



CONTACT:

Peter Furey, 609-393-7163 pfurey9119@aol.com
Pegi Adam, 973-744-6090, pegi@mountsnow.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RICHARD NIEUWENHUIS TO CONTINUE LEADERSHIP OF NEW JERSEY FARM BUREAU

'State Funding Support for Agriculture will be Major Issue Next Year'

Trenton, NJ (November 19, 2008) – Richard Nieuwenhuis was elected to this fourth two-year term as president of the New Jersey Farm Bureau, during the organization's 90th annual convention held earlier this week in Princeton. He also serves on the board of directors of the American Farm Bureau Federation, representing the northeast region and on that organization's Trade Committee.

"It's an honor and my pleasure to continue leading this important organization," says Nieuwenhuis. "New Jersey Farm Bureau continues to be widely respected in Trenton and throughout the state, and with the economic constraints now on our state government, the Farm Bureau will be increasingly important as the voice of our agricultural community."

"The country's agricultural industry is in for an uncertain future along with everyone else. We are all well aware of the economic downturn. This period of high input costs and lowering commodity prices will certainly impact our business decisions in New Jersey agriculture. We need to be very concerned that any stimulus legislation recognizes agriculture's needs. We will monitor this closely both at New Jersey Farm Bureau and American Farm Bureau."

New Jersey Farm Bureau has been an active voice for agriculture this past year, most notably rallying in Trenton on April 1st, with a "tractorcade" of more than 100 tractors and horses to successfully save the Department of Agriculture. But the organization has also achieved favorable language for the northeast's farms in the 2008 federal Farm Bill and worked closely with the State Board of Agriculture on numerous policy issues.

Farm Bureau also worked actively on Highlands region legislation, successfully convincing the Appellate Division of State court that the DEP Highlands regulations on septic density were not supported with adequate science and imposed unreasonable burdens on landowners.

During the convention, Secretary of Agriculture Charles Kuperus gave a final address to his farming constituents, for which he received a standing ovation of appreciation. Farm Bureau also received the results of a Fairleigh Dickinson PublicMind poll, showing strong public support for farming and agriculture in New Jersey. Enthusiasm was strong among convention goers for recent trends favoring locally grown food and the popularity of preserved farms, coupled with the political victory of turning back the attempt to eliminate the Department of Agriculture.

Moving forward this year, Niewuenhuis sees funding for vital agricultural programs and support organizations as the most crucial issue facing state farmers, with many now in jeopardy. "It is vital that the legislature and Corzine administration continue to support our Extension Service and Rutgers School of Environmental and Biological Sciences. It is also vital to continue funding our farmland preservation program, which to date has helped preserve more than 1,700 farms totaling more than 170,000 acres in the country's most densely populated state," he says.

Finally, he recognizes the new federal emphasis on alternate energy and the opportunities this presents to innovative New Jersey farmers. "Production of electricity on farms from solar and other forms of renewable energy is an increasingly important issue," concludes Nieuwenhuis. "While we think national energy priorities will support such efforts, they will also raise many questions about farmland assessment, right to farm guidelines and other concerns for landowners and municipalities where these projects will be placed. We have much to do this year, but our Farm Bureau is up to whatever challenges or opportunities present themselves."

For further information, contact the New Jersey Farm Bureau, at The Farmhouse, 168 West State Street, Trenton, NJ 08608. Phone 609-393-7163; fax 609-393-7072; email mail@njfb.org; website www.njfb.org

The New Jersey Farm Bureau is a non-profit member organization of 14,000+ 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.*

###