

RESOLUTION #14

NEONICOTINOID INSECTICIDES

1 **WHEREAS**, destructive insect pests are among the most harmful challenges faced
2 by farmers, homeowners and government agencies when trying to protect plant life; and

3 **WHEREAS**, much work has been undertaken over the past five decades to ensure
4 that pesticides marketed for general use carry the least unintended harm to humans,
5 animals, and beneficial and non-target insects; and

6 **WHEREAS**, pesticides in the neonicotinoid group play a major role in most
7 Integrated Pest Management (IPM) plans, which are designed to limit the overuse of
8 pesticides by employing a combination of chemical and natural methods to fight pests; and

9 **WHEREAS**, one of the pesticides included in the neonicotinoid group is imidacloprid
10 which was first registered for use in the United States in 1992 and has a wide range of target
11 pests and sites, and is effective in protecting vegetables, fruits, potatoes, cereals and turf;
12 and

13 **WHEREAS**, dinotefuran is an essential tool for eliminating and controlling spotted
14 lanternfly (SLF), a destructive, invasive pest that can cause severe damage to a number of
15 agricultural crops and which is currently the subject of protective quarantines in several New
16 Jersey counties, especially those near Pennsylvania, the state where the SLF was first
17 discovered in the United States and where it has become established or detected in at least
18 a dozen counties; and

19 **WHEREAS**, a number of insecticide products in the “neonicotinoid” group are
20 classified as being for general use and have been registered under the EPA’s Conventional
21 Reduced Risk Program due to their favorable toxicological profiles, and they play an
22 important role in controlling a variety of insects in agricultural, forestry and veterinary
23 applications; and

24 **WHEREAS**, as a group, neonicotinoids are effective against sucking insects such as
25 aphids, leaf hoppers, whitefly and thrips, as well as chewing insects such as termites, and

26 larvae of beetles (wireworms and grubs) and some Lepidopteran pests, particularly
27 cutworms; and

28 **WHEREAS**, the New Jersey Department of Agriculture and USDA effectively used
29 imidacloprid to protect trees from attack by the Asian longhorned beetle during the
30 eradication of that insect in two separate infestations in New Jersey; and

31 **WHEREAS**, the formulations of the neonicotinoids, clothianidin (GrubEx®),
32 (Arena®), imidacloprid (Merit®), and thiamethoxam (Meridian™); are widely used by
33 homeowners and golf course managers to protect turfgrass from Japanese beetle grub
34 damage; and

35 **WHEREAS**, another insecticide included in the neonicotinoid group is dinotefuran,
36 which is effective on a broad spectrum of insects infesting vegetable, fruit and fiber crops,
37 and which was granted Organophosphorous Alternative and Reduced Risk Status by the
38 EPA; and

39 **WHEREAS**, the “Scorpion® and Venom®” formulations of dinotefuran are relied
40 upon by New Jersey’s peach and apple growers to protect their crops against the invasive
41 Brown Marmorated Stink Bug; and

42 **WHEREAS**, imidacloprid is widely used against a number of veterinary parasites
43 such as fleas, flies and lice on domestic dogs, cats and livestock; and

44 **WHEREAS**, while neonicotinoids are a factor in the debate over the cause of Colony
45 Collapse Disorder (CCD) among honeybees, no single, identifiable cause of CCD has been
46 determined by widespread research into that phenomenon; and

47 **WHEREAS**, neonicotinoid insecticides already come in containers with label
48 instructions that address their potential impacts to honeybee colonies; and

49 **WHEREAS**, the loss of neonicotinoid pesticides as an effective tool in a producer’s
50 or regulatory control agencies’ pest-fighting arsenal would likely lead to increased use of
51 other broad-spectrum insecticides that may not carry the Reduced Risk Status by the EPA or
52 the ability to effectively control exotic or domestic agricultural pests; and

53 **WHEREAS**, action to provide education to producers about the proper use of
54 neonicotinoid insecticides would have more beneficial impacts; and

55 **WHEREAS**, legislation has been introduced to direct the Department of
56 Environmental Protection to classify neonicotinoids as “restricted use” pesticides in New
57 Jersey, limiting their application to certified and licensed pesticide applicators, but not to
58 outrightly prohibit the use or sale of neonicotinoid pesticides in the state; and

59 **WHEREAS**, separate legislation has been introduced to also ban the use of
60 chlorpyrifos insecticides in the state, further limiting the options New Jersey farmers have
61 available to them to combat the ravages of pests; and

62 **WHEREAS**, with each state-level ban or restriction on insecticides that is not
63 mirrored in surrounding states, New Jersey farmers are placed at an even further competitive
64 disadvantage to those farmers who do not have to abide by such bans.

65 **WHEREAS**, Paraquat (Gramoxone) is an economically significant and important
66 herbicide used extensively in New Jersey on a wide variety of fruit, vegetable,
67 ornamental and grain crops; and

68 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey farmers do not have alternative products that can
69 accomplish the same results as Paraquat to replace it; and

70 **WHEREAS**, under the EPA’s Paraquat Dichloride Human Health Mitigation
71 Decision and amended paraquat dichloride (paraquat) product labels, certified
72 applicators must successfully complete an EPA-approved training program before
73 mixing, loading and/or applying paraquat; and

74 **WHEREAS**, only certified applicators with the new specialized training may mix
75 and apply Paraquat, while all others are prohibited from mixing, handling and applying
76 Paraquat; and

77 **WHEREAS**, current training and testing for certified applicators is offered only in
78 English, while a large segment of New Jersey farm workers use Spanish as their primary
79 language.

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the delegates to the 105th State Agricultural Convention, assembled in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on February 5-6, 2020, do hereby urge the Department to support the continued availability of neonicotinoid pesticides for the agricultural and veterinary applications they have been used for to date.

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we oppose any legislation to ban the use of neonicotinoids, as the scientific evidence does not support that the drawbacks of using neonicotinoids outweigh the substantial benefits of neonicotinoids, and since the EPA has granted them a “Reduced Risk” designation.

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we encourage an educational program on the proper use of neonicotinoid insecticides be undertaken as an alternative to legislation banning their use, emphasizing the precautions to be taken when using them, with experts in the field creating the educational materials.

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we oppose any legislation that would ban chlorpyrifos insecticides for use by New Jersey farmers, and instead urge a similar educational campaign for chlorpyrifos as is urged for neonicotinoids.

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we hereby direct the New Jersey Department of Agriculture to work cooperatively with Rutgers Cooperative Extension to create and implement both certified pesticide applicator license training courses and exams, as well as specialized Paraquat training, in Spanish.

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we urge the New Jersey Department of Agriculture to closely monitor the effects of the use of neonicotinoids on local pollinators.

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