

RESOLUTION # 34

SUPPORTING *JERSEY FRESH*

1 **WHEREAS**, the *Jersey Fresh* grading and marketing program has served as a model
2 for state-sponsored agricultural promotion efforts for more than three decades, since its
3 inception in 1984; and

4 **WHEREAS**, the *Jersey Fresh* logo, and those of its spinoff brands (such as *Jersey*
5 *Grown* and *Jersey Seafood*) is a recognized marketing benefit to both farmers enrolled in the
6 *Jersey Fresh* program and the retailers who use it to draw attention to the fact that they stock
7 New Jersey agricultural products; and

8 **WHEREAS**, the further implementation of the federal Food Safety Modernization Act
9 (FSMA) will result in more inspections on more produce farms in the next year, and a *Jersey*
10 *Fresh* quality grading inspection can help farmers be better prepared for FSMA inspections;
11 and

12 **WHEREAS**, the FY2020 state budget included an additional \$100,000 appropriation
13 for the *Jersey Fresh* marketing and promotional program; and

14 **WHEREAS**, Secretary Fisher announced, at the 2019 New Jersey Farm Bureau
15 convention that the Department would undertake a fact-gathering mission to determine how
16 produce farmers enrolled in the *Jersey Fresh* program make the best use of it, with an eye
17 toward doubling participation in the program; and

18 **WHEREAS**, the goal of the Department, beyond increasing participation in the
19 program, is to create a guidance document that will help answer farmers' questions about
20 the program and provide case studies of those farmers who have maximized their
21 investment in *Jersey Fresh*; and

22 **WHEREAS**, the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture has empaneled a
23 subcommittee to explore the idea of, and make recommendations for, the creation of a
24 *Jersey Fresh* branding program for all livestock products, such as meat, wool, fiber, eggs
25 and hides, produced in New Jersey.

26 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the delegates to the 106th State
27 Agricultural Convention, assembled through a virtual platform hosted in Trenton, New
28 Jersey, in accordance with COVID-19 pandemic recommendations, on February 17, 2021,
29 do hereby urge all produce farmers approached for input into the Department’s fact-finding
30 mission on *Jersey Fresh* to participate candidly about their views of the program, as
31 participation from the maximum amount of farmers will create the best possible guidance
32 document.

33 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge all those in the agricultural community to
34 support any bills that may be introduced in the current Legislative session to increase the
35 state appropriation for *Jersey Fresh* in the FY2022 budget, and to contact their state
36 Assembly members and Senators to urge them to also co-sponsor such bills.

37 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge the Department of Agriculture to
38 continue to explore ways to generate increased funding for the *Jersey Fresh* program, and
39 additionally urge the subcommittee formed by the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture to
40 continue exploring, and make recommendations to the Board regarding the development of a
41 branding program for all livestock products, such as meat, wool, fiber, eggs and hides,
42 produced in New Jersey so that those producers may also enjoy success in the marketing of
43 New Jersey products.