

The Honorable **[insert full name]**  
**[insert either New Jersey State Assembly or New Jersey State Senate]**  
**[insert address]**

Dear **[insert title and last name of legislator]:**

**[Insert personal introduction of yourself – where you live, what kind of farm you have, how many acres, how many generations you've farmed here, etc. Anything to make this letter personal.]**

I am writing you to express my concerns regarding the Governor's proposal to eliminate the Department of Agriculture. This proposal is completely unacceptable!

The elimination of agriculture as a cabinet-level department is a symbolic gesture of spending cuts only. After all of the department's vital services are redistributed to other state agencies, the savings will be minimal – maybe as little as \$500,000. Is such miniscule savings really worth undermining an industry that contributes billions to the state's economy?

The Department of Agriculture has a major impact on many aspects of our quality of life in New Jersey. It impacts farmland preservation, food quality and safety, Jersey Fresh marketing, animal and plant health, children's nutrition programs, and the agricultural education program.

In addition to the devastating effect this will have on agriculture, I worry that all of the department's remaining functions will suffer, impacting not just farmers, but all citizens of New Jersey. For example, right now, school nutrition programs, gypsy moth suppression, and farmland preservation are high priorities in the NJDA, and are administered by experienced experts. Will they receive the same kind of attention and priority in other departments?

**[If you have an example, insert any details of how the Department of Ag has personally benefited you – SADC preserved your farm, Jersey Fresh marketing supplies, organic certification.]**

I urge you to support a budget in which the cuts are spread fairly throughout all departments and their affected industries. Please keep the New Jersey Department of Agriculture, the Secretary of Agriculture and the State Board of Agriculture intact.

Sincerely,  
**[insert your name and address]**

Cc: Governor Jon S. Corzine