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FARMING IS BIG BUSINESS. A NEW REPORT FROM THE STATE COMPTROLLER PUTS THE VALUE OF NEW YORK'S FARM PRODUCTION AT 5-POINT-7 BILLION DOLLARS. THAT COMES EVEN AS THE NUMBER OF OPERATIONS AND THE ACREAGE DEDICATED TO FARMING HAS DECLINED OVER THE LAST DECADE. DESPITE THOSE SETBACKS THE STATE IS SECOND IN THE NATION FOR THE PRODUCTION OF APPLES AND MAPLE SYRUP, AND COMES IN THIRD FOR DAIRY PRODUCTION. THE REPORT ALSO FOUND 96 PERCENT OF THE STATE'S FARMS ARE FAMILY OWNED.