

Home Grown Politics Across NH Farmland to Concord and Washington

I think you all know that I have tried to get a closer relationship between the NH Farm Bureau and the NH State Grange. As a result I have been and continue to represent our State Grange on the Farm Bureau Government Affairs Committee. Recently I spent the entire day at the Farm Bureau with the Government Affairs Committee, the Policy Committee and the County Presidents as well as the Farm Bureau Directors. I was there both as the Grange member of the Government Affairs Committee and in my role as a Legislator. That meeting was a kick off to updating Farm Bureau Policies.

I sometimes for this column and for that matter my role as your legislative and Agriculture Director find I cannot separate it from my role as a Legislator and my connection to national and regional legislative organizations. I have no problem reporting things I do as member of State Agriculture and Rural Leaders (SARL) in this column, or talking about the Grange at Council of State Governments.

In August Sister Tara Sad and I traveled to the Eastern Regional Conference of the Council of State Governments (CSG – ERC) annual meeting in Baltimore, along with four other legislators from New Hampshire. As usual we attended a personal development workshop, this one on Risk Assessment, did a Maryland agriculture tour and most importantly participated in several agriculture and rural affairs policy discussions. Having a regional forum is great because we can network with other northeastern legislators who generally have the same issues that we do in New Hampshire.

In January Sister Tara and I will also participate in the SARL Ag Chairs summit. That is a group of Agriculture and Rural Affairs Legislative Chairs and Ranking Members for both House and Senate from all fifty states. In January New Hampshire State Grange will host the Northeast Grange Leaders. I look forward to meeting with my counterparts, the other northeast Grange Legislative Directors.

I have kept busy with Judging Outstanding Young Farmer contest, and selecting our Legislative and Agriculture Awards for this year. You will have to wait for State Session in October to find out who are the recipients. Again I plan on making the Legislative award at State Session but presenting the Ag Awards at local Granges.

The Big E is fast approaching. On Sunday September 21 we will celebrate Grange Day at the Big E. Once again let me make the pitch to come to West Springfield on Grange Day. After seeing the fair and making purchases of local NH products at the New Hampshire Building, then march with us in the parade. NH needs a better showing of Grangers in the parade. It is always the same few folks that march.

Legislatively we are watching for the re-written FSMA rules and will participate as a State Grange during the comment period. We are also awaiting the release of the proposed rules for “Waters of the US”. Both of those rules have good

intentions, but both could seriously and negatively impact our small northeast producers.

Your New Hampshire Grange Foundation awarded six \$1500 scholarships this year. The checks have been cut and sent to the awardees. We had six of the most qualified applicants one could imagine. We advertised it at both the Grange and the Farm Bureau. All of the recipients were either education or agriculture majors. What a great bunch of young adults!