§ 3900. Legislative findings and purposes. 1. The legislature hereby finds, determines, and declares that promotion of the continued health and safety of New York state's farming community continues to be an unmet need. It further finds that agriculture is ranked as the most dangerous occupation on a nationwide basis and that farmers and other agricultural workers are injured and killed at a rate four times greater than other workers in the country: in nineteen hundred eighty-five, forty-five deaths and over four thousand farm-related injuries were reported within New York state.

2. The provision of health and safety services unique to the agricultural sector has been seen by many physicians as relatively unattractive. As a consequence, the medical profession lacks specific knowledge of, and expertise in, treating farm illnesses. While some progress has been made to date in the area of farm health and safety, more work is needed to address such specific concerns as traumatic injury, hearing loss, and occupational cancer. Further efforts need to be made to provide educational programs to improve awareness of agricultural health concerns, and to enhance delivery of targeted agricultural health services in the state.

3. It is vital that the state of New York develop a capability to address the special health and safety needs of the state's farming community. In order to facilitate a focus on agricultural medicine and health, the legislature hereby determines that there is a need to create a New York state center for agricultural medicine and health to operate in conjunction with the Mary Imogene Bassett Hospital, Cooperstown, New York.