



NEWS FROM NEW YORK FARM BUREAU

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FOR RELEASE

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FARM BUREAU ASKS PATERSON ADMINISTRATION TO DECLINE APPEAL IN COURT CASE

*Supreme court victory for the Lewis farm over the
APA should stand, Farm Bureau says*

ALBANY -- New York Farm Bureau president John Lincoln today urged the Paterson administration to let a judge's ruling stand in the court case of Lewis Family Farms versus the Adirondack Park Agency.

"We strongly believe the state's interest would be much better served in declining to pursue an appeal of this case," Lincoln said in a letter to Gov. Paterson, sent today.

This week, a state Supreme Court judge ruled that permit restrictions for agricultural worker housing at the Lewis farm are exempt from APA jurisdiction. This came after the APA had slapped the farmer with a \$50,000 fine for building housing for his growing roster of workers. The Lewis farm, in Essex, N.Y. is a successful and innovative organic farm.

New York Farm Bureau strongly believes that the APA does not have the ability to restrict agricultural operations and practices within the Park borders. The court agreed.

The ruling recognized that the APA exceeded its permitting authority. It also said that it was not

the Legislature's original intent to distinguish between agricultural businesses outside or inside the "blue line" boundaries of the Adirondack Park when creating both the Agency's regulatory authority and statewide Agricultural District protections.

New York Farm Bureau recognizes that New York State faces enormous challenges in the coming months, including balancing a looming \$15 billion budget deficit, and trying to foster sorely needed economic development in rural upstate New York.

"The state does not need to waste resources pursuing a case that has been definitively decided in favor of the farmer," Lincoln said. "Don't we have bigger fish to fry?"

Lincoln suggested in his letter to the governor that a healthy agricultural industry can play a large role in the state's economic recovery effort by providing much needed state tax revenue, a secure employment base and a "ripple effect" of economic support for rural communities.

"This case has taken a considerable amount of time and financial resources from all involved," Lincoln said. "We ask you to recognize that it is time to meet new, more pressing challenges that face our state and we stand ready to work as your partner in this effort."

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New York Farm Bureau is the statewide lobbying/trade organization that represents thousands of member families. Its members and the public know the organization as "The Voice of New York Agriculture." New York Farm Bureau is dedicated to solving the economic and public policy issues challenging the agricultural community.