

May 7, 2019

A PROPOSAL IN ALBANY WOULD HELP UNIONIZE FARMS, AND THAT'S NOT GOING OVER WELL WITH SOME FARMERS. AGRICULTURE HAS LONG BEEN EXEMPT FROM A WIDE SWATH OF THE STATE'S LABOR LAWS, BUT THE NEW MEASURE WOULD ROLLBACK SOME OF THOSE PROTECTIONS. THAT INCLUDES IMPOSING AN EIGHT HOUR WORK DAY, REQUIRING DISABILITY AND UNEMPLOYMENT COVERAGE, AND ALLOWING FARM WORKERS TO FORM UNIONS AND COLLECTIVELY BARGAIN. THE STATE FARM BUREAU IS AGAINST THE PROPOSAL, SAYING IT WOULD CRIPPLE FAMILY FARMS.

May 10, 2019

AN ALIEN INVADER IS TARGETING NEW YORK, AND THE STATE D-E-C WANTS YOUR HELP STOPPING IT. OFFICIALS ARE ASKING THE PUBLIC TO ASSIST IN TRACKING THE SPREAD OF THE SPOTTED LANTERNFLY. THE BRIGHTLY COLORED ASIAN INSECT CAN CAUSE SERIOUS DAMAGE TO CROPS LIKE APPLES, GRAPES, AND HOPS. IT'S BECOME ENDEMIC IN PENNSYLVANIA AND WAS FIRST SPOTTED IN NEW YORK LAST YEAR. PICTURES OF THE LANTERNFLY, AND A FORM FOR REPORTING SIGHTINGS, ARE AVAILABLE AT D-E-C-DOT-N-Y-DOT-ORG.

May 13, 2019

NEW YORK IS ESCALATING ITS BATTLE AGAINST TICKS. THE SMALL, BLOOD SUCKING PARASITES HAVE BECOME AN INCREASING PROBLEM AS MORE TEST POSITIVE FOR LYME DISEASE AND OTHER INFECTIONS. IN RESPONSE NEW YORK PLANS TO EXPAND PROGRAMS TO CONTROL THE POPULATION, INCLUDING "TICKICIDE" STATIONS THAT TREAT WILD DEER AND RODENTS WITH CHEMICALS TO KILL THE PESTS. THE STATE WILL ALSO LAUNCH A CAMPAIGN TO WARN HIGH RISK POPULATIONS LIKE HUNTERS AND HIKERS OF THE POTENTIAL DANGERS FROM TICKS AND HOW TO PREVENT EXPOSURE.

May 15, 2019

FARMERS ARE GETTING POUNDED BY THIS YEAR'S STEADY RAINS. STATE AGRICULTURE OFFICIALS SAY THE ALMOST DAILY RAINFALL HAS KEPT SOME CROPS FROM BEING HARVESTED BECAUSE THE FIELDS ARE TOO WET, WHILE OTHERS STILL HAVEN'T BEEN PLANTED. THE BIGGEST IMPACT HAS BEEN ON ANIMAL FEEDS LIKE HAY AND ALFALFA, WHICH NORMALLY HAVE THEIR FIRST CUTTING IN MID MAY. ON THE BRIGHT SIDE, THE AREA IS LIKELY TO SEE A NEAR RECORD STRAWBERRY CROP.

May 23, 2019

THE ARRIVAL OF SUMMER MEANS LOCAL BEACHES AND LAKES WILL BE SEEING A HORDE OF VISITORS, AND NOT ALL OF THEM ARE WELCOME. THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION IS LAUNCHING A NEW EDUCATION EFFORT ABOUT ALGAL BLOOMS. THEY'RE CAUSED WHEN HIGH LEVELS OF NUTRIENTS IN THE WATER CAUSE AN EXPLOSION OF BLUE GREEN ALGAE THAT PRODUCE A TOXIC RESIDUE. BLOOMS HAVE BEEN A MAJOR ISSUE AT SYLVAN BEACH AND VERONA BEACH STATE PARK OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS.

June 7, 2019

LOCAL HEALTH OFFICIALS ARE WARNING RESIDENTS TO TAKE PRECAUTIONS AGAINST RABIES. THE DISEASE IS ENDEMIC ACROSS CENTRAL NEW YORK THANKS TO THE LARGE POPULATION OF WILD ANIMALS. OFFICIALS SAY PET OWNERS SHOULD MAKE SURE ALL OF THEIR ANIMALS HAVE BEEN VACCINATED AGAINST THE VIRUS, AND RESIDENTS SHOULD AVOID CONTACT WITH ANY ANIMALS ACTING STRANGELY. VACCINATIONS ARE AVAILABLE THROUGH VETERINARIANS AND AT REGULAR CLINICS SPONSORED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH.

July 31, 2019

THERE'S BEEN ANOTHER OUTBREAK OF BLUE GREEN ALGAE IN ONEIDA LAKE, AND IT'S NOT ALONE. THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION SAYS OVER FIFTY BODIES OF WATER ACROSS THE STATE HAVE SEEN BLOOMS OF THE POTENTIALLY TOXIC ORGANISMS. THAT NUMBER IS EXPECTED TO RISE AS A NEW ROUND OF HOT, HUMID WEATHER PROVIDES THE PERFECT CONDITIONS FOR THE ALGAE TO REPRODUCE. OFFICIALS AT VERONA BEACH STATE PARK SAY ANYONE PLANNING A VISIT SHOULD CALL AHEAD TO SEE IF THE BEACH IS OPEN.