

RESOLUTION # 8

NEW JERSEY FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES EDUCATION

1 **WHEREAS**, the 46 secondary instructional programs related to agriculture are
2 known as *New Jersey Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Education* and include
3 experiential learning (Supervised Agricultural Experiences) and leadership development
4 through FFA, the appropriate Career and Technical Student Organization for these
5 programs; and

6 **WHEREAS**, today's high-tech Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Education
7 curricula, taught by 64 agriculture-certified instructors, is infused with rigorous academics
8 and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) components provided by
9 Curriculum in Agricultural Science Education (CASE) and other agricultural science
10 education courses, to ensure global competitiveness, student achievement and well-
11 prepared graduates for over 250 career areas in the food, agriculture, renewable energy and
12 environmental industry; and

13 **WHEREAS**, the NJDA's Office of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources
14 Education conducts the national State Teach Agriculture Results (STAR) program to develop
15 strategies to address teacher recruitment, retention and the high demand for agriculture
16 teachers; and

17 **WHEREAS**, an increased supply of teachers will be needed to fill vacancies caused
18 by retirements and/or to provide newly established programs with properly trained and
19 certified teachers for Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Education, therefore helping
20 to increase the human capital needed to serve the agriculture industry; and

21 **WHEREAS**, five vacancies were filled in 2019 by teachers without traditional teacher
22 education training, thus entering the classroom with content background in agriculture but
23 without agriculture teacher preparation and training; and

24 **WHEREAS**, the Rutgers' Graduate School of Education (GSE) has not adequately

25 met the needs of the state’s rural agriculture community, instead emphasizing “urban
26 education;” and

27 **WHEREAS**, the Rutgers GSE currently does not offer a post-bachelor’s program in
28 Agricultural Science Education with an emphasis on agricultural science, which limits
29 opportunities for trained agriculturists to become teachers of agriculture in New Jersey; and

30 **WHEREAS**, the GSE program limits opportunities for currently certified agriculture
31 teachers to acquire a Master’s degree of Education in agricultural education because the
32 program is designed for generalized teacher certification, instead of having an emphasis on
33 agricultural teaching expertise; and

34 **WHEREAS**, the high demand for agriculture teachers is amplified by a low supply
35 due to the lack of an Agriculture Teacher Educator (professor) to recruit and educate
36 students in a complete teacher preparation program at our Land Grant College; and

37 **WHEREAS**, more programs are needed due to an increased supply of human capital
38 required to fill the 57,900 annual employment opportunities in Food, Agriculture, Renewable
39 Energy and the Environment between 2015-2020.

40 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the delegates to the 105th State
41 Agricultural Convention, assembled in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on February 5-6, 2020,
42 support the development of a post-bachelor’s program at the Rutgers GSE, developed and
43 offered jointly with the Rutgers School of Environmental and Biological Sciences, leading to
44 the degree of Ed.M. in Agricultural Science Education.

45 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we support legislation to establish a
46 “Loan Redemption Program for Teachers of Agriculture,” created to help increase the
47 number of needed outstanding new and beginning teachers in pursuit of serving the
48 profession of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Education, by providing for student-
49 loan forgiveness for certain agriculture teachers.

50 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we support and further encourage the recent
51 efforts made by the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences to improve and market

52 the 5-year agricultural science education program that currently exists; as well as
53 development of an agricultural education option in the undergraduate major in Agriculture
54 and Food Systems, including the development of at least two courses focusing specifically
55 on agricultural education; and efforts made by SEBS to utilize the Curriculum for Agricultural
56 Science Education to recruit high quality undergraduates interested in agriculture careers.

57 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we support continuing a strong and viable Food,
58 Agriculture and Natural Resources Education program in New Jersey through a continuing
59 memorandum of understanding between the New Jersey Department of Education and the
60 New Jersey Department of Agriculture; support continual improvement of resources and
61 services to all New Jersey instructional programs for food, agriculture and natural resources
62 education at the middle, secondary and post-secondary levels; support the development of
63 innovative academically/STEM-enhanced agriculture instructional programs and support the
64 increase in supply of agriculture teachers.