**RESOLUTION # 12 (((DONE)))**

**PRESERVING PESTICIDE AVAILABILITY FOR AGRICULTURE**

**WHEREAS,** destructive insect pests are among the most harmful challenges faced by farmers, homeowners and government agencies when trying to protect plant life; and

**WHEREAS**, much work has been undertaken over the past five decades to ensure that pesticides marketed for general use carry the least unintended harm to humans, animals, and beneficial and non-target insects; and

**WHEREAS**, pesticides in the neonicotinoid group play a major role in most Integrated Pest Management (IPM) plans, which are designed to limit the overuse of pesticides by employing a combination of chemical and natural methods to fight pests; and

**WHEREAS**, one of the pesticides included in the neonicotinoid group is imidacloprid which was first registered for use in the United States in 1992 and has a wide range of target pests and sites, and is effective in protecting products including but not limited to, vegetables, fruits, potatoes, cereals, and turf and other horticultural and forestry products; and

**WHEREAS,** another neonicotinoid, dinotefuran, is an essential tool for eliminating and controlling spotted lanternfly (SLF), a destructive, invasive pest that can cause severe damage to a number of agricultural crops and which is currently the subject of protective quarantines in all New Jersey counties; and

**WHEREAS**, a number of insecticide products in the “neonicotinoid” group are classified as being for general use and have been registered under the EPA’s Conventional Reduced Risk Program due to their favorable toxicological profiles, and they play an important role in controlling a variety of insects in agricultural, forestry and veterinary applications; and

**WHEREAS**, as a group, neonicotinoids are effective against sucking insects such as aphids, leaf hoppers, whitefly and thrips, as well as chewing insects such as termites, and larvae of beetles (wireworms and grubs) and some Lepidopteran pests, particularly cutworms; and

**WHEREAS**, the New Jersey Department of Agriculture and USDA effectively used imidacloprid to protect trees from attack by the Asian longhorned beetle during the eradication of that insect in two separate infestations in New Jersey; and

**WHEREAS**, imidacloprid is widely used against a number of veterinary parasites such as fleas, flies and lice on domestic dogs, cats and livestock; and

**WHEREAS**, the formulations of the neonicotinoids, clothianidin (GrubEx®), (Arena®), imidacloprid (Merit®), and thiamethoxam (Meridian™), are widely used by golf course managers to protect turfgrass from Japanese beetle grub damage; and

**WHEREAS**, another insecticide included in the neonicotinoid group is dinotefuran, which is effective on a broad spectrum of insects infesting vegetable, fruit and fiber crops, and which was granted Organophosphorous Alternative and Reduced Risk Status by the EPA; and

**WHEREAS**, the “Scorpion® and Venom®” formulations of dinotefuran are relied upon by New Jersey’s peach and apple growers to protect their crops against the invasive Brown Marmorated Stink Bug; and

**WHEREAS**, while neonicotinoids are a factor in the debate over the cause of Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) among honeybees, no single, identifiable cause of CCD has been determined by widespread research into that phenomenon; and

**WHEREAS**, neonicotinoid insecticides already come in containers with label instructions that address their potential impacts to honeybee colonies; and

**WHEREAS**, the loss of neonicotinoid pesticides as an effective tool in a producer’s or regulatory control agencies’ pest-fighting arsenal would likely lead to increased use of

other broad-spectrum insecticides that may not carry the Reduced Risk Status by the EPA or the ability to effectively control exotic or domestic agricultural pests; and

**WHEREAS**, action to provide education to producers about the proper use of neonicotinoid insecticides would have more beneficial impacts; and

**WHEREAS**, legislation has been introduced to direct the Department of Environmental Protection to classify neonicotinoids as “restricted use” pesticides in New Jersey, limiting their application to certified and licensed pesticide applicators, but not to outrightly prohibit the use or sale of neonicotinoid pesticides in the state; and

**WHEREAS**, separate state-level legislation has been introduced in each of the past two legislative sessions to also ban the use of chlorpyrifos insecticides in the state, further limiting the options New Jersey farmers have available to them to combat the ravages of pests, and those bills have not moved past the level of committee consideration in either house of the New Jersey Legislature; and

**WHEREAS**, the federal Environmental Protection Agency’s attempt to ban chlorpyrifos through regulation was vacated in early-November 2023, by the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals, which ruled the action was “arbitrary and capricious;” and

**WHEREAS**, gramoxone (Paraquat) is an economically significant and important herbicide used extensively in New Jersey on a wide variety of fruit, vegetable, ornamental and grain crops; and

**WHEREAS,** New Jersey farmers do not have alternative products that can accomplish the same results as gramoxone to replace it; and

**WHEREAS**, under the EPA’s Paraquat Dichloride Human Health Mitigation Decision and amended paraquat dichloride (Paraquat) product labels, certified applicators must successfully complete an EPA-approved training program before mixing, loading and/or applying Paraquat; and

**WHEREAS**, only certified applicators with the new specialized training may mix and apply gramoxone, while all others are prohibited from mixing, handling and applying it; and

**WHEREAS**, current training and testing for certified applicators is offered only in English, while a large segment of New Jersey farm workers use Spanish as their primary language; and

**WHEREAS**, on December 1, 2021, U.S. Senator Cory Booker, D-New Jersey, introduced a proposed FIFRA update bill, titled the “Protect America’s Children from Toxic Pesticide Act” which would give states and local governments more power over chemical pesticide use and would ban many individual chemistries vital to agriculture.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the delegates to the 109th State Agricultural Convention, assembled in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on February 7-8, 2024, do hereby urge the Department to support the continued availability of neonicotinoid and gramoxone for the agricultural, professional landscape, and veterinary applications they have been used for to date.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we oppose any legislation to ban the use of neonicotinoids , gramoxone or chlorpyrifos pesticides, as the scientific evidence does not support that the drawbacks of using them outweigh the substantial benefits when they are applied in accordance with the label requirements.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we encourage an educational program on the proper use of these insecticides be undertaken as an alternative to any legislation banning their use, emphasizing the precautions to be taken when using them, with experts in the field creating the educational materials, and we urge the New Jersey Department of Agriculture to closely monitor the effects of the use of pesticides on local pollinators.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we do hereby urge the New Jersey Congressional Delegation to oppose any bill pending in the U.S. House of Representatives or U.S. Senate that would give local governments more power over chemical use and would ban individual chemistries, especially those vital to a robust agriculture needed to feed an ever-growing world population.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge the appropriate federal agencies allow the sale of rodenticides over the counter instead of only through professional exterminators.