RESOLUTION # 34

PINELANDS

 **WHEREAS**, there have been 2,852 farms covering 250,243 acres permanently preserved through the Farmland Preservation Program, including 148 farms covering 16,508 acres in the Pinelands; and

 **WHEREAS**, the permanent preservation of farmland within the Pinelands Area is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Pinelands Protection Act, the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP), the Agriculture Retention and Development Act (ARDA), and the Garden State Preservation Trust Act (GSPT Act); and

 **WHEREAS,** the Pinelands Commission established a formal agriculture committee in 2015 comprised entirely of commission members to review and make recommendations to the full Commission about agriculture-related matters, including proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Management Plan, permitting requirements, proposed legislation and rulemaking by other agencies.

 **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, support the State Agriculture Development Committee’s (SADC) ongoing efforts to promote the enrollment of Pinelands farms into the State Farmland Preservation Program through all of the SADC’s programs.

 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge the SADC to continue allowing both appraisal valuations and formula valuations for each application submitted in order to make an offer to the landowner based on the higher of the two values.

 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge the Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign legislation that would allow all Pinelands Commission members to fully participate in deliberations and voting on any amendments to the CMP, while respecting conflict of interest concerns related to specific issues that would impact individual landowners.

 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we encourage the Pinelands Commission to explore adding non-voting farmer members to its Agriculture Committee and seek the active participation of the agricultural community by reactivating the Pinelands Agriculture Advisory Committee and utilizing it as a resource in deliberations about agriculture-related matters that come before this new Committee.

 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we encourage that any amendments to the Pinelands CMP or PDC program that have an effect on agricultural interests be done only in a manner that does not diminish or dilute the demand for, or market value of, PDCs.

 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we encourage more active participation of the agricultural community in the development of any amendments to the Pinelands CMP or PDC program that have an effect on agricultural interests in the Pinelands, and that the Pinelands Agricultural Advisory Committee primarily involve farmers and residents in the Pinelands who live with these issues daily, or other such body representing the landowners of the Pinelands Area.

 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge the Governor to immediately nominate a member to the Pinelands Commission to represent economic activities, such as agriculture, consistent with Article 5.b of the Pinelands Protection Act.