



**Built to Lead**

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GOVERNOR ANDREW M. CUOMO

**GOVERNOR CUOMO HIGHLIGHTS SUCCESS OF BUY NY PROGRAM TO INCREASE PROCUREMENT OF LOCAL FOODS IN STATE FACILITIES**

***State Prisons Significantly Increase Purchases of New York Grown and Produced Products***

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today highlighted the success of the Buy NY program to increase procurement of local, New York State foods in state facilities and support the state's agricultural economy. As a result of the program, first announced in 2014 at the Farm to Table Upstate-Downstate Agricultural Summit, the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision has significantly increased its purchase of New York State products. It has replaced several out-of-state products on its menu and spent more than \$1.8 million to purchase New York State-grown and produced food and beverages such as apples, potatoes, beans, yogurt, ice cream and milk.

"New York's agriculture industry is an economic engine in communities across this state and through the Buy NY program, we are continuing to drive its growth and expand opportunity," **Governor Cuomo said.** "I am proud of this program's success and we will continue to connect state institutions with local farmers and producers to showcase the very best of New York's products and strengthen our agricultural economy."

Governor Cuomo announced the Buy NY initiative in 2014 to help state and local governments increase the purchase of local agriculture products in government-run institutions such as hospitals, colleges, prisons and other facilities. The program is a collaborative effort by the State Department of Agriculture and Markets, DOCCS, Office of Mental Health, Department of Health, Office of General Services and Cornell Cooperative Extension.

By working in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture and Markets, OGS and Cornell Cooperative Extension, DOCCS has been able to further the Governor's initiative and maintain the low cost to taxpayers of feeding the inmate population.

In 2015, several menu items and ingredients were changed to promote the use of New York products, including:

- Diced potatoes are now grown and processed in New York. Approximate annual usage is 451,437 pounds at a cost of \$139,950.

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- Vanilla yogurt produced in New York State was added to the menu. Annual usage is 1,800,000 cups at a cost of \$450,000.
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- A Jamaican beef patty processed in New York was added to the menu. Estimated annual usage is 20,950 patties at a cost of \$576,125.
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- A New York produced ice cream was added to the menu for two holiday meals. Usage is 110,000 cups of pumpkin ice cream at a cost of \$27,500.
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- New York frozen diced apple replaced an Argentina dehydrated product used in making apple crisp. Annual usage is 230,000 pounds at a cost of \$137,190.
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- New York State powdered milk replaced an out-of-state produced brand. Usage is 12,000 pounds annually at a cost of \$13,200.
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- Dry beans from New York replaced frozen beans from Canada. Annual usage is 352,000 pounds at a cost of \$210,500.
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- New York State kosher grape juice was added to the menu. Annual usage is 26,400 gallons at a cost of \$283,800.

It costs DOCCS an average of \$2.84 to feed an inmate three meals per day using the Cook-Chill process. Cook-Chill involves chilling food products immediately after their preparation to ensure freshness, then shipping the products in large, sealed plastic bags for easy reheating.

DOCCS continues to follow up on the additional leads for New York products. Fresh produce and other food vendors are asked to identify whether products are grown and/or processed in New York State when submitting their procurement bid packets.

**DOCCS Acting Commissioner Anthony J. Annucci said,** “By supporting Governor Cuomo’s Buy NY program, DOCCS is able to fulfill its responsibility to offer nutritionally sound meals in our correctional facilities, with an increasing number of New York food products procured at good prices. The State’s economy benefits from our purchases and we join the many who are helping the agricultural industry grow.”

**State Agriculture Commissioner Richard A. Ball said,** “We are very proud of the products grown and made in New York and pleased to be connecting the dots between our growers and producers and new market opportunities. Having the opportunity to offer high quality food from our own backyard while also benefitting farmers and the economy is a win, win.”

The Buy website, <https://www.ny.gov/programs/buy-ny>, provides a portal for state and local governments to learn more about purchasing New York State-produced products. It also helps educate New York agricultural producers and distributors about the state contracting system, which is available to all 62 counties and hundreds of municipalities across the state.

The Department of Agriculture and Markets has made great progress in increasing procurement of local foods across New York State. In addition to the Buy NY partnership, the Governor launched the State's Farm to School program in 2015 to strengthen ties between local farmers and school districts. Six school districts were awarded a total of nearly \$325,000 in October. In addition, Governor Cuomo has proposed up to \$500,000 to be invested in the state's Farm to School program this year.

The Department also assisted in New York City's NY Thursday's program that brings locally grown or produced foods directly to students in New York City Department of Education schools every Thursday, providing them with healthy meals. New York State will replicate this program in schools across Upstate New York.

The Governor's Taste NY initiative has also proven hugely successful in promoting local products and the program tripled gross sales of participating vendors last year. Total gross sales of New York products from Taste NY events and stores jumped from approximately \$1.5 million in 2014 to over \$4.5 million in 2015.

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