

RESOLUTION # 7

INVASIVE PESTS AND THE PHILLIP ALAMPI BENEFICIAL INSECT LABORATORY

1 **WHEREAS**, the increasingly globalized nature of the world's economy means more
2 goods are imported to, and exported from, the United States, with many of them arriving via
3 ship or air transport; and

4 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey is both home to, and is surrounded by states that have,
5 numerous large commercial ports; and

6 **WHEREAS**, requirements for shipping containers and packaging vary throughout the
7 world, and can result in insects and diseases not native to the United States arriving in the
8 containers and packaging of goods, often concealed in packing materials; and

9 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey must be prepared to detect, control, and eradicate foreign
10 invasive pests that could cause severe damage to the state's agricultural crops, livestock,
11 pets and wooded areas; and

12 **WHEREAS**, 2017-18 saw the first-ever arrivals in New Jersey of the exotic
13 Longhorned Tick and the Spotted Lanternfly, both invasive pests; and

14 **WHEREAS**, the Spotted Lanternfly (SLF) is the subject of an interior statewide
15 quarantine, as the Department aims to combat its spread and populations; and

16 **WHEREAS**, the SLF in particular can cause significant damage to a number of high-
17 value agricultural crops, and is the subject of a current cooperative effort between the
18 Department and the USDA to prevent the SLF's spread in the state, with the ultimate goal of
19 eradicating it; and

20 **WHEREAS**, the cooperative effort with USDA has resulted in \$1.3 million in federal
21 funding coming to New Jersey to help stop the SLF, and the Department's Division of Plant
22 Industry estimates that it needs at least double that amount in federal funding to successfully
23 battle the SLF; and

24 **WHEREAS**, the Division needs additional tools that would help enact preventive-
25 treatment agreements outside of quarantine zones and to expedite judicial orders for those

26 property owners within quarantine zones who refuse to allow treatments on their properties;
27 and

28 **WHEREAS**, governments at all levels are aware of the concerns of some members of
29 the public regarding chemical pesticides, and New Jersey in particular is sensitive to the
30 desire of residents to attack pests through biological methods whenever the use of chemicals
31 can be avoided; and

32 **WHEREAS**, in order to facilitate biological pest-control methods, New Jersey in 1985
33 established the Phillip Alampi Beneficial Insect Laboratory (PABIL) within its Division of Plant
34 Industry to breed effective predator insects and other life forms that attack and kill invasive
35 pests; and

36 **WHEREAS**, methods created at PABIL that have been successful in attacking
37 invasive pests include predatory wasps that kill Mexican bean beetle, the Derodontidae beetle
38 that feeds on hemlock woolly adelgid, and fungi released into the environment that kill gypsy
39 moth caterpillars by invading their digestive tracts and stopping them from eating; and

40 **WHEREAS**, pending bills in the New Jersey Legislature would create an "Invasive
41 Species Task Force" to combat the entry and spread of new invasive species into the state;
42 and

43 **WHEREAS**, the Task Force, under the pending legislation, would be charged in part
44 to "prepare a comprehensive invasive species management plan for the State," which would
45 include identifying which species it will consider to be invasive; and

46 **WHEREAS**, that process, under previous task forces and councils charged with
47 creating such a plan, has been challenging because certain non-native species grown by New
48 Jersey nursery producers were listed, although they had not proven previously to be a threat
49 for invasive growth; and

50 **WHEREAS**, pending legislation requires the New Jersey Department of Agriculture to
51 adopt rules and regulations to create a permitting program for the safe sale, distribution, and
52 propagation of invasive plant species in the State and will include criteria for exempting a

53 cultivar of a restricted plant species that proves to be non-invasive by virtue of sterility factors
54 or other stable genetic traits unique to that cultivar; and that the Department, in consultation
55 with the Department of Environmental Protection, and other organizations shall, from time to
56 time, adopt regulations to designate additional plant species as “invasive plant species” for
57 purposes of this legislation.

58 **WHEREAS**, the New Jersey Department of Agriculture is the most appropriate
59 agency (through experience, expertise, personnel, and existing enforcement processes) to
60 oversee final regulation of invasive species (plants along with associated insects and plant
61 diseases), and that current NJDA efforts to control Spotted Lantern Fly in both agricultural
62 and natural settings bear this out.

63 **WHEREAS**, the NJDEP is already provided a key role in this process by virtue of its
64 inclusion at the NJ Invasive Species Council level.

65 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the delegates to the 108th State
66 Agricultural Convention, assembled in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on February 8-9, 2023, do
67 hereby urge PABIL and the Division of Plant Industry to continue working to develop biological
68 controls of both invasive and native pests that do harm to agricultural crops, wooded lands
69 and ecosystems.

70 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we gratefully acknowledge the provision of state
71 funding to address the repairs needed for the heating, ventilation and air conditioning repairs
72 at PABIL in order to allow the facility to operate optimally.

73 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that should the legislation to create the NJ Invasive
74 Species Council advance, we strongly encourage that the Secretary of Agriculture sit as co-
75 chairperson of the NJ Invasive Species Council.

76 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the creation and regulation of the permitting and
77 exemption process should be the responsibility of the N.J. Department of Agriculture.