

RESOLUTION # 31

RENEWABLE ENERGY

1 **WHEREAS**, energy costs place financial burdens on all New Jersey agricultural
2 sectors, and using traditional fossil fuels adds to the overall carbon footprint, making
3 traditional fossil fuels less attractive for on-farm use; and

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

8 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey agricultural operators have embraced becoming part of the
9 alternative-energy production market, including but not limited to the growing of grasses and
10 other cellulosic materials for use in woodstoves or other heating and power devices; the use
11 of agricultural and other food wastes as inputs for anaerobic digesters (either on-farm or
12 aggregated to a centralized facility) and the growing of corn, soybeans and other crops to be
13 used as feedstocks for biofuels, such as ethanol and biodiesel; and

14 **WHEREAS**, the efforts of agricultural operators to both use and produce alternative
15 energy are consistent with the goals of the Administration to "build a clean energy economy"
16 that has 100 percent of the state's energy coming from renewable sources by 2050; and

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

20 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey's fiscal position requires innovative ways of creating an
21 inviting business climate for potential alternative-energy producers that do not rely entirely on
22 financial incentives; and

23 **WHEREAS**, bills have been introduced in the Legislature that would mandate
24 producers of large amounts of food waste to have that waste hauled to facilities employing
25 various methods for its re-use instead of dumping it into a landfill (except as a last-resort

26 option), including, but not limited to, using it for “agricultural purposes” or by taking it to an
27 anaerobic digester to be turned into methane gas for use in creating electrical power; and

28 **WHEREAS**, a bill should be introduced in the New Jersey Legislature that would
29 establish a graduated mandate, starting at 3 percent and rising to 5 percent over time, for the
30 inclusion of biodiesel in home heating oil.

31 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the delegates to the 105th State
32 Agricultural Convention, assembled in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on February 5-6, 2020,
33 support the continued development of renewable energy sources in New Jersey and support
34 the New Jersey Department of Agriculture’s efforts to maximize farmers’ potential roles as
35 both producers and consumers of alternative energy.

36 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we support the efforts of the Department with
37 USDA’s Farm Service Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS),
38 Rutgers University, New Jersey Farm Bureau and/or any other agencies, to increase the
39 participation of farmers in the growing of cellulosic crops that can be used in a variety of
40 alternative-energy processes.

41 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we support the re-use of food waste from large
42 generators of such waste for creating energy, as well as for any other agricultural purposes,
43 which includes feeding it to livestock, as this helps farmers keep feed costs down.

44 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we support the continuing operation of an
45 electricity-generating anaerobic digester at the Landis Sewerage Authority in Vineland, as it
46 addresses the dual needs of creating alternative energy while removing organic waste from
47 the waste stream.

48 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge the Department to seek funding, from
49 public or private foundation sources, to pursue similar digester projects in the Central and
50 Northern portions of the state, so that organic wastes in those areas also may be used in a
51 productive way to create energy.

52 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we strongly urge the Legislature to pass, and the
53 Governor to sign, legislation that would put into effect a graduated 3 percent/5 percent
54 biodiesel mandate, which would require that all space-heating diesel fuel sold in the state
55 would include 3 percent biodiesel initially and increase that amount to 5 percent over time.

56 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we direct the Department to continue its efforts to
57 support the establishment of biofuel production facilities of all types in New Jersey, as such
58 development can lead to an enhanced close-in market for many of the crops grown in New
59 Jersey when they are used as biofuel feedstocks.

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