

RESOLUTION # 32

NEW JERSEY FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES EDUCATION

1 **WHEREAS**, the 55 secondary instructional programs related to agriculture are
2 known as *New Jersey Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Education* and include
3 experiential learning (Supervised Agricultural Experiences) and leadership development
4 through FFA, the appropriate Career and Technical Student Organization for these
5 programs, and

6 **WHEREAS**, today's high-tech Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Education
7 curricula, taught by 63 agriculture-certified instructors, is infused with rigorous academics
8 and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) components provided by
9 Curriculum in Agricultural Science Education (CASE) and other ag science education
10 courses, to ensure global competitiveness, student achievement and well-prepared
11 graduates for over 250 career areas in the food, agriculture, renewable energy and
12 environmental industry; and

13 **WHEREAS**, the NJDA's Office of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources
14 Education conducts the national State Teach Agriculture Results (STAR) program to develop
15 strategies to address teacher recruitment, retention and the high demand for agriculture
16 teachers; and

17 **WHEREAS**, an increased supply of teachers will be needed to fill vacancies caused
18 by retirements and/or to provide newly established programs with properly trained and
19 certified teachers for Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Education, therefore helping
20 increase the human capital to serve the agriculture industry; and

21 **WHEREAS**, 10 vacancies were filled in 2018 by teachers without traditional teacher
22 education training, thus entering the classroom with content background in agriculture but
23 without agriculture teacher preparation and training; and

24 **WHEREAS**, the Rutgers' Graduate School of Education (GSE) is not adequately
25 meeting the needs of the state's rural agriculture community due to its emphasis on "urban

26 education,” and the program limits opportunities for agriculture students/teachers to acquire
27 a Master’s Degree of Education since it only provides teacher certification and does not
28 provide opportunities for preparation as a career and technical education instructor; and

29 **WHEREAS**, the high demand for agriculture teachers is amplified by a low supply
30 due to the lack of an Agriculture Teacher Educator (professor) to recruit and educate
31 students in a teacher preparation program at our Land Grant College; and

32 **WHEREAS**, more programs are needed due to an increased supply of human capital
33 required to fill the 57,900 annual employment opportunities in Food, Agriculture, Renewable
34 Energy and the Environment between 2015-2020.

35 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the delegates of the 104th State
36 Agricultural Convention assembled in Atlantic City, New Jersey on February 6-7, 2019,
37 support development of a Teacher Education Program coordinated by an Agriculture
38 Teacher Educator (professor) at Rutgers’ School of Environmental and Biological Sciences
39 (SEBS), to meet the high demand for Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Education
40 teachers in New Jersey.

41 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we support legislation in the establishment of a
42 “Loan Redemption Program for Teachers of Agriculture,” created to help increase the
43 number of needed outstanding new and beginning teachers in pursuit of serving the
44 profession of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Education, by providing for student-
45 loan forgiveness for certain agriculture teachers.

46 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we support continuing a strong and viable Food,
47 Agriculture and Natural Resources Education program in New Jersey through a continuing
48 memorandum of understanding between the New Jersey Department of Education and the
49 New Jersey Department of Agriculture; support continual improvement of resources and
50 services to all New Jersey instructional programs for food, agriculture and natural resources
51 education at the middle, secondary and post-secondary levels; support the development of

52 innovative academically/STEM-enhanced agriculture instructional programs and support the
53 increase in supply of agriculture teachers.