

RESOLUTION # 3

LABELING OF FOODS WITH GMO INGREDIENTS

1 **WHEREAS**, some consumers have expressed a desire to be informed on
2 package labels whether a raw or processed food product they are buying contains
3 ingredients produced using biotechnology or genetic modification, collectively known as
4 “GMOs”; and

5 **WHEREAS**, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s stated policy on “Foods
6 Derived from New Plant Varieties,” first published in 1992, is geared toward ensuring
7 that relevant scientific, safety and regulatory issues are resolved prior to introducing
8 these new plant varieties into the marketplace; and

9 **WHEREAS**, the FDA holds the position that there is no significant nutritional or
10 compositional difference between foods produced with GMO ingredients and their
11 conventional counterparts; and

12 **WHEREAS**, meaningful food labeling includes information on nutrient content,
13 chemical composition, potential allergy concerns or potential toxicity concerns; and

14 **WHEREAS**, labeling that delivers no pertinent information about the quality and
15 safety of food, and is included solely to distinguish production methods, is not a
16 meaningful way to enhance consumer choice; and

17 **WHEREAS**, some consumers, food marketers, vendors, retailers and producers
18 have called for mandatory, state-imposed labeling of food products made with GMO
19 ingredients that would differ from what is required by federal law; and

20 **WHEREAS**, the FDA already has guidelines, first published in 2001, to direct
21 those producers who wish to voluntarily label food products as either being produced –
22 or not produced – with GMO ingredients; and

23 **WHEREAS**, the National Organic Program within the USDA excludes the use of
24 GMO ingredients as a prerequisite to using the USDA’s “Organic” marketing seal, thus
25 providing another avenue for consumers to choose products; and

26 **WHEREAS**, pending legislation in the New Jersey Assembly and Senate would
27 create mandatory labeling of products as being made with GMO products (if the product
28 contains more than 1 percent GMO ingredients); and

29 **WHEREAS**, rather than a state-by-state, patchwork approach of laws regarding
30 GMO labeling, this issue would be better left to a federal measure that would apply
31 equally to all states; and

32 **WHEREAS**, measures pending in Congress would establish a voluntary federal
33 labeling standard for GMO foods, and would prohibit states from passing individual laws
34 mandating labeling because they would create a patchwork of varying regulations that
35 would differ from state to state and result in confusion regarding differing labels on the
36 same product depending upon the state in which it is being sold.

37 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the delegates to the 101st
38 State Agricultural Convention, assembled in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on February 10-
39 11, 2016, do hereby express our opposition to bills currently pending in the New Jersey
40 Legislature that aim to mandate labeling of food products as being produced with bio-
41 engineered ingredients.

42 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge Congress to take the lead in passing
43 legislation establishing a voluntary GMO labeling law, as we believe the issue of labeling
44 for GMO ingredients is best addressed at the federal level in order to avoid a patchwork
45 of varying regulations at the state level, which will lead to multiple packaging labels
46 needed for products that are sold in more than one state or region, potential disruption to
47 interstate commerce, and potential confusion among shoppers who cross state lines to
48 do their shopping.