



Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors

Merry Christmas, happy holidays, happy New Year! We extend our best to you during this holiday season! Be sure and check out action item 1.

“I will honor Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year.” – Ebenezer Scrooge from Charles Dickens (1843) in *A Christmas Carol. In Prose. Being a Ghost Story of Christmas (First Edition)*, Chapman and Hall, London.

Action items:

- Eat, drink and be merry!

Reminders/Updates:

- The minutes for NERA’s winter meeting on December 7, 2023, are [posted on the NERA website](#). Please give those a look!
- The [National Impacts Database](#) is seeking submissions to help tell the stories of the Land-grant university system. While the Northeast has not contributed to the database to the same extent as other regions, we have great stories to tell. Consider telling your stories.
- The BAA Communications and Marketing Committee has released the [January 2024 Toolkit](#). Please feel free to share with your communications staff.
- As we shared in the last newsletter, the APLU is developing an advocacy effort dedicated to supporting the large capacity programs like Hatch. Caron Gala is leading this, and she is seeking experts to interview on the following topics: (1) the role of capacity funding in supporting a national network of programs of research; (2) research, Extension, and stakeholder partnered innovation in: blueberry production research, wheat/small grain production research, beef/poultry production research, markets and risk forecasting, and watershed/environmental health research, and responsiveness in research and Extension to disasters (e.g., train derailment, Avian Influenza monitoring, COVID testing); (3) how to talk about the federated system of research/development/Extension that is in partnership with the states, counties, or municipalities; and (4) private sector partnerships. If you have suggestions, [please send those to us](#).

Informational items:

- The FY 2024 AFRI Foundational and Applied Science (Competitive Grant Program) is now available. Check out the [AFRI Program page](#).
- In 2024, the [Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education \(SARE\)](#) program will initiate a \$10 million national food loss and food waste grants program. SARE is now seeking a [Program Coordinator](#). The Southern region SARE will serve as the host institution, applications are due on January 31, 2024.
- The USDA and DOE are co-hosting listening sessions January 12, 16, and 17, 2024, on American Farms, Rural Benefits. The agencies are specifically seeking input on how clean energy siting can benefit

farmers. Here's a link to the [Stakeholder Announcement](#).



Lobster pots on Block Island, RI, decorated for the season (photo courtesy of Block Island Organics).



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