



Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors

Many thanks for joining NERA's summer teleconference last Wednesday, June 10th. We truly benefited from broad engagement across the region. Our agenda was ambitious and we had a number of items that we agreed that we'd do electronically. While the follow-up items are mentioned below, I'm making an ask for your participation. NERA is seeking from the membership, volunteers to serve as Administrative Advisers, members on NERA committees and members on ESCOP committees. We've created and posted a google spreadsheet that allows you to sign on. If more than one members signs on, we'll host a run-off.

“Here's the bottom line: This isn't the time for another “diversity report” or any report at all. This is time for action, inside and outside. This is a time for change: inside ourselves and our companies; across our communities and our country.” — Omar Johnson (ØPUS United) in an open letter in the *New York Times*, June 14, 2020.

### Action items:

- Congratulations to the new leadership team at NERA: Matt Wilson (WVU), chair; Eric Wommack (Delaware), vice chair; Mark Hutton (Maine), officer-at-large; and Jody Jellison (UMass), past chair.
- The [notes from the June 10 summer teleconference](#) are posted. Check those out.
- Fred Servello reported to NERA two items related to the National Research Support Project (NRSP) Review Committee (RC). The NRSP RC has extensively edited the [NRSP Guidelines](#). In doing so, the new guidelines have been shortened, streamlined and ambiguous language removed. This was especially important to assist in describing intent surrounding business plans to transition away from off-the-top funding. Your office of the executive director (OED) recommends approval of the new guidelines. The NRSP RC has also developed a [two-track category of NRSPs](#). The two tracks would distinguish core NRSP projects like NRSP1 (*Multistate Research Information Management and Impact Communications Program* [NIMSS]) and NRSP4 (*Facilitating Registration of Pest Management Technology for Specialty Crops and Specialty Uses*) versus new and emerging innovations like NRSP8 (*National Animal Genome Research Project*.) The OED recommends approval of this new designation and direction.
- We've posted on the NERA website, sign-up sheets for [NERA and ESCOP committees](#) and [Administrative Adviser slots](#). The sign-up is a self-nomination. If we have more than one volunteer for a position, we'll host a run-off. I ask: how might you contribute to regional and national efforts? Once we have nominations for all open positions, we'll share a ballot for confirmation by NERA.

Nominations close on July 17th.

- Please consider responding to the [survey](#) that was sent to you to assist the BAA's Committee of Legislation and Policy (CLP) in the identification of issues associated with the upcoming Farm Bill. The survey closes on June 19th at 9:00 PM EDT.
- NIFA is requesting the participation of research directors and staff persons in the design of a new reporting module for research. This research working group (RWG) effort would apply to capacity and competitively funded research. The goal is to produce a modern, streamlined and integrated reporting system. Ultimately, this new reporting system will replace REEport. In addition, this also has the potential to better interface with NIMSS. The RWG will be constituted of directors and staff persons from each of the five regions, ARD, NE, NC, S, and W, one director and one staffer per region. Each representative should have direct experience with NIFA reporting, NIMSS, and capacity and competitive funds. Hence, we're seeking a NE director to volunteer for this? Do you have a staff person that you'd like to nominate? Please share your self-nomination or the nomination of a staff person with [Rick](#).

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### Reminders/Updates:

- The results of the NERA voting on the Investment of the *ESS Residual Funds ballot* was 11-approve, 0-disapprove and 3 stations not voting. The final national tally on the ESS ballot was 59-approve, 0-disapprove, and 17 stations not voting. The ESS residual funds will be transferred to the TD Private Client Group for investment.
- Now that the 2021 NERA budget has passed, we'll be sending out assessment notices. You might want to give your business offices a heads-up.
- The USDA is seeking public comment and written stakeholder input on the [Agriculture Innovation Agenda](#) (posted on NERA website.) NERA encourages you, your scientists, and state agricultural stakeholder groups to submit comments through the [Federal eRulemaking Portal](#). Ali Mitchell and I are currently working to potentially offer a regional listening session that would span interests from Northeast experiment stations to Extension. Comments are due by August 1, 2020.

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### Informational items:

- The Northeast Administrative Heads rescheduled their meeting to June 25th at 2:00 PM. The group will be discussing a Northeast agenda. Stay tuned.
- As each of your states and institutions enter new phases of re-opening, we're interested to hear what's going well, what's working and what's not. Please keep us posted.
- And again: The [Multistate Research Fund Impacts](#) group is seeking closer connections with your research communicators. Please send [me](#) the name, email address and phone number of your primary research communicator and I'll submit the NERA list to the MRF impacts working group.



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Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors (NERA)

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NERA and its member institutions are committed to the principles of affirmative action, diversity, and inclusion.

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