



This is the last newsletter of 2019. In retrospect, we've had a good year: we experienced increases in both competitive and capacity funding, we weathered a government shutdown, and we heard from a number of our NERA colleagues that they will be retiring. I'm anticipating that 2020 will be a year of significant change: new NERA leaders, a reimagined NIFA, and fresh opportunities. We look forward to working with you to advance opportunities while continuing to support your robust Northeastern agricultural research enterprises.

On a personal front, David and I both extend our heartiest greetings for a brave new year for all!

"If you want something new, you have to stop doing something old." -Peter Drucker

Action items:

- Last ask: We continue to compile thoughts on "reimagining NIFA." If you haven't shared your thoughts, please [forward](#) those. As means to frame your thoughts, you'll recollect that we were seeking suggestions on the following four questions:
 - How can NIFA improve its delivery of capacity programs for supporting research and extension?
 - What changes will improve NIFA's implementation of its competitive programs?
 - How can NIFA increase transparency and effectiveness of its organizational structure?
 - What steps NIFA should take to enhance its customer experience?
- Book 'em Danno. The room block for the NERA Spring Meeting (March 23-25, 2020) is now open. Click [here](#) to reserve your room.
- NERA and NEED submitted comments to the Federal Register in response to Agricultural Marketing Service's (AMS) rules on the [Establishment of a Domestic Hemp Program](#). The [text of our comments](#) is posted on the NERA website. The comments were based on questions that we collected from the NERA and NEED directors during the past two months. We've also posed questions to both NIFA and the AMS seeking answers to questions that our Northeast institutions have posed about hem research and Extension. Once we have answers from NIFA and AMSD, we'll share those with you.

Reminders/Updates:

- The [FY 2020 NERA Funding Support for Grant Applications: Request for Proposals](#) is now open. This rolling opportunity supports costs associated with development, writing, and submission of grant

proposals. Please share widely! Remember, team leaders that submit proposals will be submitting their proposal to their host AES director: that might be you.

Informational items:

- One more time: West Virginia University invites nominations and applications for an innovative and charismatic leader as Dean and Director of the [West Virginia University Extension Service](#). Greenwood/Asher and Associates has been retained to assist the Search Committee.



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