island.