**RESOLUTION # 35**

**NEW JERSEY ONE HEALTH PROGRAM**

**WHEREAS**, the New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA), serving as the lead agency in New Jersey Emergency Support Function 11 (NJESF11) within the state’s Emergency Response Plan, works to plan for, and respond to, statewide or multi-county natural or man-made disasters and emergencies in the state; and

**WHEREAS**, operations coordinated by NJESF11 include providing co-located animal shelters where temporary county or state shelters are established for humans who must evacuate, so that they do not either leave their pets behind or refuse to evacuate if they cannot take their pets with them; and

**WHEREAS**, NJESF11 also plans for and provides coordination for moving at-risk livestock from farms to county fairgrounds or other safe locations in natural or man-made disasters, and is charged with coordinating movement of necessary foods from the state’s two USDA warehouses to feed humans at temporary shelters; and

**WHEREAS**, an important part of NJESF11 is for NJDA’s Division of Animal Health to plan for the prevention and response to outbreaks of contagious and possibly zoonotic diseases (those able to transfer from animals to humans) in livestock, assist domestic companion animals (i.e. household pets) in disaster, and detect animal diseases through its Animal Health Diagnostic Laboratory; and

**WHEREAS**, New Jersey and many other states continue seeing evidence of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influence (HPAI) in wild birds that have died and been collected during and after the winter flyway traffic of birds flying south; and

**WHEREAS**, HPAI has shown its ability to infect species other than birds in the past six months, with cattle, large and small cats, and at least one human being infected and requiring hospitalization, playing out a solid example of the concepts behind One Health and its animal, human and environmental touches; and

**WHEREAS**, New Jersey has become the first state in the nation, and the first regional jurisdiction in the United States and Canada, to legislate a One Health initiative - the New Jersey One Health Task Force - to study, prepare for, and respond to instances where health concerns cross the barriers of human, animal, and environmental health; and

**WHEREAS**, in recognition of NJDA’s lead role in NJESF11, the expertise in animal diseases, both zoonotic and non-zoonotic, concentrated in the Division of Animal Health, and the understanding of the ways in which diseases can cross the barriers between the health categories, the Legislature and Governor placed the New Jersey One Health program in the NJDA.; and

**WHEREAS**, coordination of the various agencies and other entities involved in the One Health program, its unique status as the first effort of its kind in the nation, and the need to be innovative and groundbreaking in its approaches, are important and time-consuming additional duties for the Division; and

**WHEREAS**, NJDA has been working with the other state, federal, and regional partners within the One Health program to address the relevant aspects of agriculture that impact the health and livelihood of New Jerseyans, - including emerging and endemic zoonotic diseases, food security, child and adult nutrition, farmland preservation, agricultural sustainability, and carbon sequestration efforts - by utilizing the One Health approach to improve ecosystem health in the state; and

**WHEREAS,** climate change is deeply intertwined with not only public health, animal health, and environmental health, but also demographic, social, and economic patterns of inequality that reach across all sectors – being a key One Health issue that experts consider the biggest health threat facing humanity worldwide, a transdisciplinary One Health approach is necessary.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the delegates to the 110th State Agricultural Convention, assembled in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on February 5-6, 2025, do hereby continue to support the New Jersey One Health program being an integral part of how the NJDA participates in emergency planning and response in the state.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we strongly urge the Legislature and Governor to consider the additional expense and workload to the NJDA in taking on this task, and to allocate a minimum of $300,000 in the next state budget for salaries and benefits for the personnel and activities of the NJDA involved in New Jersey One Health efforts.