

RESOLUTION # 6

100th ANNIVERSARY OF THE COMMERCIAL BLUEBERRY CROP

1 **WHEREAS**, the blueberry was declared to be the official state fruit of New Jersey
2 by an Act of the Legislature in 2004, after a campaign launched by students at the
3 Veteran’s Memorial Elementary School in Brick, Ocean County; and

4 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey continues to be in the Top 10 states for the production
5 of highbush blueberries, despite increasing competition from other states and areas of
6 Canada; and

7 **WHEREAS**, highbush blueberries were first cultivated in the Pinelands town of
8 Whitesbog by Elizabeth Coleman White, daughter of a New Jersey cranberry farmer,
9 and USDA botanist Frederick Coville, in the early part of the 20th Century, despite the
10 conventional wisdom of the time being that blueberries, which grew wild in New Jersey,
11 could not be domesticated; and

12 **WHEREAS**, blueberries have become increasingly popular throughout the United
13 States, as both a fresh-market fruit to be eaten whole and as ingredients in everything
14 from pies to muffins to iced tea; and

15 **WHEREAS**, blueberries are recognized as a “super food” for their antioxidant
16 qualities and other health-related benefits; and

17 **WHEREAS**, White and Coville harvested and sold their first commercial crop of
18 blueberries in 1916, and the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council has marked the occasion
19 in 2015 and 2016 by celebrating that first cultivated commercial crop.

20 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the delegates to the 101st
21 State Agricultural Convention, assembled in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on February 10-
22 11, 2016, do hereby commemorate 2016 as the 100th Anniversary of the first commercial
23 highbush blueberry harvest in New Jersey.

24 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge the Department, working in
25 conjunction with partners such as Rutgers University, the New Jersey Farm Bureau, the
26 U.S. Highbush Council and other blueberry-oriented commodity groups, to continue,
27 through research, to work toward improving the state's blueberry crop, and to strive,
28 through promotional efforts, to continue educating the public as to the health benefits of
29 blueberries in general and, specifically, the superior quality of New Jersey blueberries.