

RESOLUTION # 1

DEFINITION OF “LOCALLY GROWN”

1 **WHEREAS**, the strongest, most consistent trend in the marketing of agricultural
2 and other food products is the “local” movement, in which consumers in ever-growing
3 numbers express a desire to purchase products that were grown, raised or processed as
4 near to their homes as possible; and

5 **WHEREAS**, because New Jersey is a temperate state, our farmers have a
6 limited window in which to sell their agricultural products; and

7 **WHEREAS**, this limited window adds significant importance to New Jersey
8 farmers making the most of the time they have to sell their products, including making
9 the most of the consumer’s desire to “buy local” whenever possible; and

10 **WHEREAS**, competition in the marketplace abounds in the form of products from
11 areas outside New Jersey, some from many states away, from which agricultural
12 products must travel several days to reach this state; and

13 **WHEREAS**, the lack of a uniform, standardized, national or state definition of the
14 terms “local” or “locally grown” means that products coming from any state can be
15 labeled “local” by retailers or wholesalers, and consumers may find that what they
16 thought came from a farm just a few miles from the store actually traveled across the
17 entire country to reach those shelves; and

18 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey has invested significant resources, both financial and
19 otherwise, into the *Jersey Fresh* and related marketing campaigns over the past 30
20 years, signaling the state’s desire to have New Jersey agricultural products stand out in
21 the marketplace; and

22 **WHEREAS**, the Legislature has passed and the Governor has signed into law,
23 measures intended to prevent producers of foodstuffs from outside New Jersey from

24 advertising their products in a way that implies or states they have come from New
25 Jersey when, in fact, they have not, adding yet another signal that the state recognizes
26 the interests our farmers have in distinguishing their farms' output in the marketplace;
27 and

28 **WHEREAS**, the Department and State Board of Agriculture drafted, circulated for
29 comment, asked for additional comment on specific questions raised in the first round of
30 comments, and are now reviewing all the comments on a rule that would define "local"
31 when used in terms such as "local," "locally grown," "locally raised" and "locally
32 produced" in the marketing of agricultural products, that matches the direction provided
33 by the delegates to the 99th and 100th State Agricultural Conventions; and

34 **WHEREAS**, comments received on this rule proposal indicate that many growers
35 in New Jersey are opposed to enacting a definition of locally grown; and

36 **WHEREAS**, the adoption of these definitions is likely to reduce the ability of
37 supermarket chains to market New Jersey produce as locally grown in the Mid-Atlantic
38 region, thereby reducing the ability of wholesale produce growers in New Jersey to
39 market as locally grown, and

40 **WHEREAS**, that direction was that the use of such terms on agricultural products
41 coming from outside the state of New Jersey must also include the name of the state
42 from which they originate.

43 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the delegates to the 101st
44 State Agricultural Convention, assembled in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on February 10-
45 11, 2016, do hereby urge the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture to abandon the
46 current proposal to establish statewide definitions of the terms "local," "locally grown,"
47 "locally raised" and "locally produced."