

Report and Recommendations

NORTHEAST MULTISTATE ACTIVITIES

COMMITTEE MEETING

February 25, 2020
8:00-9:00 am Teleconference

In attendance: Brad Hillman (Chair/Rutgers), Matt Wilson (WVU), Eric Wommack (UD), Gary Thompson (PSU), Pat Vittum (UMASS), Amy Ouellette (UNH), Fred Servello (Maine/ex-officio NRSP RC rep), Rick Rhodes (NERA/ex-officio), David Leibovitz (NERA/ex-officio)

Approval of the agenda

- The February 25 agenda was approved by acclamation.

Approval of [MAC Report, November 20, 2019 \(click to view\)](#)

- The November 20 MAC report was approved by acclamation.

NRSP Discussion

1. NRSP_TEMP4: *Facilitating Registration of Pest Management Technology for Specialty Crops and Specialty Uses, 10/2020 – 09/2025* [Renewal of NRSP4, Northeast AA: Brad Hillman, Rutgers]
 - NRSP4 is a minor but relatively important component of IR-4.
 - NRSP4 contributes \$500k to IR-4's \$20M budget.
 - IR-4 is an individual USDA budget line item.
 - Currently IR-4 administrative offices are transitioning to NC State University (has been with Rutgers since 1963.)
 - The Northeast regional IR-4 office will remain at both Rutgers and Maryland.
 - NRSP funding has been leveraged to secure other sources of funding.
 - NRSP dollars are spread out to support regional IR-4 offices across the country.
 - NRSP guidelines call for a transition plan to decrease off the top funding and increase support from other alternative sources of funding. Can the current level of NRSP support be decreased?
 - IR-4 would not disappear without NRSP funding, but NRSP funding helps stations across the country to organize and helps to showcase the value of IR-4 at a national level.
 - The MAC expressed general support for NRSP4.
 - **Matt Wilson introduced a motion to recommend approval of NRSP4 by NERA, with a caveat that NRSP4 should draft a transition plan for inclusion in the final proposal.**
 - The motion was seconded by Gary Thompson and approved unanimously.

2. NRSP_TEMP6: *The US Potato Genebank: Acquisition, Classification, Preservation, Evaluation and Distribution of Potato (Solanum) Germplasm*, 10/2020 – 09/2025 [Renewal of NRSP6, Northeast AA: Walter De Jong, Cornell]
 - NRSP6 supports the potato germplasm center in Wisconsin.
 - The NRSP provides unique services and has received decades of off-the-top funding support.
 - The budget request for the project is “the status quo funding level” at \$150k/year, and no transition plan was included – the technical team expressed that they’re comfortable with the current NRSP arrangement and are requesting the same.
 - ESS voted to decrease NRSP6 funding to \$135k in 2019.
 - NRSP6 is the strongest case for the need for alternative sources of funding.
 - NERA could recommend a significant funding cut for the next 5 years and a full funding stop in the next 10 years. Rejecting the NRSP outright in 2020 may be too extreme.
 - A transition plan to sunset the project is critical and should be required for submission by NRSP6 team.
 - **Gary Thompson introduced a motion to recommend approval of NRSP6 by NERA, with a caveat that the total 5-year budget be reduced by 50% and a clear message that NRSP6 is expected to develop a transition plan away from off-the-top funding.**
 - **The motion was seconded by Brad Hillman and approved unanimously.**

3. NRSP_TEMP9: *National Animal Nutrition Program*, 10/2020 – 09/2025 [Renewal of NRSP9, Northeast AA: Rick Rhodes, NERA]
 - NRSP9 supports animal nutrition research, focused on the expansion of databases related to animal nutrient requirements.
 - Interfacing with the National Academies of Science in the development of the widely used database is critical.
 - Years 1, 2, and 5 budget requests are level at \$199k/year.
 - Year 3 includes a budget increase to support mid-term review.
 - Year 4 includes an increase to support a national animal nutrition summit in Washington, DC.
 - 2020 is the second renewal cycle for NRSP9 (project was initiated in 2010.)
 - National Animal Nutrition Program is truly research support, and shows heavy leverage of the off-the-top funding – meeting the expectations of an NRSP.
 - NRSP9 should draft a transition plan away from off-the-top funding, whether short or long term
 - **Gary Thompson introduced a motion to recommend approval of NRSP9 by NERA, with a caveat that the total 5-year budget be reduced by 50% and a clear message that NRSP9 is expected to develop a transition plan away from off-the-top funding.**
 - **The motion was seconded by Matt Wilson and approved unanimously.**

NERA Planning Grant Proposal

1. [2020-01] Rojas (UMass) submission: *Consumer Preferences for Diet Quality, Innovation and Market Structure*
 - This proposal was submitted by Bill Miller (UMass) to the NERA OED on behalf of PI Christian Rojas (UMass) and co-PI Ted Jaenicke (Penn State.)
 - The team intends to apply for a NIFA Foundation grant (~\$500k.)
 - Proposal supports a graduate student to work on literature review and preliminary data assembly, cleaning, and analysis.
 - NERA has carryover from previous years to support more grant development work.
 - The proposal would look stronger with involvement of more than two institutions and the team can be encouraged to invite more participants.
 - To increase the number of submissions, NERA OED can send the RFP out regularly, at least quarterly.
 - **Matt Wilson introduced a motion to approve NERA Planning Grant proposal 2020-01.**
 - **Gary Thompson seconded the motion and the planning grant proposal was approved unanimously. (Note: UMASS AES will support the project and the next UMASS NERA assessment will be reduced by an identical sum up to the requested amount of \$6,986.)**

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm Eastern.