



State of New Jersey

## **BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING December 18, 2024 (Wednesday)**

Public meeting notice was certified by communication on December 12, 2024.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq. adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by giving written notice of the time, date, location and to the extent known the agenda of this meeting. At least 48-hours in advance this notice has been posted on the third floor, Riverview Plaza, Trenton, New Jersey; mailed to the Newark Star Ledger; the Camden Courier Post; the Trenton Times and filed with the Office of the Secretary of State.

President Bob Blew called the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture to order at 1:05 pm. Board members in attendance included President Bob Blew; Vice President Lisa Specca, Kurt Alstede, David DeFrango, John Hart, Stephen V. Lee, IV, Joel Viereck and Rick Gardner. The meeting was held at 200 Riverview Plaza, Trenton, NJ.

Also in attendance were Secretary of Agriculture Edward Wengryn; Assistant Secretary Joe Atchison, Dr. Amar Patil, Director, Division of Animal Health; Rose Chamberlain, Director, Division of Food & Nutrition; Chuck Roohr, Deputy Director, SADC; Joe Zoltowski, Director, Division of Plant Industry; Frank Minch, Director, Division of Agricultural & Natural Resources; Nancy Wood, Division of Marketing & Development (Teams); Tameko Webster, Christopher LaRegina, Robert Vivian, Jeff Wolfe and Jeff Beach, Office of the Secretary. Also in attendance were Ashley Kerr, Alfred Murray, NJ Farm Bureau; Dr. Brian Schilling, Rutgers University; Bruce Eklund, State Statistician; Jared Kravitz, Organic & Regenerative Farming Board; Lindsay Carragher, Farm Service Agency; Julie Hawkins, State Conservationist, Teams) NRCS; Dr. Michael Fugaro, Mountain Pointe Equine Veterinary Services (Teams), Beth Feehan, Zone 7 (Teams), Jeanine Cava, NJ Food Democracy (Teams), and Linda Walker, NJ Department of Agriculture.

### **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

ON the MOTION of Rick Gardner, seconded by John Hart, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the November 20, 2024, regular meeting.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Dr. Michael Fugaro of Mountain Pointe Equine Veterinary Services was on the call to discuss the Readoption of N.J.A.C. 2:10 Laboratory Services. He commented that he recognizes that all fees are

having to go up and was specifically talking about the \$2.00 processing fee and what it would be used for. He questioned why there were changes to the services provided by the Lab and stated that he, along with other veterinarians, were not happy about the proposed increases.

Beth Feehan, former Farm to School Coordinator for the Division of Food & Nutrition, was on the call to state her concerns about Assembly Bill 5150 that would move the Division of Food and Nutrition out of the Department of Agriculture and go to the Department of Health & Human Services. She noted that Farm to School has come such a long way since it was first talked about in 2008. She reported that she works at Zone 7 with Mikey Azzara and that this October, 60% of their business was to schools. She announced that she hopes that the State Board and the Department will help to keep Food & Nutrition in the Department of Agriculture where it belongs.

Jeanine Cava of the Food Democracy stated that she agreed wholeheartedly with Beth Feehan.

### **REPORT OF RUTGERS UNIVERSITY**

Dr. Brian Schilling represented the College and reported on the following topics:

- Peggy Brennan is retiring, and Wendi Cohick is moving on to a different position at the College and he noted that both will be extremely hard to replace. Their responsibilities are being redistributed.
- Search is underway for the Dean of Research / Director of Research positions. In addition, a verbal offer was made and has been accepted for the County Agent position in Salem County. This position has been open for a great length of time. He noted that he is hopeful that someone will be taking on that role in the coming few months. He noted that there are a few other searches underway and hopes that some of these other positions can be filled in the New Year.
- Sessions for the Vegetable Growers educational sessions are lined up and there was a question from one county if there could be someone that speaks Spanish available for the sessions. He continued that there is a big demand for Spanish speaking classes, information and farm safety resources available.
- The Ag Viability Committee met earlier that day, and he reported that the Farm Viability work is never going to be done and that it is and will be an ongoing process. He stated that there is proposed legislation that will advance a formula funding bill to raise the amount of easement payments that can be issued to a landowner to preserve the land. He stated that they are also looking at the opportunity to invest more on the Stewardship side. He noted that progress to go forward is being made. He noted that we need to speak with many voices around one message. With the message being that the economic performance of New Jersey agriculture is challenged. Whereas we used to be among the highest, net producing states on a per acres basis, in the top four or five, we've dropped down to 16. When you look at how much of our net income is a percentage of gross income among the lowest in the country. He noted that at the Farm Bureau Convention he stated that what is driving American agricultural output and productivity is technology, R & D and innovation.

## REPORT OF FARM SERVICE AGENCY (FSA)

Lindsay Carragher reported on behalf of the Farm Service Agency:

### Marketing Assistance for Specialty Crops (MASC)

FSA's \$2 billion Marketing Assistance for Specialty Crops (MASC) program provides eligible specialty crop producers with marketing assistance payments to help them engage in activities that aid in expanding domestic specialty markets or in developing new markets for their specialty crops in 2025. FSA is accepting applications through January 8, 2025. With the short application period, please contact your local FSA office as soon as possible.

To be eligible for MASC, a producer must be in business at the time of application, maintain an ownership share and share in the risk of producing a specialty crop that will be sold in calendar year 2025. MASC covers the following commercially marketed specialty crops:

- Fruits (fresh, dried);
- Vegetables (including dry edible beans and peas, mushrooms, and vegetable seed);
- Tree nuts;
- Nursery crops, Christmas trees, and floriculture;
- Culinary and medicinal herbs and spices; and
- Honey, hops, maple sap, tea, turfgrass and grass seed.

Eligible established specialty crop producers can apply for MASC benefits by certifying their specialty crop sales for calendar year 2023 or 2024. FSA will calculate MASC payments based on the producer's total specialty crop sales for the calendar year elected by the producer.

New specialty crop producers are required to certify 2025 expected sales and provide certain documentation to support reported sales i.e., receipts, contracts, acreage reports, input receipts, etc. New producers are those who began producing specialty crops in 2023 or 2024 but did not have sales due to the immaturity of the crop, began producing specialty crops in 2024 but did not have a complete year of sales, or will begin growing specialty crops in 2025. Payments for new producers will be based on their expected 2025 calendar year sales.

FSA will issue MASC payments after the end of the application period. If demand for MASC payments exceeds available funding, payments may be prorated, and the payment limitation of \$125,000 may be lowered. If additional funding is available after MASC payments are issued, FSA may issue an additional payment.

### FSA Drought Resources – What can you do now?

- If you are currently experiencing crop loss from drought, contact your local FSA service center to see if you may be eligible for any program assistance.
- Document drought loss on crops eligible for NAP and other FSA programs. Take pictures and ensure date is in the metadata. Record specific losses seen from the drought.
- File a Notice of Loss (NOL) if applicable.
- Submit your specific drought data to US Drought Monitor:  
[droughtimpacts.unl.edu/Tools/ConditionMonitoringObservations.aspx](https://droughtimpacts.unl.edu/Tools/ConditionMonitoringObservations.aspx)

*What is the US Drought Monitor:* [www.farmers.gov/sites/default/files/2021-10/fsa-usdroughtmonitor-factsheet-21-101521.pdf](http://www.farmers.gov/sites/default/files/2021-10/fsa-usdroughtmonitor-factsheet-21-101521.pdf) *Short explanation of FSA disaster assistance programs:* [www.fsa.usda.gov/resources/programs/disaster-assistance-programs](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/resources/programs/disaster-assistance-programs)

#### Food Safety Certification for Specialty Crops Program (FSCSC)

FSCSC provides financial assistance for specialty crop operations that incur eligible on-farm food safety program expenses related to obtaining or renewing a food safety certification. This program helps offset costs to comply with regulatory requirements and market-driven food safety certification requirements. The 2024 FSCSC Application deadline is January 31, 2025.

To be eligible for FSCSC, an applicant must:

- Have obtained or renewed a:
  - 2024 food safety certification that was issued between June 26, 2024, and December 31, 2024; or
  - 2025 food safety certification issued during the 2025 calendar year.
- Have paid eligible expenses. Expenses that have been incurred by the applicant, but have not yet been paid, will not be eligible.
- Be a specialty crop operation; and meet the definition of a small business or a medium-sized business.
  - A small business has an average annual monetary value of specialty crops the applicant sold during the 3-year period preceding the program year of no more than \$500,000.
  - A medium size business has an average annual monetary value of specialty crops the applicant sold during the 3-year period preceding the program year of at least \$500,001 but no more than \$1,000,000.
- Be located in the 50 United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

#### FSA to Host Listening Session at the New Jersey Ag Convention

Join the New Jersey Farm Service Agency for a listening session on Tuesday, February 4, 2025, at the New Jersey Agriculture Convention, hosted by the New Jersey Vegetable Growers Association. *Note: We are currently working to identify if pesticide credits may be awarded to attendees.*

#### Session Agenda

- 2:00 P.M. – *How Can USDA FSA Help You? All Things NAP* If pesticide credits are awarded, the session will be renamed to: *All Things NAP & How Following BMPs and Failure to Maintain Spray Records Effects Your Loss Claim* – Aly Dyson, Program Specialist, USDA, FSA
- 2:30 P.M. – *FSA Farm Loan Programs (FLP) & the New Enhancing FLP Rule* – Shannon Barton, Farm Loan Chief, USDA/FSA
- 3:00 P.M. – *Why COC Elections & Acreage Reporting are Important* – Lindsay Caragher, Deputy State Executive, Director, USDA/FSA
- 3:30 P.M. – *How Can USDA FSA Help You? Marketing Assistance Loans & Farm Storage Facility Loans Overview* – Sarah Lally, Program Specialist, USDA/FSA

#### Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP)

2024 Organic certification applications with expenses paid by producers from October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024, can be late filed with FSA County Offices through February 7, 2025. Please contact

your local county office ASAP to apply before funds run out. 2025 OCCSP information has not been announced.

There was a question about the status of the State Executive Committee and the Director past Inauguration Day, January 20, when the new Administration will take over. It was noted that she, as the Assistant State Executive Director, would serve as the Acting Director until someone is officially named.

### **REPORT OF NJ FARM BUREAU**

Ashley Kerr represented the Farm Bureau and reported on the following topics:

- Farmland Assessment –
  - Bill created in reaction to Mendham Twp (Morris Co) allowing generous qualifications/loose assessor behavior
  - It has attracted media attention and legislator interest
  - FB to lead “just the facts” campaign in wake of Senate Economic Growth approval (12/9/24)
- Heat Stress: proposed amendments for ag carve out appear fine to us.
- NJREAL/DEP proposal: very serious issue. Seeking a meeting with DEP upper management as per conversation with Commissioner Latourette at the League of Municipalities conference.
- SADC approp/Governor CV: appreciated Governor action; hoping for concurrence in Legislature tomorrow to get finally approved. Following board lists in both houses tomorrow
- Farmland assessment/rollback bill by Simmons and Burzichelli: leaning in favor but need comments to tighten up.
- Farm Bill in Congress: we are encouraged by the last-minute deal to add disaster and economic relief to the one-year extension of the Farm Bill.
- Watching the Corporate Transparency/BOI filing requirement; January 1, 2025 deadline currently suspended by federal court injunction.
- Spreading the word about FSA’s program for specialty crops (MASC), January 8, 2025 deadline.
- Pleased to see continuing progress of the Ag Viability Work Group.
- Great meeting of the GSPT yesterday, lots of potential opportunities for agriculture moving forward.
- CATA lawsuit: court action anticipated for late January.

### **REPORT OF NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE (NASS)**

Bruce Eklund, State Statistician, reported the following to the Board:

- Census of Aquaculture reported that the sales in NJ had doubled for NJ since the last survey was done in 2018 with \$13.1 million reported in sales.
- Census of Horticultural specialties will be next on the list and should be received by the end of the month. It is hoped that farmers that receive the survey will reply, and he asked the Board members to encourage farmers to participate in the survey, the information is very important.
- The December ag survey of field crops is almost complete for corn, soybeans and wheat. The end-of-year survey for vegetables is also being completed. The vegetable chemical use survey also underway and those that complete it will receive pesticide credit.

## **REPORT OF NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE**

Julie Hawkins, State Conservationist, reported the following regarding the Act Now Program:

- NRCS has developed a faster process to approve producer applications for its conservation programs. Using its “Act Now” authority, NRCS can now pre-approve applications when they meet or exceed a state’s pre-determined minimum ranking score. Applications are ranked according to local resource concerns, the amount of conservation benefits the work will provide, and the needs of applicants.
- Applications for eligible practices that meet or exceed state-determined minimum ranking thresholds will be considered for priority funding when applying to the Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA), Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). No special application is required to be eligible for funding through the Act Now process.
- This means funding decisions can be made without having to wait for all applications to be reviewed and ranked. This can potentially allow farmers to start conservation projects earlier instead of waiting long periods to know if a project will be funded.

## **ORGANIC & REGENERATIVE FARMING BOARD**

Jared Kravitz represented the Organic & Regenerative Farming Board and reported the following:

- Announced that Meredith Taylor, Rutgers Extension, has joined the Board and they are hoping to have one more member named very soon.
- By-Laws have been submitted for review, and they held their first meeting with a very strong turnout and the next meeting will be part of the NOFA-NJ Conference on January 25.
- The Survey Committee will be releasing the results of their first survey to establish their goals going forward.

## **SECRETARY’S REPORT**

Secretary Wengryn reported that he had attended the first meeting of the Organic & Regenerative Farming Board and that there were some excellent discussions about going forward. He announced that the Department and Rowan University had signed the Lab Use agreement which will mean that their pathologist will come here and work in our laboratory, this is a win/win for both agencies. He reported that he had attended the NY Produce Show the week before with the Jersey Fresh team and that it was an excellent event with lots of inquiries about Jersey Fresh. In addition, he noted that the Department is currently getting ready to conduct interviews for the CFO position and that the search committee for the SADC Executive Director position is in the process of reviewing the applications and hopefully in the New Year we will begin the interview process. He wished all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Frank Minch, Director, Division of Agricultural & Natural Resources, provided the Board members with more information regarding the drought situation and noted that information about pond dredging was also provided. In addition, he reported that with some help from the Department’s Legal Specialist, the wildlife fencing program now has an advanced payment option which will be helpful to many. He noted that the DEP Real Rules which include the flood hazard and stormwater rules as well as others continue to be reviewed and discussed by DEP. There was extensive discussion regarding proposed rules.

Joe Zoltowski, Director, Division of Plant Industry, reported that there had been a positive result for eucalyptus tortoise beetle, which is a leaf beetle from Australia that has been introduced to California. It is a pest that can damage eucalyptus trees by eating their leaves. He reported that heavy infestations can stress trees and lead to defoliation. In addition, he noted that a few beetles may not cause noticeable damage, large infestations can seriously affect the health of trees. He noted that from the LDD surveys, over 24,882 acres of municipal and 1,266 acres of state lands have been proposed for single and double applications of Btk for the spring of 2025 in Burlington, Cape May, Morris, Passaic and Sussex Counties. Of this number, two municipalities in Sussex County declined participation in the Program, reducing the mun acreage now to 14,215 and state land treatments to 596 for the spring of 2025.

Rose Chamberlain, Director, Division of Food & Nutrition, played for the Board and audience a short video of a Farm to School song that was put together by one of the food service management companies and the audience loved it. In addition, she reported that the USDA Foods Conference was held on December 5, and that Denise Liptak, Manager, Food Distribution, and her team had done an outstanding job and that the feedback so far from the attendees was very positive. She noted that she felt that this year's conference was the best to date. She noted that the summer EBT program was being closed out for the year and that more than 700,000 students were provided with Summer EBT benefits. Finally, she reported that the LFS Grant program has expended \$3.2 million of the grant that goes until November of 2025 and has recently learned that New Jersey would be receiving another \$16.2 million from USDA for LFS/CC 25. It was noted that a report was being prepared by the Community Food Bank and that the Board would like to see a copy once it is available.

ON the MOTION of Stephen Lee, seconded by Joel Viereck, the Board voted to have all grants go through the Grants Committee going forward. It was discussed that the Grants Committee would meet to discuss this change.

Vice President Lisa Specca and Board member Kurt Alstede recused themselves from the vote.

Dr. Amar Patil, Director, Division of Animal Health, reported that the first confirmed case of *Theileria orientalis* Ikeda in New Jersey was detected via PCR in a 5-year-old Hereford cow in Warren County. Clinical signs include weight loss over the past two months, inappetence, mild pyrexia, mild icterus and pale gums with bruising and erythema on the dental pad.

Chuck Roohr, Deputy Director, SADC, reported that the Soil Protection Standards Committee reviewed the final draft and public comments/answers at its December meeting. Authorization to publish the rule will occur at a January meeting. The Committee for the Statewide Formula Value authorized staff to begin the rule writing process for the Statewide Formula Value to be reviewed at an upcoming meeting. In addition, the Next Gen SADC staff are currently conducting outreach through surveys, meetings and focus groups to help guide the direction of the program.

Assistant Secretary Atchison reported that the Division was waiting for the end of the year food tracking awareness survey. He noted that the Division has been working on plans for the upcoming State Agricultural Convention in February at Harrah's. In addition, he reported that planning is underway by

Division of Markets staff for New Jersey to host the NAAMO (North American Agricultural Marketing Officials) Conference in July 2025. He reported that the NY Produce Show was a great event that was well attended and there were some good conversations related to Jersey Fresh. In addition, he attended the USDA Foods Conference with Chief of Staff Tameko Webster and noted that there was great participation by the students as well as the Food Management Companies. Division staff are working to compile a Community Farmers Market list that will include information that will be helpful to growers and consumers.

#### **BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Rick Gardner reported that in the case of *Theileria orientalis* that Dr. Patil mentioned earlier, he noted that that disease was found in sheep in Hunterdon County in 2017 and noted that it was extremely serious. In addition, he reported that the Warren County Annual Distinguished Service dinner would be held January 11 at Harpers Hollow and they are expecting a good turnout. He reported that Warren County is hopeful that they will have a new Extension Agent shortly. In addition, he reported that the new Ag Extension building has opened but many are not happy about the layout. He noted that several members of the Board of Ag attended a meeting in Warren County on December 10 about PFAS. Finally, he reported that there was a meet & greet regarding the Livestock Processing facility that is being proposed.

Joel Viereck announced that he had attended the Salem County Board of Ag meeting earlier this week and that they are one step closer to having a new Extension Agent in Salem County. This position has been vacant for some time, and everyone is excited. He noted that the Salem County Board also voted to give \$5,000 to the Woodstown FFA for one of their fundraisers. In addition, they elected Rachel Sickler as the new President and John Coombs, Jr. will be the Vice President. The following day at the Gloucester County Board of Ag they agreed to contribute \$2,000 to the Vegetable Growers Association towards their upcoming Annual Trade Show. The South Jersey Caucus nominated Hillary Barile from Cumberland County to the State Board. Finally, he reported that he attended Committee meetings at the State House to listen to the Assembly Appropriations and Economic Development.

Stephen Lee reported that he had attended Camden and Atlantic County Board meetings, in addition, he attended the Hunterdon County Board of Agriculture dinner meeting where he was part of a panel of speakers. He reported that the Counties that he attends Atlantic, Burlington and Camden had asked him to convene a joint meeting of those Boards to have a general discussion about things happening in their respective counties and what is and is not working for their Boards. In addition, he noted that he had attended a Legislative Tour with Assemblyman Spearman of the Food Bank of South Jersey, Hope Works, Camden County College where they have their new culinary school. It was a very good event. He noted that he would like to hear from and include the Chief of Staff going forward. He noted that there have been discussions on Legislative Tours going forward and they have a template for the tours and asked the Division Directors for suggestions on places that should be visited. He noted that the Legislative Committee will be meeting more regularly to keep abreast of what is happening legislatively and to have Board members prepared and ready to testify if needed on certain legislation. Finally, he noted that there is a lot of work to do with the LFPA grant and grants that come through the Department and it is the responsibility of the Board for oversight of the grants. He thanked Nancy Wood for her dedication to



the State Agricultural Convention, he reported that even though she was out of the office on medical leave, she was still hard at work making plans for the upcoming Convention.

John Hart reported that he had recently attended the Mercer & Middlesex County Board of Ag meetings and that there is concern about the lack of hay due to the drought. Those with livestock are having some serious problems feeding livestock with the lack of hay due to the drought.

Kurt Alstede reported that labor costs continue to be a problem with H2B wage inflation, and it continues to nibble at farm profitability. He noted there is concern that the Passaic County CADB that the Commissioners have reallocated their Open Space tax fund away from farmland preservation and there is no longer a dedicated portion going into farmland preservation, it is going to parks and other entities and that is making them incapable of preserving the few remaining viable farms.

Dave DeFrance commented that there was a very robust discussion at the Hunterdon County Board of Ag dinner where the panelists discussed what the future of agriculture looks like in 5 years, 10 years. He noted that he had invited Board member Stephen Lee to participate so that those in the county heard from someone outside of the county as well as Farm Bureau and the Secretary of Agriculture. He reported that they will be working on moving agriculture forward in Hunterdon County. In addition, he reported that he had also met with the Food Security Advocate and feeding people is one of the most important things that we in agriculture can do.

Lisa Specca reported that this year's direct marketing season was pretty strong with high demand for fruits and vegetables. She noted that despite a challenging season the late season crops were bountiful. She reported that the recent drone situation has caused many people to be concerned.

President Blew reported that he had attended the Cape May County Board of Ag and that they will be holding an Industry Night on March 3 where they will have some local vendors and there will be presentations that will offer pesticide credits. He noted that Cumberland County would be meeting the next day. He attended the NJNLA Annual meeting and it was an excellent event. He attended the South Jersey Caucus meeting where Rick VanVranken, County Agent, is retiring. He noted that Rick has been involved with this meeting for more than 20 years and that County Agent Michelle Casella would be taking over the ownership of the meeting.

### **BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Joel Viereck reported that the Nominations Committee had met and has voted to honor the following with Distinguished Service Awards, Rich & Rosina Byma; Douglas Fisher and John Rigolizzo, Jr. In addition, he reported that the Convention Committee continues to meet to plan/discuss the upcoming State Agricultural Convention. The Convention Committee also voted to have Greg Warren as the keynote speaker. Board member Kurt Alstede reported that Farm Credit East has been gracious enough to sponsor the dinner speaker and he also secured some additional sponsorship from American National Insurance towards the catering of the Youth Ambassador Reception. In addition, Joel commented on the work that is done for the Convention by Nancy Wood. As the President of the Vegetable Growers last year and coming on the Board this year, he has seen firsthand how good she is at doing her job and stretching the money to make everything run smoothly. There was a brief discussion on NJ wines being

available at the Convention and has been working with the Garden State Winegrowers to see if that can be accomplished.

There was a brief discussion about the proposed Invasive Species legislation and where we are with the amendments that the Department is looking for. It was noted that the recent changes that we asked for have been sent to DEP for their review and that it is hoped that action on the legislation will take place on January 6.

Kurt Alstede, Chair of the Budget Committee, reported that the Department Fishbowl discussion for our department is set for January 8 and asked if there was anything that the Committee would be meeting prior to the Fishbowl meeting in case there are any questions/concerns.

Board member Stephen Lee commented that he is concerned about the status of the FSA State Executive Director Bob Andrzejczak with the new Administration. He noted that he has done a great job and suggested that the Board send a letter of recommendation for him.

ON the MOTION of Stephen Lee, seconded by Rick Gardner, the Board discussed sending a letter of recommendation for Bob Andrzejczak for the State Executive Director position. After a brief discussion, the Board took no action on the motion.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Final Approval – Readoption of N.J.A.C. 2:10 (Laboratory Services) with Amendments and New Rule

Nathan Schatz reviewed with the Board the changes that the Department was seeking regarding this and although there were several comments against the processing fee that the Department was seeking, it was still something that the Department had to do.

ON the MOTION of Kurt Alstede, seconded by Lisa Specca, the Board voted unanimously to table this discussion until after the next public comment period.

The Board cycled back to this after public comment and the following motion was made:

ON the MOTION of Lisa Specca, seconded by Rick Gardner, the Board voted unanimously to approve the rule as presented pursuant to the Administrative Procedures Act.

Readoption by Notice without changes (and without public comment period) – N.J.A.C. 2:35A (New Jersey Wine Portion Account Grants Program) pertains to the award process for grants from the New Jersey Wine Promotion Account. N.J.A.C. 2:35A is scheduled to expire on August 23, 2025.

ON the MOTION of Kurt Alstede, seconded by Stephen Lee, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Readoption of N.J.A.C. 2:35A by Notice without changes pursuant to the Administrative Procedures Act.

Board member Stephen Lee commented that they had received a draft letter regarding S-2788, which would have radically changed how the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) accessed

funding approved by the state constitutional amendment tying the funding to the Corporate Business Tax.

ON the MOTION of Kurt Alstede, seconded by Stephen Lee, the Board voted unanimously to send the letter.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Dr. Michael Fugaro of Mountain Pointe Equine Veterinary Services again commented that he and members of the agricultural community will not be happy with this.

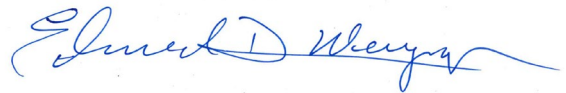
#### **MEETINGS**

The next regular meeting of the State Board of Agriculture will be held on Tuesday, February 4, 2025 beginning at 2:30 pm at Harrah's Resort and Conference Center.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

ON the MOTION of Joel Viereck, seconded by Stephen Lee, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the regular meeting at 5:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Edward D. Wengryn