

## RESOLUTION # 9

### HUNGER, NUTRITION AND GLEANING IN NEW JERSEY

1           **WHEREAS**, schools are an appropriate vehicle to promote the availability of  
2 healthier foods and nutrition services, as they are uniquely positioned to model and reinforce  
3 healthy eating behaviors, such as increasing knowledge of and improving access to fruits  
4 and vegetables on the school campus and at school-related activities; and

5           **WHEREAS**, schools can serve as an outreach tool to carry positive nutrition  
6 messages to parents and the community at large; and

7           **WHEREAS**, schools are required to develop and implement a school  
8 nutrition/wellness policy and to promote nutritious alternatives, and the Department  
9 continues to train schools and school food-service providers about marketing nutritious foods  
10 to children and incorporating more fresh fruits and vegetables into the school meal program;  
11 and

12           **WHEREAS**, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the usual ways of delivering nutritious  
13 foods to students while they are **in** school were disrupted by schools shifting to virtual  
14 learning from home, meaning the Department of Agriculture and Department of Education  
15 needed to collaborate on ensuring those meals continued to get to students, through various  
16 methods of delivering those meals to students at home; and

17           **WHEREAS**, the Department of Agriculture has significantly increased participation in  
18 the School Breakfast Program by working in conjunction with the New Jersey Department of  
19 Education to facilitate the inclusion of “breakfast after the bell” options in schools; and

20           **WHEREAS**, the WIC Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program, Senior Farmers’ Market  
21 Nutrition Program and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and  
22 Children are established through the United States Department of Agriculture but have been  
23 administered in New Jersey through the New Jersey Department of Health; and

24           **WHEREAS**, WIC coupon redemption rates in New Jersey have traditionally been low  
25 compared to other states, and resistance has been met for the idea of “over-issuing” WIC

26 coupons in order to ensure the highest possible number of people are receiving them, with  
27 the goal that they will also use them; and

28 **WHEREAS**, a sound, balanced, nutritional diet is important to the well-being of  
29 society, both in terms of the future productivity of our children and the health and well-being  
30 of the population in general; and

31 **WHEREAS**, approximately 1.9 million people in New Jersey rely upon various  
32 feeding and nutrition programs administered by or through the Department; and

33 **WHEREAS**, local purchases of food items including fresh fruits and vegetables can  
34 benefit the local economy, growers and distributors, thus reducing the number of “food miles”  
35 those commodities must travel to reach the end consumers; and

36 **WHEREAS**, timely information from state officials regarding the potential for sale of  
37 locally grown and harvested foods through federal government programs such as SNAP,  
38 WIC and the Senior Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program would help farmers more effectively  
39 plan for what types and amounts of produce they should grow in a coming season; and

40 **WHEREAS**, volunteer gleaning organizations that provide surplus produce from  
41 farms to community feeding operations are a valuable source of fresh agricultural products  
42 that do not demand financial resources for purchasing this food, yet still have costs related to  
43 storage and transportation of this produce; and

44 **WHEREAS**, gleaning surplus agricultural products as a means of reducing food  
45 insecurity has been increasing in popularity, and more gleaning organizations are working  
46 with farmers in New Jersey than in the past; and

47 **WHEREAS**, the FY2020 state budget included \$100,000 for Hunters Helping the  
48 Hungry, to be targeted toward moving meat from hunting, primarily venison from deer, to  
49 feeding operations to help feed the hungry; and

50 **WHEREAS**, the biggest challenge in adding venison to the feeding operations is  
51 aligning hunters with butchers who can cut and prepare the meat for the feeding operations’  
52 use; and

53           **WHEREAS**, the New Jersey Department of Agriculture has for the past 25 years  
54 worked with municipalities and agriculture groups to establish and support community  
55 farmers markets, where, in addition to selling to the general public, farmers can accept  
56 federally issued Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition program vouchers from senior citizens,  
57 which the farmers then redeem for additional income; and

58           **WHEREAS**, New Jersey is home to some of the largest commercial fishing ports in  
59 the United States, and New Jersey's commercial fishermen seek to reduce hunger by  
60 participating in a seafood gleaning program; and

61           **WHEREAS**, among the goals of the gleaning program is exposing consumers to the  
62 tastes of some underutilized species, in the hope they will seek them out in the future, and,  
63 under the program being proposed, fishermen will receive neither payment nor tax write-offs  
64 for the fish being gleaned.

65           **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the delegates to the 107<sup>th</sup> State  
66 Agricultural Convention, assembled in Atlantic City, N.J., on February 9-10, 2022, do hereby  
67 continue to support the efforts of the Department and its partners in the United States  
68 Department of Agriculture (USDA), as well as community feeding organizations to ensure  
69 that healthy food choices and fresh fruits and vegetables are available to all children and  
70 adults throughout New Jersey.

71           **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge the Department to continue to lead in  
72 promoting healthy foods and sound dietary choices to improve the well-being of New  
73 Jersey's citizens by promoting programs such as "Jersey Fresh Farm to School", "Farm to  
74 Preschool", "Farm to Summer" and school wellness policies.

75           **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge the Department to continue promoting  
76 the increased participation in School Breakfast programs, especially the inclusion of  
77 "breakfast after the bell" options, which have helped New Jersey significantly increase  
78 participation over the past several years.

79                   **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge the Governor and Legislature to  
80 recognize the critical nature of maintaining state funding levels supporting the federal school  
81 nutrition and commodity programs in an amount that will ensure that no accompanying  
82 federal funds are lost.

83                   **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge those at all levels responsible for  
84 purchasing or otherwise acquiring food for community feeding programs to ensure that those  
85 foods are grown, harvested or produced in New Jersey to the greatest extent practicable.

86                   **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we stress the critical nature of the Governor and  
87 Legislature providing adequate funding for the State Food Purchase Program (SFPP) in the  
88 FY2023 budget at a level at least equal to the current funding, and that additional funding  
89 should be provided for storage and distribution of emergency food.

90                   **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge the Department to work with New Jersey  
91 fruit and vegetable processing companies and the Rutgers Food Innovation Center to  
92 produce pre-packaged, value-added, single-serving New Jersey fruit and vegetable  
93 products, and “Made with Jersey Fresh” products, for use in school food service menus.

94                   **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we encourage the Department to engage in an  
95 education and outreach campaign to link hunters with butchers, and to further link those  
96 butchers with feeding operations, in order to fulfill the mission of Hunters Helping the Hungry  
97 by moving meat from hunts into the stream of food accepted by the feeding operations.

98                   **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we strongly support increased participation in the  
99 following safety-net federal and state nutrition programs administered by the Department:  
100 National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program; After School Snack  
101 Program; Special Milk Program; Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program; Child and Adult Care  
102 Food Program; Summer Food Service Program; School Commodity Program; The  
103 Emergency Food Assistance Program; the State Food Purchase Program; WIC and Senior  
104 Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program.

105

106                   **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we do hereby support and encourage the use of  
107 grants from all possible sources by New Jersey fishermen to establish the United States  
108 Seafood Gleaning Program, and we support the USSGP pilot project in Monmouth and  
109 Ocean counties in New Jersey to promote these efforts.