

RESOLUTION # 32

SOIL HEALTH

1 **WHEREAS**, soil is a vital resource of agriculture and its management is essential in
2 all farming best practices; and

3 **WHEREAS**, states currently are adopting soil health legislation, building upon the
4 work of federal and state agencies, academic, and agricultural professionals, to improve soil
5 health and sequester carbon; and

6 **WHEREAS**, holistic ecosystem protection is the responsibility of all in the farming
7 community; and

8 **WHEREAS**, nutrient management planning – to budget, supply, and conserve
9 nutrients for plant production in order to maintain or improve the physical, chemical, and
10 biological condition of soil – can be used to develop whole farm, conservation management
11 plans; and

12 **WHEREAS**, permanent incentives are needed in order for farmers to be able to pay
13 for implementation of best management practices; and

14 **WHEREAS**, farmer training programs, including farmer-to-farmer styled programs,
15 demonstration field days, and farm tours, need to be expanded; and

16 **WHEREAS**, significant soil health changes may not occur in a typical three- to five-
17 year grant period, making the need for economic support for those soil health practices go
18 beyond the end of that typical grant period to something more permanent; and

19 **WHEREAS**, access to cost-share programs should be available to farmers who
20 operate on year-to-year leases; and

21 **WHEREAS**, cost-effective measurements and protocols for quantification of utilized
22 soil carbon should be increased to give farmers data to guide their practices; and

23 **WHEREAS**, ongoing disruptions in the food system due to the COVID-19 pandemic
24 underscore the necessity of a resilient, local food system supported by state policies and
25 funding; and

26 **WHEREAS**, improving soil health through best management practices can increase
27 productivity and help to feed an expanding population.

28 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the delegates to the 106th State
29 Agricultural Convention, assembled through a virtual platform hosted in Trenton, New
30 Jersey, in accordance with COVID-19 pandemic recommendations, on February 17, 2021,
31 do hereby urge the Governor of New Jersey and all appropriate state, local, and federal
32 agencies to support increased funding for expanded training on soil health.

33 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that a fixed source of state funding
34 commensurate with long-term, financial incentives to expand best soil health improvement
35 practices should be created to enable the achievement of 2030 climate goals and ensure a
36 vibrant and resilient local food system.