

August 7, 2009

WASHINGTON, DC - Today, U.S. Rep. Michael Arcuri (NY-24) was joined by representatives from the local agriculture community to announce \$400,000 in federal funding for the Graze NY program he secured in legislation that passed in the House of Representatives in July. These funds represent a substantial increase in federal funding over previous years for the Graze NY program, which promotes effective grazing habits for livestock across Upstate New York.

"The Graze NY program will continue to provide key resources to Upstate farmers who are looking to improve the grazing practices of their livestock and ensure the healthiest herds possible," **Arcuri said**. "I am looking forward to this program continuing its growth across New York State and I know that I can continue to be a steward and a resource for our local farmers who are interested in Graze NY."

The primary goal of the Graze NY program is to provide technical training, guidance and some financial assistance to help family farms utilize the most effective grazing methods possible. Grass based agriculture will lower feed costs and overhead costs on farms across the region. Environmentally, grass based agriculture conserves natural resources and reduces the amount of carbon in the atmosphere.

The Oneida County Soil and Water District will receive the funds and is charged with distributing it to the Graze NY program for, among other things, maintaining grazing specialists on staff to consult with local farmers on best practices and to develop strategies for the most efficient and effective grazing process.

The Graze NY program was originally started with help from former U.S. Rep. James Walsh (NY-25) and has now been led by Arcuri since Walsh's retirement from Congress in 2008.

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