

## RESOLUTION # 14

### LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY IN NEW JERSEY

1           **WHEREAS**, New Jersey's livestock and meat production industry is an important  
2 part of the state's agriculture, not only contributing wholesome, locally produced meat and  
3 meat products, but also creating demand for field crops used as feed, as well as other  
4 industry support sales; and

5           **WHEREAS**, recent years have seen wide market swings, combined with periodic  
6 spikes in input costs, and a lack of processing facilities that enable producers to establish  
7 Custom Value-Added products, both wholesale and retail to the consumer; and

8           **WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 pandemic brought to the forefront the need to  
9 decentralize the meat USDA-inspected and custom-slaughter processing industry, and to  
10 provide greater availability in processing centers throughout the United States of small to  
11 medium size meat processors; and

12           **WHEREAS**, within the current marketing structure, New Jersey livestock producers  
13 have suffered from the lack of USDA-inspected and custom-slaughter processing centers  
14 within the state's borders that have as their first priority of providing custom harvest and  
15 processing of all types of livestock; and

16           **WHEREAS**, the Department has been working with livestock producers to explore  
17 alternative modes to marketing livestock meat and meat products outside the traditional  
18 route of selling live animals into a commodity processing system; and

19           **WHEREAS**, those alternative approaches include the establishment of on-farm,  
20 small group, or regional USDA-inspected and custom-slaughter processing centers for the  
21 purpose of harvesting, cutting, packaging, and further processing for table-ready livestock  
22 protein meat products; and

23           **WHEREAS**, the creation of opportunities to process New Jersey-produced livestock  
24 meat and meat products within the state can provide the state's livestock farmers with a

25 chance to control their own destiny and earn significant premiums over the commodity  
26 market; and

27 **WHEREAS**, an important step in pursuing that goal occurred this November when  
28 the state's USDA-Rural Development, working in conjunction with NJDA, announced \$4.2  
29 million in federal funding through the Meat and Poultry Processing Expansion Program for  
30 increased poultry meat production at Goffle Road Poultry in Bergen County, and to explore  
31 the idea of a waste digester at that facility to help create energy for its operations; and

32 **WHEREAS**, as with all agricultural products, the return to the farmer for livestock  
33 produced meat and meat products should be greater the further into the marketing chain,  
34 such as when the farmer controls the packaging and sale of the products that his farm  
35 produces; and

36 **WHEREAS**, all value-added ventures in agriculture involve a considerable amount  
37 of risk, and this level of risk is additionally intense for livestock processing ventures, which  
38 tend to be capital-intensive and require large investments of equity on the part of the  
39 principals to establish; and

40 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey is demographically favorably positioned to have direct local  
41 or on-farm USDA-inspected and custom-slaughter processing of livestock meats be  
42 profitable ventures for any size livestock farmers looking to diversify, as evidenced by  
43 existing successful on-farm operations providing needed livestock meat supplies during the  
44 initial stages of the COVID-19 Pandemic and has since continued with consumers wanting  
45 more knowledge of where their food is coming from; and

46 **WHEREAS**, the state Economic Development Authority has been directed, via  
47 statute, to establish a funding pool to aid the state's farmers in acquiring the equipment  
48 necessary to modernize their livestock USDA-inspected and custom-slaughter meat  
49 processing operations and to create on-farm produced and processed value-added products;  
50 and

51           **WHEREAS**, New Jersey’s commercial farmers have in recent years branched out  
52 beyond “traditional” livestock (cattle, poultry, swine, small ruminants, etc.) and there are now  
53 also New Jersey farmers raising llamas, alpacas, water buffalo, bison, rabbits, emus,  
54 ostriches and other livestock, all of which can be a source of farm income and contribute to  
55 the overall value of farm products sold in the state; and

56           **WHEREAS**, agricultural methane emitted by cattle and other livestock is part of the  
57 flow of a pre-existing carbon cycle and does not represent new carbon extracted from  
58 underground; and

59           **WHEREAS**, using the GWP 100 (Global Warming Potential) metric overcalculates  
60 methane emitted by cattle by three or four times because it treats methane as an  
61 accumulating stock gas like CO<sub>2</sub>, where, in contrast, using GWP\* developed by Oxford  
62 University treats methane as a flow gas and accounts for the biogenic cycle.

63           **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the delegates to the 108<sup>th</sup> State  
64 Agricultural Convention, assembled in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on February 8-9, 2023, do  
65 hereby strongly urge the New Jersey Department of Agriculture to do the following:

- 66       • Continue to support value-added projects, both on-farm and those that involve USDA-  
67 inspected and custom-slaughter processing at off-farm sites, that can offer New Jersey  
68 livestock meat producing farmers significant premiums for their products; help livestock  
69 farmers expand beyond custom retail cuts to include less-expensive, alternative table-  
70 ready livestock meat, to serve non-premium markets; and work through the Department’s  
71 Division of Marketing and Development to provide enhanced support for the “*Jersey*  
72 *Raised*” livestock meat/protein products brand. Help livestock farmers access all  
73 appropriate state and federal government agencies with the goal of maximizing all small-  
74 business funding program opportunities in order to create value-added livestock meat  
75 processing units that will support and grow the diversified livestock industry in New  
76 Jersey.

77 • Enthusiastically support development of a USDA-inspected and custom-slaughter  
78 processing facility that would be owned by a group of livestock producers and facilitate  
79 the development of individual branding of custom products and enhance the ability to  
80 develop a wholesale market that would establish greater volumes of meat product which  
81 can be made available to a wider consumer base, and to include in those efforts  
82 involvement in an innovation center that could help both the livestock and dairy sectors  
83 identify projects that can bridge both sectors, with an emphasis on creating  
84 demonstration projects.

85 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Department, along with Rutgers Cooperative  
86 Extension and Rutgers University as the result of the two Special Statewide Livestock  
87 Summits, continue working to identify all possible resources and partnerships that could help  
88 livestock producers create livestock harvest and USDA-inspected and custom-slaughter  
89 processing facilities of source-verified *Jersey Fresh* livestock meat products, either  
90 individually or in tandem with other New Jersey livestock producers.

91 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge the Department to closely monitor  
92 developments in the drafting of the next federal Farm Bill as regards the livestock industry,  
93 and that it advise and educate the New Jersey Congressional Delegation as to New Jersey  
94 livestock farmers' support or opposition of livestock-related issues in the Farm Bill, in order to  
95 ensure that the Farm Bill best reflects the needs of New Jersey's livestock industry.

96 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we support science-based calculations using  
97 GWP\* that take into account this climate-neutrality, so that the global-warming potential of  
98 cattle and livestock is not overstated.