

RESOLUTION # 22

FARMER MEMBERS ON THE STATE AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

1 **WHEREAS**, the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) oversees the
2 Farmland Preservation and Right to Farm programs in New Jersey under the Agriculture
3 Retention and Development Act (ARDA); and

4 **WHEREAS**, the SADC includes among its members, by law, four people “actively
5 engaged in farming” in New Jersey as farmers, who provide invaluable knowledge and
6 expertise on farming to the SADC’s deliberations on various issues; and

7 **WHEREAS**, by law, “...with respect to the members actively engaged in farming, the
8 State Board of Agriculture shall recommend to the Governor a list of potential candidates
9 and their alternates to be considered for each appointment”; and

10 **WHEREAS**, by law, “all appointments shall be made for terms of four years. Each of
11 these members shall hold office for the term of the appointment and until a successor shall
12 have been appointed and qualified. A member shall be eligible for reappointment for no
13 more than two consecutive terms”; and

14 **WHEREAS**, farmer members on the SADC frequently are in a “holdover” position, in
15 which they are serving beyond the original length of the term to which they were appointed;
16 and

17 **WHEREAS**, SADC’s farmer members, due to the nature of their businesses, are
18 more likely than other SADC members to be put in a situation where they cannot attend a
19 meeting, especially during their busiest on-farm seasons; and

20 **WHEREAS**, it would benefit the discussion of issues before the SADC during those
21 meetings, when farmer members cannot attend, for a “substitute” to be sent in their place,
22 much as ex officio SADC members can do; and

23 **WHEREAS**, A4787, signed into law in January 2018, provides for an alternate farmer
24 member to be chosen by the Governor, in consultation with the President and the Vice
25 President of the State Board of Agriculture, with the advice and consent of the Senate, and

26 requires that the alternate member be a past member of either the State Board of Agriculture
27 or the State Agriculture Development Committee.

28 **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the delegates to the 104th State
29 Agricultural Convention, assembled in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on February 6-7, 2019, do
30 hereby strongly urge the State Board of Agriculture to promptly make the required
31 recommendation to the Governor of at least one of the farmer members and an alternate to
32 be considered for appointment as soon as possible so that the holdover farmer members can
33 be replaced on an orderly basis though the staggered appointments originally provided for in
34 the law.

35 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we strongly urge that the existing law be
36 amended to provide authority for "substitute" farmer members to be named by the President
37 and Vice President of the State Board of Agriculture to allow the full complement of farmer
38 representation to participate in any SADC meetings when the appointed farmer member or
39 members cannot attend, and to empower such substitutes to cast votes for those members.

40 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that whether the existing structure of the Governor
41 appointing substitute members with the advice and consent of the Senate remains, or
42 whether legislation is passed to empower the President and Vice President of the State
43 Board of Agriculture to name those substitutes without further, outside action, the restrictions
44 limiting those substitute members to former State Board members or former SADC members
45 be revised to allow for other agricultural officials, such as members of county agricultural
46 development boards, to be eligible as well.