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**STATE AGRICULTURE COMMISSIONER HIGHLIGHTS FIRST-YEAR RECORD SALES AND EXPANDED PROGRAMMING AT THE TASTE NY MARKET AT TODD HILL**

***Store Celebrates Record Sales of Locally Produced Products in May***

***Farmers' Market Kicks Off Second Season with New Farm Share Program Sign-Up Tomorrow***

State Agriculture Commissioner Richard A. Ball today announced record sales of locally produced New York State products at the Taste NY Market at Todd Hill. On Friday, May 22, the Taste NY Market at Todd Hill broke its single-day sales record, bringing in \$8,569. Since it opened in June of last year, the store has grossed well over \$500,000 from the sale of New York State foods and beverages, far outpacing early sales projections. Sales continue to climb with record-high gross sales in the month of May exceeding \$92,000. The majority of the revenues go directly to New York growers and processors, and local producers use the store to bring new products to market. The Taste NY Market at Todd Hill also provides valuable information on the extensive agri-tourism opportunities in the area.

“It’s great to see the success at the Taste NY Market at Todd Hill store and Farmers’ Market because it reinforces what we know to be true: New Yorkers really do value fresh, locally produced and grown foods,” said Commissioner Ball. “Taste NY is certainly helping to connect the dots between our farm community and new customers, and I’m pleased we are continuing to find ways to support our agricultural economy.”

The Market at Todd Hill is a unique Taste NY experience on the Taconic Parkway that offers a wide variety of foods and beverages from different New York State producers on a rotating basis. Among the Taste NY products offered at the Taste NY Market at Todd Hill are fresh eggs, cheese and other dairy products, meats, local fruits and vegetables, sauces and syrups. Travelers can also purchase local ice cream, coffee and tea, as well as sandwiches and pastries. The Market currently boasts over 100 products from 60 local farmers and food processors.

“We are looking forward to a summer packed with freshness and flavor and providing commuters and tourists with easy opportunities to enjoy the season’s local bounty,” said Market Manager Lachele Coninx-Wiley. “Due to popular response, we have also expanded hours of operation this summer.”

Last June, the Taste NY Market at Todd Hill officially opened its doors. The store was renovated by the New York State Office of General Services and New York State Department of Transportation.

“Because of Governor Cuomo’s vision and leadership, the New York State Department of Transportation rejuvenated the long-closed Todd Hill rest area with a Taste NY store and expanded the Park and Ride lot there for area commuters,” State Transportation Commissioner Joan McDonald said. “We are proud to celebrate our partnership with the Governor’s Taste NY

program, which is so successfully promoting the state by showcasing to travelers the many high-quality products made here.”

“The record-breaking sales at the Taste NY Market at Todd Hill are a great success story in Governor Cuomo’s campaign to promote New York’s food and beverage industries,” said OGS Commissioner RoAnn M. Destito. “I will always be proud of the work OGS did assisting with the design and renovation of this market for our partners at the Department of Agriculture and Markets and Department of Transportation.”

The Cornell Cooperative Extension of Dutchess County, which operates and manages the Taste NY Market at Todd Hill, has also been expanding its programming and promotion of local agriculture at the Market at Todd Hill. Last fall brought the introduction of a new farmers’ market, which has grown this year to support 12 local farms. Tomorrow, June 5, the Todd Hill Farmers’ Market will kick off its second season and offer sign-up for a new farm share program, sponsored by Taste NY and the FarmOn! Foundation.

Through this first-ever FarmOn! Taste NY Farm Share initiative, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) members will be able to pick up their subscription of shares of fresh, local and organic produce from various Hudson Valley farms on Fridays at the Taste NY at Todd Hill Farmers’ Market beginning June 19 through October 23 from 2 until 6 p.m.

Members are able to sign up for the farm share program in person at the Taste NY at Todd Hill Farmers’ Market or online at <http://farmonfoundation.org/farmon-farm-shares/>. The Taste NY site has 100 shares available, which will not only include produce, but also recipes, tips and demonstrations from Taste NY and invitations to FarmOn! “Meet Your Farmer” events. The following Hudson Valley farms are participating in the farm share:

- Common Hands Farm – Hudson
- FarmOn! Empire Farm – Copake
- Fix Brothers Fruit Farm – Hudson
- Kleins Kill Fruit Farms – Germantown
- Turtle Tree Seed – Copake
- Caradonna Farm – Marlboro

“FarmOn! inspires us to eat local fresh food from family farms. CSA farm share programs not only feed you well, it benefits beyond taste and rebuilds local economies that are at the heart of our partnership with Taste NY. Curated FarmOn! CSA farm shares also fund the FarmOn! Foundation youth education programs to keep farmers farming in our rich agricultural communities,” said FarmOn! Foundation Founder Tessa Edick.

Each and every share includes vegetables that have been harvested within 24 hours of pick-up and includes enough food to feed a family in the Hudson Valley region for one to two weeks. Organic greens, vegetables and seasonal fruit from organic and biodynamic farms in the Hudson Valley region will also be a part of the bi-weekly pick up. FarmOn! Foundation will also deliver goods to Westchester, New York City and Greenwich, CT.

For more information and pricing, please visit: <http://farmonfoundation.org/farmon-farm-shares/>.

For information regarding the Taste NY Market at Todd Hill, including its expanded hours, please visit: [www.taste.ny.gov](http://www.taste.ny.gov) or <http://ccedutchess.org/agriculture-horticulture/taste-ny-market-at-todd-hill-1.php>.

**About Taste NY:**

Taste NY is an initiative launched by Governor Cuomo in 2013 to promote New York's food and beverage industries. It is overseen by the Department of Agriculture and Markets and has created opportunities for local producers to showcase their goods at large public events such as the New York Wine & Food Festival, Summer Fancy Food Show and the Great New York State Fair. The program has also opened stores at Thruway rest stops and New York City airports, enabling travelers to buy New York State's homegrown and homemade products. Approximately 1,100 local companies have participated in these opportunities, further linking their products and the state's growing food and beverage market to consumers from across the globe.

**About CCE Dutchess County**

Through quality educational programs, Cornell Cooperative Extension Dutchess County (CCEDC) builds strong, healthy youth, adults, families and communities while enhancing the economic, social, agricultural and natural resources of Dutchess County and the region. Through the Taste NY Market at Todd Hill, CCEDC is researching the feasibility of marketing local farm and food products in a Taste NY setting. In addition, CCEDC is working to enhance the sustainability of local farms by providing training in agricultural marketing practices, as well as providing education on the benefits of healthy food choices.

**About the FarmOn! Foundation:**

Created in 2011 as the philanthropic arm of Culinary Partnership, FarmOn! Foundation is a 501c3 non-profit organization and public charity. Tessa Edick, founder of both, has cultivated and nurtured a broad network of supporters and beneficiaries within New York. Located in the heart of the agricultural community of the Hudson Valley in Columbia County, N.Y., the organization strives to bring community awareness to food sources, reinvigorate a respect for farming to inspire youth and encourage careers in agriculture and help connect rural to urban marketplaces. By supporting succession on the farm and funding educational youth programs and experiences for the next generation of farmers, FarmOn! Foundation is working to preserve family farming in America.

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