

RESOLUTION # 5

100th ANNIVERSARY OF THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

1 **WHEREAS**, agriculture, in all its forms, has been a key part of New Jersey's
2 economy since the first settlements, and even before that, in some ways, among the
3 area's Native peoples; and

4 **WHEREAS**, the importance of agriculture to the state is reflected in the nickname
5 "The Garden State," and the state's agriculture-and-food complex is valued at
6 approximately \$105 billion; and

7 **WHEREAS**, to this day, New Jersey is among the national leaders in the
8 production of certain crops, including being in the Top 10 producing states for
9 cranberries, bell peppers, spinach, peaches, blueberries, cucumbers, sweet corn,
10 squash, tomatoes, snap beans and cabbage; and

11 **WHEREAS**, agriculture in New Jersey goes beyond fruit and vegetable crops to
12 include categories such as Nursery, Greenhouse & Sod (the leading sector by dollar
13 value in the state and also in the Top 10 producing states); Field Crops; Equine and
14 other livestock; Aquaculture/Seafood; Dairy; Wineries, Breweries & Distilleries and
15 Beekeeping; and

16 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey encompasses all of these forms of agriculture and
17 occupies the Top 10 producer spots in many of them all while being one of the smallest
18 states by land mass in the nation and being the most densely populated state, which
19 leads to many agricultural operations existing in proximity to urban and suburban areas;
20 and

21 **WHEREAS**, in order to foster the growth, regulation, development and
22 refinement of agricultural enterprises in the state, the New Jersey Department of
23 Agriculture was founded in 1916; and

24 **WHEREAS**, over the decades, the Department, and its policy-making body, the
25 New Jersey State Board of Agriculture, working in conjunction with partners such as
26 Rutgers University, the New Jersey Farm Bureau, the New Jersey Agricultural Society,
27 New Jersey Food Council and various groups representing each agricultural commodity,
28 has been a leader in innovation on the farm; and

29 **WHEREAS**, the Department has been a national innovator, being one of only
30 three state agriculture departments that currently administer all school feeding programs,
31 providing opportunities for New Jersey farmers to connect with nearby schools as a
32 potential customer for their wholesome, nutritious agricultural products; and

33 **WHEREAS**, the Department created the first state-sponsored agricultural
34 branding program, “Jersey Fresh,” in 1983, in order to distinguish the high quality of New
35 Jersey-produced fruits and vegetables from others in the marketplace; and

36 **WHEREAS**, that effort has expanded over the years to include nursery crops
37 (“Jersey Grown”), aquacultured and wild-caught fish and shellfish (“Jersey Seafood”),
38 equine (“Jersey Bred”), and even processed products (“Made with Jersey Fresh”); and

39 **WHEREAS**, the Department’s model is one of efficiency and the effective use of
40 limited resources, leveraged through private-sector partners and other governmental
41 agencies at the state, federal, county and local levels; and

42 **WHEREAS**, the rapidly growing world population will continue to create
43 increased demand for agricultural products of all types, and the New Jersey Department
44 of Agriculture is poised to help lead the state’s farm community in maximizing the output
45 of all sectors of New Jersey agriculture.

46 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the delegates to the 101st
47 State Agricultural Convention, assembled in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on February 10-
48 11, 2016, do hereby commend the good work of the New Jersey Department of
49 Agriculture, and its policy-making body, the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture, in
50 this, the Department's Centennial Year.

51 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we encourage the Department to maintain its
52 well-deserved national reputation as an innovative leader and regulator of agricultural
53 operations.