

RESOLUTION # 15

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 FY2023 State budget included a total appropriation for the *Jersey*
13 *Fresh* and related marketing and promotional programs of \$149,000, which included \$49,000
14 directly for *Jersey Fresh* programs (which matches funding from federal sources for Specialty
15 Crops promotion) and \$100,000 for promotion of agricultural products not defined as
16 “Specialty Crops” by the USDA (under which *Jersey Fresh*-promoted products are included
17 by the federal agency); 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*-style branding program for all livestock products, such as meat, wool, fiber,
25 eggs and hides, produced in New Jersey.

26 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the delegates to the 108th State
27 Agricultural Convention, assembled in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on February 8-9, 2023, do
28 hereby urge the Legislature and Governor to increase the overall appropriation for Jersey
29 Fresh and related promotional campaigns for New Jersey agricultural products to at least \$5
30 million across all categories.

31 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge all those in the agricultural community to
32 support any bills that may be introduced in the current Legislative session to increase the
33 State appropriation for *Jersey Fresh* in the FY2024 budget, and to contact their state
34 Assembly members and Senators to urge them to also co-sponsor such bills.

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