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**FINAL ALERT/IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Tractor Rally, April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008, Trenton**  
**NOTE: Any reporter covering this rally is welcome to hitch a ride in one of the tractors departing from Cadwallader Park. Please advise in advance, if possible.**

**TRACTOR RALLY IN TRENTON PROVIDES PLATFORM  
FOR ONGOING FARMER OUTCRY VS ELIMINATING DEPARTMENT OF  
AGRICULTURE**

**Trenton, NJ (March 31, 2008) --** Farmers and their allies continue to press their case in Trenton and in the Legislature against the proposed elimination of the New Jersey Department of Agriculture as a cabinet level position. The most emphatic demonstration thus far is an unprecedented rally of farmers, tractors, horses and landscape vehicles in front of the Statehouse Annex drawing speakers from the legislature, county freeholders, farmers and other supporting organizations, organized by the New Jersey Farm Bureau.

As of today, nearly 50 tractors, several horses and other farm and landscape equipment are expected to join the procession (more than 500 rallyers are expected) will parade down West State Street, starting at 10:00 a.m., at Cadwallader Park, leading to a rally with more than a dozen speakers, beginning at 10:30 a.m. NJFB President Rich Nieuwenhuis will emcee the rally.

Those arriving for the rally before 10:00 a.m. are welcome to coffee and doughnuts, compliments of New Jersey Farm Bureau...outdoors next to the Farmhouse, in the garden area. Good opportunity to talk with participating farmers and supporters.

The objective is to support legislators who will seek the needed changes in the state budget proposal, and to show the Corzine administration and general public that agriculture deserves to maintain its current standing in state government as a major industry in the Garden State. The event goes on rain or shine; only the threat of severe weather could cause a cancellation.

**Confirmed speakers for tomorrow's rally:**

Rich Nieuwenhuis, NJFB President, greenhouse grower, acting as emcee  
Senator Jeff Van Drew (D-1: Cape May, Cumberland, parts of Atlantic)  
Assemblyman Nelson Albano (D-1; Cape May, Cumberland, parts of Atlantic)  
Assemblyman John Burzichelli (D-3:Salem, part of Gloucester, part of Cumberland)

Assemblyman Doug Fisher (D-3: :Salem, part of Gloucester, part of Cumberland)  
Assemblywoman Caroline Casagrande (R-12: most of Monmouth; part of Mercer)  
Assemblywoman Marcia Karrow (R-23: Warren, part of Hunterdon)  
Assemblyman Mike Doherty (R-23: Warren, part of Hunterdon)  
Assemblywoman Alyson Little McHose (R-24: Sussex, part of Morris, part of Hunterdon)  
Assemblyman Joe Malone (R-30: part of Burlington, part of Ocean, part of Monmouth, part of Mercer)

Cumberland County Freeholder Lou Magazzu  
Sussex County Freeholder Glen Vetrano  
Warren County Freeholder/farmer Richard Gardner

Michael Brooks, Salem County farmer  
Alyssa Mottram, President, NJ FFA Association, ag student  
Maggie Romano, NJ Horse Council, horse farmer  
(more names to come later)

**Other measures of support:** Recent Senate and Assembly budget committees' public hearings on the draft FY '09 state budget provided opportunities for supporters to weigh in. County freeholders have submitted resolutions against eliminating the agency.

Salem County farmer Bill Brooks told a Senate committee meeting in Gloucester County: "I'm willing to see it (NJDA) take its fair share of cuts, but to think of the drastic elimination proposed by the governor is not acceptable to me or my family." Members of the Salem County freeholder board appeared before the Assembly committee in Burlington County to protest the NJDA cuts. Equine industry leader Mary Jo Herbert of Mercer County and other farming advocates also testified.

**Legislators are expressing support.** Senator John Adler suggests dropping the Department of State and retaining the NJDA. Assemblywoman Marcia Karrow used the revenue forecast meeting in an Assembly Budget Committee in Trenton to protest cutting the NJDA. So did first-term senators Phil Haines (Burl.) and Steven Oroho (Sussex). In a joint press release, they said the NJDA "is an indispensable source of information and support for our agricultural industry ... it does not belong in the DEP."

The New Jersey Farm Bureau is a non-profit member organization of 15,000 farmers and farm-related individuals within the Garden State. It is the only organization solely dedicated to representing the grass- roots interests and directives of its members in educating all levels of government and the public on the farm community's policies and positions. The Farm Bureau also takes a lead in seeking out initiatives, activities and ventures to enhance the profitability of producer members and ensure the viability of agriculture in New Jersey -- *the Garden State for Good Reason -- our farms.*