

## RESOLUTION # 31

### HUMANE TREATMENT OF LIVESTOCK

1           **WHEREAS**, the Department, working with industry representatives, New Jersey  
2 Farm Bureau, veterinarians, Rutgers University, and the New Jersey Agricultural  
3 Experiment Station, wrote and adopted N.J.A.C. 2:8, which became the first regulations  
4 of their kind in the country to address the humane care and keeping of domestic  
5 livestock; and

6           **WHEREAS**, the Department has adopted the regulation with amendments, as  
7 prescribed by the New Jersey Supreme Court on July 30, 2008, following a challenge by  
8 the New Jersey Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, among others, in which  
9 the Standards were largely upheld; and

10           **WHEREAS**, concerns from stakeholders about the inconsistent application of  
11 animal cruelty statutes to the owners of livestock and poultry in New Jersey have not  
12 changed since the adoption of the statute, despite the development of rules to guide the  
13 investigation of complaints -- namely that state and county SPCAs enforce animal  
14 cruelty statutes based on factors other than science-based regulations; and

15           **WHEREAS**, the Standards, as they currently exist, must be filed for re-adoption  
16 by December 30, 2018, but also can be amended through the rule-making process  
17 before then; and

18           **WHEREAS**, animal agriculture increasingly finds itself a point of contention with  
19 the consuming public through the activism of those who either oppose animal agriculture  
20 altogether or object to certain practices deemed to be consistent with N.J.A.C. 2:8, as  
21 evidenced in recent attempts to legislatively prohibit the use of sow gestation crates in  
22 New Jersey; and

23           **WHEREAS**, both of those attempts at legislation to prohibit gestation crates in  
24 New Jersey were vetoed by the Governor, who cited in successive veto messages that  
25 decisions regarding the humane treatment of livestock are most appropriately left to the  
26 Department of Agriculture and to the State Board of Agriculture as the Department's  
27 policy-making body, and New Jersey's farm community is in support of those vetoes.

28           **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the delegates to the 101<sup>st</sup>  
29 State Agricultural Convention, assembled in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on February 10-  
30 11, 2016, urge that New Jersey's agricultural community, represented by the New  
31 Jersey Farm Bureau, Rutgers University, the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment  
32 Station, the New Jersey Veterinary Medical Association, the New Jersey State Board of  
33 Agriculture and Department of Agriculture reconvene to evaluate the implementation of  
34 N.J.A.C. 2:8, Humane Treatment of Domestic Livestock.

35           **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge the Department and the State Board  
36 of Agriculture, in that evaluation, to consider all changes in scientific approaches brought  
37 forward by the appropriate veterinary bodies, both state and national, in determining if  
38 the Standards should be amended, and to present a report to the 2018 State Agricultural  
39 Convention on any recommended changes to the Standards so that they can be  
40 discussed by the delegates in advance of the filing for readoption by December 30,  
41 2018.

42           **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we encourage the Legislature to appropriate  
43 a minimum of \$350,000 in the FY2017 budget to adequately fund the operations  
44 required for implementation and defense of N.J.A.C. 2:8, Humane Treatment of  
45 Domestic Livestock.

46           **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge the New Jersey State Attorney  
47 General to require that all law enforcement personnel authorized to respond to animal  
48 cruelty complaints comply with N.J.A.C. 2:8 and enforce those standards upheld by the

49 Supreme Court, as well as ensure that the notification requirements to the Department of  
50 Agriculture are also upheld.

51 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we recognize the increased interest and  
52 concern within the state and country about livestock handling and welfare and therefore  
53 support the expansion of services provided by the Division of Animal Health in order to  
54 maintain pace with the significant increase in requests for field investigations of alleged  
55 violations.

56 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the we urge the NJSPCA to avail itself of  
57 increased and more frequent training regarding the Humane Standards, which the  
58 Division of Animal Health has made a commitment to provide, in an effort to have  
59 NJSPCA enforcement more accurately reflect the provisions of the Standards.

60 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we support appropriate funding levels and  
61 resources to provide science-based factual information to educate citizens of the state,  
62 especially the agricultural community, and properly comply with the Legislature's  
63 mandate that the Department continually review and update standards to ensure the  
64 humane care of livestock and poultry.