

RESOLUTION # 25

DICKEYA

1 **WHEREAS**, *Dickeya dianthicola* is a bacterial disease that is relatively new to the
2 potato crops of the United States, is highly aggressive, and has caused severe damage to
3 white potato crops; and

4 **WHEREAS**, *Dickeya* thrives in warmer temperatures, making crops grown in
5 southern states and the Mid-Atlantic states (including New Jersey) more susceptible, and
6 has resulted in many cases of severe crop loss; and

7 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey's potato growers could be devastated by widespread
8 *Dickeya* if preventive measures are not established quickly; and

9 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey farmers harvested 2,300 acres of white potatoes in 2015,
10 but the acreage in 2016 and 2017 was not reported via NASS under its provisions to protect
11 the information that is provided by only a sole producer (meaning it was likely that only one
12 producer reported growing potatoes to NASS); and

13 **WHEREAS**, Department personnel and a State Board member attended a multi-
14 state meeting in Maine in 2017 to determine if steps could be taken to reduce or eliminate
15 the instances of *Dickeya*-infected seed coming from that state in order to reduce the risk of
16 *Dickeya* being further spread to Northeastern and Mid-Atlantic states, which primarily source
17 seed potatoes from Maine; and

18 **WHEREAS**, the result of the discussions in that meeting was an understanding that
19 trying to prevent infected seed from leaving a state would be nearly impossible, as potatoes
20 can be infected with *Dickeya* but not show signs of the infection; and

21 **WHEREAS**, that meant developing methods, protocols, or best management
22 practices for farmers to more effectively manage *Dickeya* once it appeared in their potatoes
23 was a more viable way of stemming the spread of *Dickeya*; and

24 **WHEREAS**, the potential for *Dickeya* spreading beyond potato crops and into other
25 types of crops in New Jersey is not yet determined; and

26 **WHEREAS**, the incidence of *Dickeya dianthicola* in New Jersey potato fields has
27 greatly diminished since intense attention began being paid to the problem two years ago.

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 urge that the Department and Rutgers NJAES continue working with potato growers
31 in New Jersey to monitor and surveille for *Dickeya dianthicola* in New Jersey potato fields
32 and to take steps to address it if it arises.

33 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge the Department and Rutgers to establish
34 protocols for eliminating Dickeya from contaminated fields.

35 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge the Department and Rutgers to develop
36 best management practices for avoiding, controlling and eliminating Dickeya and to
37 determine the risk to other crops from Dickeya introduced into an area via potatoes, including
38 best management practices for minimizing such risks.

39 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge all appropriate agencies and farm
40 advocacy groups to investigate potential sources of funding to carry out the necessary
41 research, testing and support programs on Dickeya, including but not limited to food
42 processors, other segments of the food industry, pesticide companies and others with an
43 interest in keeping Dickeya from becoming further established in New Jersey.