

## RESOLUTION # 21

### BEEKEEPING

1           **WHEREAS**, commercial honey and hive products, and crop pollination by  
2 honeybees, are vital components of New Jersey agriculture; and

3           **WHEREAS**, because honeybees forage over airsheds measured in square  
4 miles, not acres, New Jersey's commercial beekeepers provide their pollination services  
5 to other commodity producers, and produce honey and hive products without the  
6 necessity for control of their own land base, unlike all other types of commercial  
7 agriculture; and

8           **WHEREAS**, the Right to Farm Act is intended to protect Commercial Farms  
9 engaged in generally accepted agricultural management practices from over-restrictive  
10 local regulation nuisance lawsuits; and

11           **WHEREAS**, since 2006, there has been a tremendous increase in public  
12 awareness of the extreme honeybee colony losses routinely suffered by beekeepers  
13 around the country, and of the threat that the loss of honeybees and other pollinators  
14 poses to our food supply and quality of life; and

15           **WHEREAS**, increased public awareness has resulted in a corresponding  
16 increase in the numbers of beekeepers in New Jersey, who now number in the  
17 thousands; and

18           **WHEREAS**, many of the state's increasing number of beekeepers are non-  
19 commercial or do not operate on a scale or in a location that could make them eligible  
20 for exemptions from local regulation of beekeeping practices under the Right to Farm  
21 Act; and

22           **WHEREAS**, despite daily proof of the capacity for properly managed bees to be  
23 kept in developed areas where they can come into contact with the public, including the

24 White House lawn, the Cape May County Zoo, the Burlington County Institute of  
25 Technology, and rooftops in New York and Jersey City, local authorities in New Jersey  
26 without an understanding of bee biology and behavior increasingly seek to regulate  
27 beekeeping; and

28 **WHEREAS**, the Department of Agriculture's State Apiarist and the New Jersey  
29 Beekeeper's Association now expend significant time and resources to respond to over-  
30 restrictive local regulatory efforts and to educate local regulators about appropriate  
31 beekeeping best management practices; and

32 **WHEREAS**, there is a clear need for adoption by the Department of Agriculture,  
33 pursuant to new, exclusive statutory authority, of new uniform comprehensive statewide  
34 standards to regulate beekeepers and guide local authorities to proper enforcement; and

35 **WHEREAS**, such standards should be developed by the Department of  
36 Agriculture in order to regulate beekeeping throughout the state in all the differing types  
37 of communities, and must be based upon the sound understandings of honeybee  
38 biology and behavior of qualified experts within and without the Department; and

39 **WHEREAS**, in 2015, the Legislature passed and the Governor signed into law A-  
40 1295/S-1975, which establish the state's exclusive authority to regulate apiary activities  
41 through the development of uniform statewide standards promulgated by the New  
42 Jersey Department of Agriculture.

43 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the delegates to the 102<sup>nd</sup>  
44 State Agricultural Convention, assembled in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on February 8-9,  
45 2017, gratefully recognize the Legislature and Governor for passing and signing,  
46 respectively, the bills to extend Right to Farm protection to beekeeping operations that  
47 fall within the parameters specified in the new law, and the bills establishing the state's  
48 exclusive authority to regulate apiary activities.

49           **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge the Department to move promptly to  
50 promulgate uniform statewide standards regulating apiary activities.

51           **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge the Department to continue involving  
52 members of both the New Jersey Farm Bureau and the New Jersey Beekeepers  
53 Association with subject-matter expertise in apiary matters in the discussions leading to  
54 these AMPs and uniform standards.