

Tribune's Newsday (6+ months) (United States), Section: Local

Saturday 05 September 2026

509 words

86850 circulation

Long Island Potato Festival coming to Farmingdale State College

By Carissa Kellman/carissa.kellman@newsday.com

A new Long Island event is taking root this fall. The first Long Island Potato Festival will bring carnival rides, live music, local food and a farmers market to Farmingdale State College Sept. 26-27.

The two-day event will take place on the president's lawn across from Horton Hall from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Admission and general parking are free.

"My goal is to make this a new annual tradition that brings people together," says Alissa Marti, of Connoisseur Media Long Island, one of the festival's producers. "And to bring back the nostalgia for people who remember the potato farms and educate those who don't."

Fans of spuds can head to the food court, which will sell knishes, loaded mashed, baked and fried potatoes, and more potato-inspired food, and feature a beer garden. Highlights from Long Island vendors include twisted potato chips on a stick from The Yum Spot in Bohemia, potato empanadas from Island Empanada and loaded meat fries from local food truck Off the Bone.

Beyond food, the weekend will feature a carnival by Newton Shows, live bands performing both days, local shopping booths, a Tots Area with touch-a-truck and touch-a-tractor activities for younger kids, a photo booth and agricultural exhibits from Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County, Marti says.

Smaller potato-themed events have popped up on Long Island before, though organizers say not to this scale.

"I've always thought, why do we not have a potato festival?" says Marti, who is also the strategic partnerships manager for Connoisseur Media. Marti grew up on Long Island at a time when potato farms were still remembered across the region, and has worked on other Long Island fairs and festivals. The idea for this one has been two years in the making, she says, driven by a simple question: What's true to Long Island, sets the region apart and can still be fun and entertaining?

Potatoes were once more than a crop on Long Island. "It was an industry. It was an identity," Marti says. The region had roughly 75,000 acres of potato farmland before development began eating into that total in the 1980s, shrinking it to about 20,000 acres, according to Marti. Some of that land became familiar Long Island names, Marti says: Grumman rose in Bethpage from what was once Looney's potato farm, Est\xE9e Lauder purchased 60 acres of potato fields to build its corporate offices in Melville and Martha Clara Vineyards in Riverhead also traces its roots to old potato land.

That history continues at Hoshyla Farms, a lavender farm in Manorville that was once a potato farm itself, she adds. The fifth-generation, family-run operation will lead the festival's farmer's market alongside the Long Island Farm Bureau. "It's one of those events and ways we can help bring that nostalgia back and reconnect with it and understand what we did as a region," Marti says.

For Marti, the farmers market is the festival's centerpiece. "Have some food, eat, listen to live music, ride some rides, and walk out with fresh, local produce. That's unique to Long Island."

Tribune's Newsday (6+ months) (United States), Section: Local

Saturday 05 September 2026

509 words

86850 circulation

--- ENDS ---