



Cornell University

Martha E. Pollack
President

August 15, 2018

Commissioner Richard A. Ball
New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets
10B Airline Dr.
Albany, NY 12235

Dear Commissioner Ball,

I am writing to thank you for your efforts to foster an inclusive and respectful environment at New York's state and county fairs. It is encouraging to learn that vendors at the state fair have complied with requests to refrain from selling or displaying products that might create a hostile or unwelcoming environment, and I was pleased to see your recent letter encouraging vendors at New York's county fairs to do likewise.

Over the past two months, Cornell Board of Trustees Chairman Robert Harrison and I have both communicated with Fair for All, an organization objecting to the sale of Confederate-related merchandise at New York's county fairs. We agree that divisive symbols of intolerance like the Confederate flag are detestable, and we regret that fair vendors choose to display them. To help support your work to ensure county fairs are welcoming for all New Yorkers, Cornell will be providing—through our Ithaca-based Cooperative Extension staff—continued materials and guidance on fostering equitable, inclusive environments in all activities to County Cooperative Extension Offices.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Martha E. Pollack".

Martha E. Pollack