

Report and Recommendations

NORTHEAST MULTISTATE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE MEETING

Via Teleconference

September 16, 2015
1:00pm to 2:05pm

Chair, Fred Servello (ME)

Present: Cameron Faustman (CT), Tim Phipps (WV), Gary Thompson (PA), Pat Vittum (MA/NEED), Ken La Valley (NH/NEED), Dan Rossi (ED) and Rubie Mize (Recorder)

1. Request to approve the **revised** Planning Grant Proposal NE1504 - Assessing and promoting “food agency,” a construct for helping individuals navigate the food environment.

Members are pleased that additional participants from the University of New Hampshire, Cornell University and University of Maryland are joining the team. MAC felt that the group is headed to the right direction and will be able to put together a successful competitive proposal.

Action: MAC recommends approval of the proposal.

2. Request to approve **revised** Planning Grant Proposal NE1506 - Terrestrial biomonitors to assess changing climate & honey bee health

Additional members have joined the group from the University of Delaware and University of Maine. The team is on track to submit a proposal to AFRI later this fall.

Action: MAC recommends approval of the proposal.

3. Request to approve the Request to Write a proposal entitled, Northeast Pasture Consortium, 10/2016-9/2021 [Renewal of NEERA1003]

Action: MAC recommends approval of the Request to Write for Coordinating Committee NEERA1003. [Note that Request was received after the teleconference and MAC members sent their approval via email.]

4. NRSP Review Committee Report – Tim Phipps

The ESCOP NRSP Review Committee met on May 28, 2015 in Denver, CO, and the following recommendations reported at our summer meeting in Portsmouth, NH, have not changed. Note that these recommendations will be discussed again before voting at our ESS Meeting on September 30. Directors present will vote individually per station.

- NRSP-4, “Enabling Pesticide Registrations or Specialty Crops and Minor Uses” – approve proposal and budget with a request that the program more fully explain/justify the maintenance funding level requested.

- NRSP-6, “US Potato Genebank” – approve proposal and budget with the requirement that the committee look at alternative funding models (e.g., increase ARS budget; look for support from key institutions) and report back to the NRSP-RC at the mid-term review on progress toward the goal of eliminating or significantly reducing NRSP funding at the end of this cycle.
- NRSP-7, “A National Agricultural Program for Minor Use Animal Drugs” – reject the proposal and budget. Assuming the recommendation is upheld at the Experiment Station Section Meeting in September, NRSP-7 will receive 1-year of funding at the current level to phase out activities.
- NRSP-9, “National Animal Nutrition Project” – approve proposal and budget with recommendations to provide an economic analysis of impact during the mid-term review and to improve outreach/communication plans and implementation

5. 2016 NERA Planning Grant Program announcement

Timing of RFA: MAC felt that last year’s timing of the release of the NERA and NEED/NERA planning grants created confusion for the researchers. The following were suggested, and NEED will be consulted as to what would work best for them. NEED will meet on October 12.

- Release one RFA in the spring, and the other in the fall
- Release both at the same time
- Release every other year, say NERA will release their 2015 RFA, and NEED next year, 2016.

Budget: MAC members need to know how much budget is available for the NERA Planning Grant and how many good proposals can be funded. MAC will consider the actual budget before reviewing the proposals in the next round.

Content: Revisions to the draft RFA were suggested as follows:

- Explain what ‘strong research core’ means – a rigorous specified approach and well defined hypothesis? At this stage, some groups may still be formulating their hypothesis.
- Demonstrated track record should refer to successful history of grantsmanship
- Add a check box on the cover page asking each team member to indicate his/her affiliation – AES, CES, or both.

Action: Fred Servello and Dan Rossi will work on revising the draft RFA, share with MAC and NERA members and present it for approval at the NERA Meeting on September 28.

6. Advisor assignments:

- NE1335 - Resource Management in Commercial Greenhouse Production [10/2013-9/2018] (TBD)

7. Other Business - See Item#3 above for NEERA1003 Request to Write.

Current MAC members:

- Fred Servello, ME (2012-2015) - Chair
- Tim Phipps, WV (2013-2016)
- Gary Thompson, PA (2012-2015)
- Cameron Faustman, CTS (2014-2017)
- Pat Vittum, MA/NEED (2014-2017)
- Ken La Valley, NH/NEED (2014-2017)