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# Lt. Governor Guadagno Addresses 100th Annual New Jersey State Agricultural Convention

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## Joint Convention and Trade Show Highlights State's Third-Largest Industry

Trenton, NJ – Last evening, Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno joined New Jersey Department of Agriculture Secretary Douglas H. Fisher in addressing the 100th Annual Agriculture Convention and Trade Show joint dinner in Atlantic City.

In her remarks, the Lt. Governor looked forward to the expanding future of agriculture and encouraged the development of programs to educate the next generation of innovative farmers. "At this moment, we are currently exploring ways in which the State and its partners can increase STEM-Ag education initiatives to keep pace with the changing nature of agriculture and ensure that we have talented and qualified farmers who will literally feed the world in decades to come," said Lt. Governor Guadagno.

Hosted in conjunction with the Vegetable Growers Association of New Jersey's convention and trade show, the State Agricultural Convention brings together industry representatives to share best practices, attend seminars and present awards to outstanding leaders in agriculture.

"The New Jersey State Agriculture Convention brings delegates from all aspects of agriculture together to set policy for the coming year," said Secretary Fisher. "The Department of Agriculture also brings important information to delegates, such as encouraging farmers to get involved with the Farm to School program and Made with Jersey Fresh initiative. The convention strengthens our industry and sets goals the Department works all year long to accomplish."

Agriculture is New Jersey's third largest industry. In 2012, the state's 9,071 farms generated sales totaling \$1.14 billion. With 715,057 acres of farmland, the Garden State produces more than 100 varieties of fruits and vegetables that are enjoyed throughout the Northeast, in Canada and globally.

"The New Jersey State Agricultural Convention is the most important gathering of the year for the agriculture community, providing a direction for the industry for the next year," said Joseph Maugeri, President of the Vegetable Growers Association of New Jersey. "It also is an opportunity to learn about the issues facing agriculture and gain knowledge through the Vegetable Growers Association's workshops and the State Board's presentations."

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