

RESOLUTION # 33

RENEWABLE ENERGY

1 **WHEREAS**, energy costs place financial burdens on all New Jersey agricultural
2 sectors, making traditional fossil fuels less attractive for on-farm use; and

3 **WHEREAS**, bio-gas facilities have the potential to remove large amounts of food
4 waste and other refuse from the state's overall waste inventory, as well as manure, in
5 the production of bio-gas, lessening the stress on the state's landfills and thereby
6 enhancing the environment and reducing municipal waste disposal costs; and

7 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey agricultural operators have embraced becoming part of
8 the biofuels and alternative-energy production market, including but not limited to the
9 growing of grasses and other cellulosic materials for use in woodstoves or other heating
10 and power devices; and the growing of corn, soybeans and other crops to be used as
11 feedstocks for biofuels, such as ethanol and biodiesel; and

12 **WHEREAS**, the federal government determines the target levels of renewable
13 fuels to be used through the Renewable Fuels Standard (RFS), especially as it relates to
14 the amount of ethanol mandated to be used nationally; and

15 **WHEREAS**, although New Jersey is not currently a leading state in the
16 production of ethanol or biodiesel, an increased nationwide demand for crops to make
17 these renewable fuels helps New Jersey corn and soybean farmers realize more
18 favorable prices for their crops; and

19 **WHEREAS**, the efforts of agricultural operators to both use and produce
20 alternative energy are consistent with the goals of the updated State Energy Master Plan
21 and with elements of the "Energy as Industry" positions of the Administration; and

22 **WHEREAS**, we strongly support all farmers having the ability to utilize solar,
23 wind and other renewable energy to meet the energy needs of their agricultural
24 operations as cost-effectively as possible, whether their farms are preserved or not; and

25 **WHEREAS**, local production of biofuels has the potential to improve air quality by
26 lessening the amount of fossil fuels being used, as well as providing New Jersey farmers
27 with an enhanced market for their crops and, in some cases, their waste streams; and

28 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey’s fiscal position requires innovative ways of creating an
29 inviting business climate for potential biofuels producers and bioenergy generators that
30 do not rely primarily on financial incentives; and

31 **WHEREAS**, a bill pending in the state Senate (S-771) mandates producers of
32 large amounts of food waste to have it hauled to facilities employing various methods for
33 its re-use instead of dumping it into a landfill, including, but not limited to, using it for
34 “agricultural purposes” or by taking it to an anaerobic digester to be turned into methane
35 gas for use in creating electrical power; and

36 **WHEREAS**, a bill should be introduced in the New Jersey Legislature that would
37 establish a graduated mandate, starting at three percent and rising to five percent over
38 time, for the inclusion of biodiesel in home heating oil.

39 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the delegates to the 102nd
40 State Agricultural Convention, assembled in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on February 8-9,
41 2017, support the continued development of renewable energy sources in New Jersey
42 and support the New Jersey Department of Agriculture’s comprehensive “green energy”
43 strategy that emphasizes a farmer’s potential role as both producers and consumers of
44 alternative energy.

45 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we support the efforts of the Department with
46 USDA’s Farm Service Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS),
47 Rutgers University, New Jersey Farm Bureau and/or any other agencies, to increase the

48 participation of farmers in the growing of cellulosic crops that can be used in a variety of
49 alternative-energy processes.

50 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we support the re-use of food waste from
51 large generators of such waste, consistent with the principles set forth in pending
52 legislation (S-771) and especially for “agricultural purposes,” which includes feeding it to
53 livestock, as this helps farmers keep feed costs down.

54 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we support the continuing operation of an
55 electricity-generating anaerobic digester at the Landis Sewerage Authority in Vineland to
56 be fueled in part by manure from New Jersey dairy or other livestock operations and
57 waste from food processors, as it addresses the dual needs of creating alternative
58 energy while removing manure and other organic waste from the waste inventory.

59 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge the Department to seek funding,
60 from public or private foundation sources, to pursue similar digester projects in the
61 Central and Northern portions of the state, so that food waste and manure in those areas
62 also may be used in a productive way to create energy.

63 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we support the continuation of the federal
64 Renewable Fuels Standard (RFS) at its current levels as a means of guiding the nation
65 to greater use of renewable fuels.

66 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we strongly urge the Legislature to pass, and
67 the Governor to sign, legislation that would put into effect a graduated three percent/five
68 percent biodiesel mandate, which would require that all space-heating diesel fuel sold in
69 the state would include three percent biodiesel initially, and increase that amount to five
70 percent over time.

71 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we direct the Department to continue its
72 efforts to support the establishment of biofuel production facilities of all types in New

73 Jersey, as such development can lead to an enhanced close-in market for many of the
74 crops grown in New Jersey when they are used as biofuel feedstocks.

75 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we support the rules developed by the State
76 Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) for incorporating solar power into
77 preserved farm operations, and regarding wind power on preserved farms, and urge the
78 Department and SADC to promptly finalize the rules regarding biomass power-
79 generation facilities on both preserved and non-preserved farms.