

RESOLUTION # 31

NEW JERSEY FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES EDUCATION

1 **WHEREAS**, the 44 secondary instructional programs related to agriculture are
2 known as New Jersey Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Education and include
3 experiential learning (Supervised Agricultural Experiences) and leadership development
4 through FFA, the appropriate Career and Technical Student Organization for these
5 programs; and

6 **WHEREAS**, today's high-tech Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Education
7 curricula, taught by 64 agriculture-certified instructors, is infused with rigorous academics
8 and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) components provided by
9 Curriculum in Agricultural Science Education (CASE) and other agricultural science
10 education courses, to ensure global competitiveness, student achievement and well
11 prepared graduates for over 250 career areas in the food, agriculture, renewable energy and
12 environmental industry; and

13 **WHEREAS**, the New Jersey Department of Agriculture's Office of Food, Agriculture
14 and Natural Resources Education conducts the national State Teach Agriculture Results
15 (STAR) program to develop strategies to address teacher recruitment, retention and the
16 high demand for agriculture teachers; and

17 **WHEREAS**, an increased supply of teachers will be needed to fill vacancies caused
18 by retirements and/or to provide newly established programs with properly trained and
19 certified teachers for Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Education, thereby helping to
20 increase the human capital needed to serve the agriculture industry; and

21 **WHEREAS**, farm viability is a major concern within New Jersey; and

22 **WHEREAS**, Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources Education has had a long
23 history of preparing young adults for agriculture and related careers, and many New Jersey
24 FFA members have taken leadership positions in the agricultural community; and

25 **WHEREAS**, more programs are needed to provide an increased supply of human

26 capital required to fill the annual employment opportunities in Food, Agriculture, Renewable
27 Energy and the Environment; and

28 **WHEREAS**, Public Law 115-224 “Strengthening Career and Technical Education for
29 the 21st Century Act,” also known as Perkins V, requires data-driven decision-making and a
30 “local” needs assessment indicating labor market needs to support existing and future Food,
31 Agriculture and Natural Resources Education programs; and

32 **WHEREAS**, neither the state Department of Agriculture, the Department of Labor,
33 nor the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station has comprehensive data for the state’s
34 need of high skill, high wage occupations in the Food, Agriculture or Natural Resources
35 sector; and

36 **WHEREAS**, Perkins V also identifies industry-valued credentials as a qualifier for a
37 rigorous program of study and as a measure of readiness for college and the 21st century
38 world of work; and

39 **WHEREAS**, the food, agriculture, renewable energy and environmental industry
40 sector lacks industry-valued credentials, especially credentials appropriate for secondary
41 aged students.

42 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the delegates to the 108th State
43 Agricultural Convention, assembled in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on February 8-9, 2023,
44 support the development of new agriculture programs in parts of the state where human
45 capital is most needed to serve the broad agriculture industry and recommend the
46 Department collaborate with the New Jersey Department of Education to secure funds to be
47 used by Rutgers NJAES to conduct a needs assessment for high skill, high wage Food,
48 Agriculture and Natural Resources occupations to help support existing and future
49 established Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Education programs.

50 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources
51 Education be included as part of the solution to farm viability.

52 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we support the creation of statewide industry

53 valued credentials for secondary-aged students in cooperation with industry trade
54 organizations.

55 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we support and further encourage the recent
56 efforts made by the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences (SEBS) to improve and
57 market the five-year agricultural science education program that currently exists; the
58 development of the agricultural education option in the undergraduate major in Agriculture
59 and Food Systems, including the development of the courses focusing specifically on
60 agricultural education; efforts made by SEBS to utilize the Curriculum for Agricultural
61 Science Education to recruit high quality undergraduates interested in agriculture careers;
62 and the development of the post-bachelor's program at the Rutgers Graduate School of
63 Education (GSE), developed and offered jointly with the Rutgers School of Environmental
64 and Biological Sciences, leading to the degree of Ed.M. in Agricultural Science Education.

65 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we support continuing a strong and viable Food,
66 Agriculture and Natural Resources Education program in New Jersey through a continuing
67 memorandum of understanding between the New Jersey Department of Education and the
68 New Jersey Department of Agriculture; support continual improvement of resources and
69 services to all New Jersey instructional programs for food, agriculture and natural resources
70 education at the middle, secondary and post-secondary levels; support the development of
71 innovative academically/STEM-enhanced agriculture instructional programs and support the
72 increase in supply of agriculture teachers.