

RESOLUTION # 7

BEEKEEPING AND RIGHT TO FARM

1 **WHEREAS**, commercial honey and hive products, and crop pollination by
2 honeybees, are vital components of New Jersey agriculture; and

3 **WHEREAS**, because honeybees forage over airsheds measured in square miles,
4 not acres, New Jersey's commercial beekeepers provide their pollination services to
5 other commodity producers, and produce honey and hive products without the necessity
6 for control of their own land base, unlike all other types of commercial agriculture; and

7 **WHEREAS**, the Right to Farm Act is intended to protect Commercial Farms
8 engaged in generally accepted agricultural management practices from over-restrictive
9 local regulation nuisance lawsuits; and

10 **WHEREAS**, the present definition of "Commercial Farm" in the Right to Farm Act
11 unnecessarily excludes most commercial beekeepers who follow generally accepted
12 agricultural management practices from Right to Farm protections because those
13 beekeepers do not operate sufficient acreage to achieve Commercial Farm status within
14 reasonably achievable levels of income derived from the production of honey and hive
15 products, and from pollination services; and

16 **WHEREAS**, unnecessary exclusion of commercial beekeepers from Right to
17 Farm Act protections burdens not only the commercial beekeepers who independently
18 compose a vital part of New Jersey's agriculture, but also the growers throughout the
19 state of commodities which are dependent upon honeybees for pollination; and

20 **WHEREAS**, legislation (A-1294 and S-1328) has been introduced to extend
21 Right to Farm protection to commercial beekeepers, with some restrictions, and the
22 Assembly version passed that house by a vote of 78-0, with the Senate version pending
23 in the Senate Economic Growth Committee.

24 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the delegates to the 100th
25 State Agricultural Convention, assembled in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on February 4-5,
26 2015, urge the New Jersey Legislature to support the New Jersey beekeeping industry,
27 and the state’s many growers of honeybee-dependent crops, through amendment of the
28 definition in the Right to Farm Act of “Commercial Farm” to reflect the significant
29 commercial agricultural activities and contributions of beekeepers with small land bases.

30 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge the Legislature to adopt a definition
31 of Commercial Farm specific to beekeeping that focuses exclusively, for purposes of
32 Right to Farm qualification for beekeeping activities only, on an appropriate level of
33 income derived from production of honey and hive products, and from pollination
34 services.

35 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge passage by the Legislature and
36 signing by the Governor of legislation (A-1294 and S-1328) that extends Right to Farm
37 protection to commercial beekeepers, with some restrictions.