

## House Republican Press Release

July 2, 2007  
Press Office: 860-240-8700

### **Rep. Ruth Fahrbach, Sen. John Kissel secure land acquisition waiver for Agriscience Center**



State Rep. Ruth Fahrbach, and state Senator John A. Kissel (R-Enfield) announce that a provision included in the recently adopted two-year state budget gives approval to the Suffield Regional Agriscience Center's plan to acquire an additional 10-acres of land that will go towards the creation of a large animal facility and pasture area on property located adjacent to Suffield High School. A waiver to exceed acreage

limitations of the purchase of the land was necessary since the state's School Facilities Committee had already approved the purchase of the 43 acres for the construction of the High School that was built in 2002.

"Agriscience attracts students who are interested in all aspects of agriculture including such fields as agribusiness, veterinary medicine, equine and the environmental science," said Rep. Fahrbach. "After working on securing a waiver over the course of the last several months, I'm pleased that Sen. Kissel and I were able to enable this acquisition. Adding this additional property will help to enhance and already valuable educational program."

"This is really good news for the eight towns in the region that the Agriscience Center serves," said Sen. Kissel who brought state and local officials together to hammer out an agreement on the waiver. "The expansion of this facility will undoubtedly mean that more students will have access to a state-of-the-art Vocational Agricultural (Vo-Ag) education."

In 2002, the Dept. of Education approved nearly \$5 million for expansion of the Agriscience Center that included funding for a large animal barn, greenhouse and purchase of equipment. Included in the funding was approximately \$370,000 for the purchase of an additional 10-acre parcel for the creation of a "land laboratory." The current owners of the land have now made the property available to the town. However, due to the construction of the high school, the town has exceeded the state standard space specifications. Through the waiver granted in the budget, funding for the project will be released and the expansion of the Agriscience Center can begin.

Under Connecticut state law, applicants for school building projects can exceed the state standard space specifications solely as a result of "extraordinary programmatic needs." In 2002, when the new Suffield High School was constructed, the anticipated average enrollment was approximately 735 students. When the school year began last September there were nearly 900 students attending the school.

Since 1965, the Agriscience Center has served the towns of Avon, Canton East Granby, Enfield, Granby, Simsbury, Windsor Locks and Suffield.