



# NERA Meeting

**The Admiral Fell Inn  
Historic Fell's Point, 888 South Broadway, Baltimore MD 21231**

**March 11-12, 2014**

## **Draft Minutes**

### **In Attendance:**

Fred Servello (ME), Chair  
Theodore Andreadis (CT-NH)  
Nancy Bull (NEED)  
Tom Burr (NYG)  
Cameron Faustman (CTS)  
Bill Hare (DC)  
Brad Hillman (NJ)  
Michael Hoffmann (NYC)  
Hiram Larew (NIFA)  
Kathleen Liang (Univ. of Vermont)  
Bill Miller (MA)  
Tim Phipps (WV)  
Jennifer Pronto (Cornell Univ.)  
Mark Rieger (DE)  
Daniel Rossi (NERA)  
Hunt Shipman (Cornerstone)  
Adel Shirmohammadi (MD)  
Howard Skinner (ARS)  
Gary Thompson (PA)  
Rubie Mize (NERA), Recorder

*Tuesday, March 11 [Admiral I Meeting Room - 5th Floor]*

### **1. Welcome and Introductions – Chair Fred Servello**

Chair Fred Servello called the meeting to order at 8:00AM. He welcomed the directors and guests, and asked everyone to briefly introduce themselves.

### **2. Approval of Agenda – Chair Fred Servello**

<http://www.nera.umd.edu/workshop/NERAAgendaMarch2014.pdf>

Changes to the draft agenda were discussed. Howard Skinner of ARS will give a presentation on the climate hubs at 11:45AM on Wednesday.

**Action:** The motion made to approve the revised agenda was seconded and passed.

**3. Approval of Minutes from the September 25, 2013 NERA Meeting – Chair Fred Servello**

<http://www.nera.umd.edu/workshop/NERAMinutesSept2013.pdf>

**Action:** The motion made to approve the minutes was seconded and passed.

**4. Interim Actions by the Chair and NERA Executive Committee Report – Chair Fred Servello**

- Approved the release of the 2014 NERA Planning Grants RFA and the electronic ballot to confirm the recommendations of the Multistate Activities Committee. Sent memo to all who submitted proposals and notified them of NERA's decisions.
- Completed analysis of the 2013 resource use survey of stations, and prepared a draft white paper on Cost Recovery at Agricultural Experiment Station Research Facilities in the Northeast Region to be presented and discussed at the spring meeting.
- Collected feedback from NERA Directors on the draft FY15 budget and the proposal to establish a five-year budget plan. Convened an Executive Committee teleconference on Feb. 24 to discuss director input and develop final proposed budgets/plans. Sent an email on March 3 to the Directors reporting on the decisions of the Executive Committee. The proposed FY15 budget, five-year budget projections, and a proposal for creation of a subcommittee for future budget planning will be discussed and submitted for consideration as a motion at the spring meeting.
- Has been serving as Acting Chair of the Multistate Activities Committee and Northeast delegate to the NRSP Review Committee since the reassignment of MAC Chair Kirby Stafford at CT-AES on Oct. 4, 2013. A new MAC Chair will be appointed at the spring meeting. MAC also needs a new member.
- Prepared the agenda of the March NERA spring meeting.

**5. Multistate Activities Committee report distributed.**

<http://www.nera.umd.edu/workshop/MACReportMarch2014.pdf>

Report was distributed. Tim Phipps will be appointed Interim Chair of MAC until Sept. 30, 2014. Tim Phipps thanked those who are serving as Advisors. He reminded Advisors to nominate their multistate project(s) for the 2014 ESS National Award for Excellence in Multistate Research.

**6. USDA-NIFA Update – Hiram Larew**

- Farm Bill has been signed into law. NIFA staff working hard to interpret the bill and adhere to the timelines that are relatively short. Erin Daly is chairing the group developing the implementation of the Farm Bill.
- Also authorized is \$200M funding for the Foundation that is now organizing the Board of Directors. This is formed to support and augment financial needs for agricultural research, and will be able to receive private funds. Farm Bill specifies criteria for the members of the Board. Roger Beachy was instrumental in conceptualizing this structure. Policy Board is meeting today to ensure that the Land-grant is represented in the Board.
- FY2014 NIFA programs looking good \$1.2B in discretionary funding, AFRI \$316.5M. NIFA working with OMB in apportioning the funds. NIFA looking into how new budget affects NIFA operation. There are several NPL vacancies that need to be filled.

- FY2015 President's budget presented. Budget highlight \$2.7B for ag research and extension including \$325M for AFRI, \$75M for new private institute including regional climate hubs
- FY2016 behind curtain and being worked on. Interpretation of current year FY2014 budget, looking at FY2015 and working on FY2016, NIFA is working on three budgets at once.
- USDA Strategic Plan 2014-2018 being finalized and will be released soon by the Secretary.
- NIFA also developing its own strategic plan and had received comments from the system. Dr. Maxwell is pulling it all together, and will again distribute it for comments.
- NIFA developing Human Capital Plan 2014-18 for NIFA staffing, align staffing needs and priorities along programs. In draft form and will be finalized by end of March.
- Ralph Otto retired early this year. Deb Sheely moved to UCONN. Louie Tupas is new director for climate change at NIFA.
- Reorganization will have all institutes reporting to Deputy Director for Programs, Meryl Broussard.
- Grants modernization initiative, intent is to go paperless, modernize IT and improve management of data and reporting results. Fit and gap analysis of grants processes is patterned after NIH and plan is to come up with something comparable or maybe tap into their system. Analysis planned to be completed by end of fiscal year.
- Cathy Woteki is championing public access to data. There is real push to make scientific data open and available to the public. Hiram Larew will follow up and get an update on where we are on this issue as the Land grants had expressed their concern before.
- REEport is up and running, FY2014 and FTE reporting now implemented through this system. Dan Rossi noted that we had representatives from all the regions meet with NIFA staff and they have been responsive with our requests and concerns. Bill Miller added that one can send queries to [reeport@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:reeport@nifa.usda.gov) that is monitored by five staff and can get response within 2 days. CRIS will wind down. CRIS is still being used to search for past data. Hopefully, this will transition smoothly to the new REEport. NIFA also holds regular webinar on REEport. Rubie Mize added that NIFA indicated that there is no plan to expand REEport to capture extension participation. Hiram Larew will raise this issue. NIFA's current priority is to finish the expenditure reporting in REEport.
- Water challenges and other RFAs released. Partnering with international institutions in all the RFAs allowed as long as it satisfies goals of AFRI. US-Israel BARD signed. BARD will support Israeli scientists who will work with US scientists under AFRI. Project should be demonstrably beneficial to the US, not assistance in nature.
- Sonny Ramaswamy testified on Hill on importance of Extension/Smith Lever. Extension's Centennial Anniversary is this May.
- Dr. Charles Onwulata from ARS in on board as Director of the Office of the Chief Scientist. OCS has programs in several key areas: Global Food Security; Bioenergy; Nutrition and Childhood Obesity; Climate Change; Food Safety and Sustainable Agricultural Systems. Hiram Larew suggested inviting Charles to talk about these programs in future NERA meetings.

## **7. USDA-ARS Update – Dariusz Swietlik**

Dr. Swietlik was not able to attend this meeting. Hiram Larew informed that Dr. Chavonda Jacobs-Young has been appointed as the new Administrator for the Agricultural Research Service.

## **8. OED Report – Dan Rossi**

- NERA Planning Grant has been extremely successful. Total grants received approximately \$15.5M with NERA investment of \$44K, to date.
- OED continues to support the US-Canada climate change initiative.
- Completed assignment as member of the NERCRD Board of Directors. NERCRD is now more visible nationally. NERA financial support to the center is minimal.
- Advisor to IR4 that is undergoing renewal, had 550 responses to their survey from stakeholders. Most systematic among the NRSPs and has most stakeholder support.
- Helped with proposal submission and reviews. Rubie assisted the advisors and technical committees in meeting the deadlines.
- ESCOP support done for now as Mike Hoffmann finished his term as ESCOP Chair
- Dan Rossi will now serve as Executive Vice Chair for the Communications and Marketing Committee. Jeff Jacobsen, new North Central ED, will take over the Science and Technology Committee.
- NRSP1 – NIMSS: Latest update is that NIMSS will have to be moved from the Univ. of Maryland server. Dan Rossi is reaching out to NIFA and 3-4 universities to develop, house the database and maintain the system. IT security issue at the Univ. of Maryland had expedited the issue of moving NIMSS to another host.
- Dan Rossi supports work of two task forces appointed by ESCOP - the Futuring Steering Committee and Capital Infrastructure Task Force, both chaired by Mike Hoffmann. Details to be shared later under the ESCOP report.
- A Water Resources Working Group has been organized and is being supported by Dan Rossi. Adel Shirmohammadi suggested expanding the membership to ensure a good balance between research and extension. Objective is to build funding by putting together an integrated national program addressing water quantity and quality.
- Dan Rossi will serve as Program Chair for LEAD21 this year, and then chair the Board of Directors next year.
- He gave input in the program development for the New Deans/Directors Orientation. This year's attendance not impressive as in past years.
- Tim Phipps met with Budget and Legislative Committee and committee voted 'water' as a priority.
- Mike Hoffmann reported that on the Crop Protection budget consolidation, now falling under 406 and subject to 30% indirect costs (IDC) will result to a \$3M loss for IPM. This is an unintended consequence of the consolidation. Funding also was reduced, and defeated initial purpose of attracting more funds. Extension IPM was not subject to indirect costs, but will now be under the consolidated budget.

## **9. ESCOP Update and Discussion – Mike Hoffmann and Dan Rossi**

- Communications and Marketing
  - AHS/Deans pleased with work of kglobal and Cornerstone, and want Academic Programs included. Can this be a truly system-wide effort? AHS had indicated that there may be additional funding available. Results are in the FY14-15

budgets. Kglobal was asked to submit a proposal addressing these questions -- How are messages received and who's receiving them? Are we using the right mechanism and targeting right audience. Proposal is developed and being commented on.

- Comment was made that SNAP-ED contributed to the lowering of the obesity rate in the country, but was cut in budget. Story has to be told, by kglobal.
- Excellence Award
  - Adel Shirmohammadi and Fred Servello of the Nominations Committee will send out a request for a one-pager for nominations. Need to complete the process by July 1.
  - Electronic process will be used and ED will help gather the info.
  - Mike Hoffmann gave a background that at the APLU Meetings, Extension give out several awards and research only has one.
- Impact Reporting – With NIFA's encouragement, ESCOP decided to join ECOP in a central reporting system built by Texas A&M. Gary Thompson shared the format they would follow, and noted that they don't want faculty inputting the impacts into the system. Online training will be provided for those writing impacts in the institutions. New system will be beta-tested this month, and plan is to integrate the multistate impacts into the system.
- Futuring Task Force – had one conference call. Dan Rossi will look at other institutions to make sure effort is not being duplicated. ECOP, ESCOP, ACOP, ICOP and AHS are all represented in the Task Force. The group is defining the scope, 20-25 years out, and will build on existing papers like the ESS Science Roadmap, Natural Res. Roadmap etc. Are we organized properly to get message out? Are we responding to change in a timely manner? Dan already found out that the university presidents are not doing one, but we need to have their support to move forward. Ian Maw is working with university presidents to make sure they are on board. May ask Batelle to facilitate the process.
- Capital Infrastructure – Sonny Ramaswamy approached Mike Hoffmann when he was ESCOP Chair to conduct this survey. Sightlines was requested to submit a proposal that the group had reviewed. Group satisfied with their methodology, 196 institutions (only college of ag., veterinary, human ecology etc. included) will be surveyed, costs is \$100K and would get good data if we get 50% response. Institutions already have the data and some have worked with Sightlines.

## **10. Budget and Farm Bill Update – Hunt Shipman, Cornerstone**

Hunt's presentation - <http://www.nera.umd.edu/March2014Meeting/ShipmanMarch2014.pdf>

- FY 2014 Appropriations Results
  - Sequestration cuts restored
  - Capacity lines up modestly (\$17M)
  - AFRI up \$39.4M
  - Pest management programs/lines consolidated
- 2014 Farm Bill Results
  - Five-Year bill (FY 2014 to FY 2018)
  - System's requests adopted
  - New matching fund requirement
  - Foundation for Food and Ag

- New 1890 Univ. (Central State)
- \$600 million in mandatory funds
- On funding for the climate hubs, the Senate was in session all night long about this item. This item will fall under the overall REE budget. Hunt will report back to the directors if there are any updates.

## **11. NEED Update and Potential Partnerships – Nancy Bull, NEED Executive Director**

Nancy Bull had just started on a halftime position as the new Executive Director for the Northeast Extension Directors (NEED).

- Communication and Marketing – ECOP paid their share of the k-global assessment and will vote at their meeting in California this spring if they want to continue.
- Challenges –
  - Extension positions are not as stable as Experiment Station positions. High turnover.
    - Chris Watkins is the new director at Cornell
    - Steven Wright at UMD
    - Deb Sheely at URI
  - How to partner with ESCOP, and work along state lines?
  - Extension publications
    - Peer reviews of extension publications - how to make them stronger
    - How do we manage data we use in publications? How about those that are not grant funded? How do users know they are reliable? How to price, to do collectively? How to recover costs but share equitably among states?
    - Intellectual property issues
  - NEED website
    - Engaged two students in digital media to develop webpages and hope to finish before semester ends
    - Who will manage system when students leave? Use college resources, web development lab?
- Centennial of Extension
  - Good turnout at reception at the Hill last week attended by key legislators, congressional staff, CARET Reps, deans and directors
  - Testimony at the Hill on same day
  - What are States doing? In NH, National Geographic did a 4H story in 1948. They've located people in the story and will do an update. PA has B/W film collection in the 1920s that are being converted in useable format. Dan Rossi has high quality slides in his office and inquired how to share those. It is good to document the history and preserve these formats as we move to the digital age.
- Joint food systems workshop hosted by NERA and NEED resulted to a joint planning grant program this year. Two projects were funded. Is there interest in continuing the program? The regional committee, the Multistate Activities Committee, that reviews the proposals for the NERA planning grants have two Extension directors, Bill Hare (DC) and Bob Schrader (MA). The same committee can be used to review submissions for the joint planning grant, or a subunit, having the same number of NEED and NERA members, plus the two EDs.
  - Water resources can be next year's theme, and as it relates to climate change. Address emergency responses, water quality/quantity issues, etc.
- Nancy Bull raised the question, "Is there perception in universities that engineering is leading?" They got shale gas. Adel S. replied that he leads the Center for Sustainable Water

System at UMD, and there is one civil and one industrial engineer involved, so the College of Agric. still carry more weight. At Penn State, there is a cooperative set-up, Penn State Institutes of Energy and the Environment (PSIEE) that brings together all the colleges/departments with their own expertise, but works as a unified body. At Rutgers, the college cooperates with engineering, for example on ag related water issues, the college is front and center.

- Besides the Food Systems, other forums organized by NERA in Beltsville, MD, that were well attended by Extension experts are on the topics of Bioenergy, Functional Foods, Water Resources and Invasive Species. The purpose of the forum is to provide a venue where people can get together and start working on common areas of interest. They can then apply for planning grants, form multistate committees or apply for competitive funds.
- Discuss with NEED what other topics we can collaborate on –
  - Land Use – suggested by Tim Phipps. We have regional strength in this area.
  - Healthy Lifestyle
  - Animal Systems – nutrition, waste management, value added, alternate grazing etc. (Jennifer Pronto will give a presentation tomorrow on a \$4M national project on climate change and animal agriculture)
- 4H events and opportunities need to integrate with research. The concern is the next generation of Extension workers, how do we get them to the Land-grant universities?
- Impact reporting – collectively convince NIFA that we should one system and not POW reporting.
- Social Media – the Dragonfly (“small acts create big change”) effect – how to market using social media?

**Action:** A joint NEED-NERA committee will be formed to discuss the 2015 Joint NEED-NERA Planning Grant.

## **12. Proposed NERA Budget and Assessments for FY14-15 – Fred Servello, Chair**

Chair Fred Servello briefly presented the following-

1. History - background info
  2. Deliberation process and executive sessions leading to the recommendations
  3. Motions presented by the Executive Committee
- Unsustainability of the NERA budget - since 2002 there has been no change on the NERA funding.
  - A group composed of Jon Wraith, Mike Hoffmann and Cameron Faustman was charged last spring to look into the different budget scenarios to cover expected deficits and build up NERA’s coffers. At the summer meeting, the directors agreed on a 3-month cushion on the operating budget starting FY2015 and a 4% annual inflation adjustment.
  - Chair Servello sent out a memo on Feb. 10, outlining the process and the group’s recommendations, attaching the (1) NERA annual budget for FY13-FY14 along with two budget scenarios for FY15, one based on continuation of current assessments and a second based on proposed new assessments and (2) a table outlining proposed budgets and assessments for FY15-FY20. He requested input from the directors by Feb. 21 so the committee can work on a final budget recommendation and allow the directors to discuss the proposal at their stations prior to the meeting in Baltimore.

- The feedback received from the directors (n=10) on the draft budget was very helpful to the Executive Committee that met on Feb. 24. Chair Servello summarized the major themes that emerged from these inputs, in his March 3 email to the directors:
  - There was a strong expression of support to approve the draft FY15 budget as presented and to build in and maintain a three-month budget reserve.
  - There was more mixed opinion on including a 4% annual increase for inflation in future budgets. Inclusion of an inflation increase was endorsed by some directors as necessary to avoid similar shortfalls in the future, but considered by some to be in conflict with revenue realities at their institutions. Some directors expressed the opinion that the 4% level was high.
  - Some directors expressed concern about the magnitude of the total increase in assessments projected over the course of the five years.
  - A significant number of directors indicated directly or indirectly that we should consider beginning a review of the organization and budget model for NERA to evaluate alternatives. Two notes were often presented in conjunction with these comments. First, this suggestion did not preclude approving the draft FY15 budget and a five-year strategy based on the current model while the discussion of other organizational options plays out. Second, the recommendation to review our model is for the organization's long term need and does not reflect negatively on the staff. Dan and Rubie's performance was consistently praised.

### **Executive Committee Recommendations**

The committee decided to propose the FY15 budget as presented on February 10th, which included creating a three-month cushion and incorporating a 4% inflation increase. There would be a corresponding increase in the assessments for each institution. The proposed FY15 budget and associated assessments are outlined in the attached document.

The committee proposed that the five-year projection as presented on February 10th and as attached be used to guide budget planning in subsequent years. This projection includes the three-month cushion and a 4% inflationary increase. However, future annual budgets will be assembled based on expected needs and costs and then reviewed and voted on annually at the March meeting.

The committee also presented a motion to charge a subcommittee to evaluate the current and alternative organizational models for meeting the needs of our institutions over the long term and reporting back in a timely manner.

The following are the actions made by the Directors:

***Motion 1 from the Executive Committee: To approve the proposed FY15 NERA budget with revised assessments.*** Motion 1 was approved with 10 Yes votes, 0 No votes, and 1 director abstaining. It was clarified during the discussion that this motion was for the FY15 budget with an income of \$380,489 from assessments as presented in the budget table.

***Motion 2 from the Executive Committee: To approve the proposed 5-year budget and assessment projections (FY15-19) as a 5-year plan and commitment. There was a motion to amend Motion 2 as follows: To approve the proposed 5-year budget and assessment***



*projections (FY15-19) as a 5-year plan subject to review and approval of annual budgets.* The motion to amend was seconded and approved with 10 Yes votes, 0 No votes, and 1 director abstaining. Motion 2 as amended was then approved with 10 Yes votes, 0 No votes, and 1 director abstaining.

***Motion 3 from the Executive Committee: To create an ad hoc committee to evaluate current and alternative organization models for NERA for meeting the needs of our institutions. There was a motion to amend Motion 3 as follows: To create an ad hoc committee to evaluate current and alternative organization models for NERA for meeting the needs of our institutions and report back at the 2015 winter meeting.*** The motion to amend was seconded and approved with 11 Yes votes and 0 No votes. Motion 3 as amended was then approved with 11 Yes votes and 0 No votes.

**The Task Force to review the NERA organization and structure will be composed of Gary Thompson (PA), Brad Hillman (NJ) and Fred Servello (ME).**

**Discussion:**

- Dan Rossi noted that in the past the directors have looked at two structures for the NERA organization –
  - (1) partner with another region when the position for the North Central Executive Director opened up (when Daryl Lund was retiring). The North Central was not interested and hired a fulltime ED (Arlen Leholm).
  - (2) partner with the Northeast Extension Directors (NEED). The NERA directors felt it was not feasible as it will be complicated to divvy up the time commitment for the ED and support staff. The Western region hired ED Mike Harrington on a joint appointment with Extension, but it didn't work out because of too many Extension meetings.
- Savings from a NERA restructuring can be used for grant programs and can lower NERA assessments
- What impacts the ED workload depends on what the NERA directors want the ED to do.
  - Get more resources/grants for the region
  - Manage the multistate portfolio
  - Be an active participant in the national arena: 40% regional and 60% national
  - EDs share the national responsibilities – former ESCOP Chair Mike Hoffmann noted significant support and benefits of having the ED assisting in this national role.

**13. Cost Recovery White Paper Update and Discussion - Fred Servello, Chair**

Chair Fred Servello had analyzed the data and developed a working draft (see white paper below). Directors appreciated and thanked him for the work he had done. It will help lay the groundwork as they strategize on how to implement their own cost recovery program at their stations/colleges. He noted that some responses were vague. He asked the directors to check the data for accuracy and to share if there are rate sheets, policies and procedures already in place in their institutions. He requested additional materials and input from the directors to finalize the white paper.

Other comments were:

- Paper helps define language so no need to start from zero

- Use case study approach. Take 2-3 examples, look at best set-up and compare. Stations have different elements to address so good to have paper to look back to.
- How can we leverage this paper? Additional topics to look into were suggested:
  - How are those used for teaching handled? Are they charged separate?
  - How can federal funds be used for this purpose? How to manage direct costs, charge under F&A?
- Share paper with business office and ask what components maybe applicable and can be adopted.
- Should also look into how to run operations like a business. Are charges allowable? Are we running a subsidized operation? Faculty should include charges in their grants. “No money, no facility”. At the same time, we don’t want to discourage faculty as some do obtain equipment/facilities from grants that are then given to the station.
- Are there federal guidelines for per diem for animals? NIH has policies for animals. We can use that rate sheet, but make sure to recover our costs. The complexity is not knowing what service is calculated and what is subsidized, e.g. salary is not included.
- Fred Servello asked the directors to check the fee sheets for Table 1 for accuracy. He will also send an email asking how teaching charges are handled.

#### **14. Joint Meeting with Academic Program Directors – Cameron Faustman and Dan Rossi**

Training of students need to be different for those heading to the Land-grants. Nancy Bull had raised the issue earlier with Extension. Who will replace the people around this table? The Southern region directors had met jointly with their academic counterparts and shared their agenda. That agenda had been modified for the Northeast by Cameron Faustman and Tracy Hoover (PennState). Two ACOP – Cameron F. and Tracy H. and two Research- Gary Thompson and Dan Rossi, will develop a program and invite Extension to join. A joint meeting next year with the Academic directors will be explored by Cameron and Dan.

#### **15. 2014 Joint NC-NE Summer Session Program – Tim Phipps and Dan Rossi**

<https://host.cals.wisc.edu/nenc/>

Tim Phipps reported that planning is well underway for the joint summer meeting with the North Central.

- University of Wisconsin will host the meeting on July 13-15 in Madison, WI.
- There will be a fermentation tour on Sunday.
- The directors were surveyed and the topics for the general sessions are:
  - Working Effectively with Legislators
  - Future of Agriculture and Natural Resources–Context of Climate
  - Future of Agriculture and Natural Resources–Water Quality & Nutrient Management
- The breakouts will be follow-up discussions in smaller groups on the general session topics. Participants can choose what topic they want.
- CARET Reps. want something concrete (like a project/program collaboration) from these meetings that can be followed up and reported on at the next meeting.
- Our Northeast directors (ME, VT and NH) left the last joint meeting (summer 2012 in VT) with ideas from our North Central colleagues that they were able to implement back home.
- NCRA and NERA will again meet jointly. Please send suggestions for topics to Chair Fred Servello and/or Dan Rossi.

#### **16. 2014 ESS/SAES/ARD Workshop Program – Dan Rossi**

- The meeting will be held at Jekyll Island, Georgia, on Sept. 30 to October 2.
- The program is still being developed.
- The NERA Meeting will be for three hours.
- Dan Rossi asked the directors for Best Practices topics they want discussed at the meeting.
  - Water and nutrient management – an example is the Chesapeake Bay Group as suggested by Mark Rieger. Adel S. is meeting with this group on March 25-26 in Annapolis, MD. The theme is Water Quality Trends in the Chesapeake Bay. Position ourselves as a group of institutions working collaboratively and ready to go after the water challenge grant. Jim Shortle (PA) is working on the physical and biological relationships and policy aspects. Brad Hillman noted a fertilizer legislation 3 years ago that resulted to fertilizer training program for the ag side and lawn care people. Outreach is important. Amy Shober, Extension Nutrient Management and Environmental Quality Specialist and other experts at UDEL, work in this area.
  - Communicating Science. Change the story - change the world, noted Nancy Bull. Is there benefit in changing the story for CARET? Invite a legislator for this topic.

**Action:** Dan Rossi, Tim Phipps and Nancy Bull will bring these topics to the table.

### 17. Station Updates – All

Each Director gave a brief update on executive departures/hires in their institutions, reorganizations and budget situations for FY2014-15.

### 18. Multistate Activities Committee Report and Discussion – Tim Phipps, MAC Chair

<http://www.nera.umd.edu/workshop/MACReportMarch2014.pdf>

- Multistate Research Proposals (4) and Requests to Write (2)

**Action:** Motion made to approve item nos. 1-6 of the MAC Report as follows, was seconded and passed:

1. Approve proposal NE\_TEMP2162: Hydropedology of Vernal Pool Systems, 10/2014-9/2019 [Renewal of NE1038]
2. Approve proposal NE\_TEMP2143: Changing the Health Trajectory for Older Adults through Effective Diet and Activity Modifications, 10/2014-9/2019 [Renewal of NE1039]
3. Conditional approval of proposal NE\_TEMP2161: Environmental Impacts of Equine Operations, 10/2014-9/2019 [Renewal of NE1041]. Project needs to include an economist and an additional objective to determine the impact of equine outreach programs.
4. Conditional approval of proposal NE\_TEMP2144: Poultry Production Systems and Well-being: Sustainability for Tomorrow, 10/2014-9/2019 [Renewal of NE1042]. Need to clarify the economics component of the project. Impacts of costs and benefits of technology to the industry are critical and the committee wants those clearly demonstrated and the economist(s) identified. Advisor Cameron Faustman will follow up with the tech. committee.
5. Approve the Request to Write a Proposal entitled, Adaptive Management for Improved Nutrient Management, 10/2014-9/2019 [Renewal of NEERA1002]. The

tech. committee should look at nutrient management and energy savings without sacrificing production costs.

6. Approve the Request to Write a Proposal entitled, Biology, Ecology & Management of Emerging Disease Vectors, 10/2014-9/2019 [Renewal of NE1043]. This project grew out of a mosquito project in New Jersey. The Directors agreed that they should include ticks and look at impacts of climate change, and reach out to folks at Penn State, Vermont and Canada.

- Regional Off-the-top Funding:
  - NE9: Conservation and Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources
    - FY2014 Budget Request = \$ 240,750
    - FY2015 Budget Request = \$ 247,727

**Discussion:**

An incremental increase during the 5-year period (2013-2018) was approved by NERA because NE9 was lagging behind the other regional germplasm projects. Last year (2013), NERA recommended reducing the funding equivalent to the Hatch reduction, but USDA-NIFA gave it its full allocation. Other regions recommended full funding for their projects. Tom Burr suggested looking into the NE9 operations and look at their business process (staffing, no. of accessions and operational costs) for the next 5 years. He will work with Dr. Young and Dr. Bretting and will submit his recommendations to NERA.

**Action:** MAC suggested that since FY2014 level is restored, that the Directors approve the request at \$240,750, and also the FY2015 budget with the stipulation that Hatch funding will not be reduced. A motion was made to approve MAC's recommendation, and it was seconded and passed.

- NE59: Multistate Research Coordination, Northeastern Region
  - FY 2015 Budget Request = \$ 40,788

**Discussion:** Penn State pays fringe and subsidizes the Center. The NERCRD Board had recommended that the Center needs additional funding. USDA-NIFA had asked the Centers to come up with requests and justifications for additional funding.

**Action:** A motion made to approve the FY2014 budget request was seconded and passed.

- NRSPs

Tim Phipps, as MAC Chair, will represent NERA at the NRSP Review Committee.

**NEW: NRSP\_TEMP321, "Database Resources for Crop Genomics, Genetics and Breeding Research,"**

There are a number of databases out there with different structures. Is this going to be yet another database? Washington State Univ. has E-Plant and was designed for this purpose. It may be the same project as Dr. Dorrie Main at Washington State University (WSU) will be the Project Director for this new NRSP.

Why do we have one for animal genome, and none for plant genome? The NRSP8 for animal genome works well, and a suggestion was made that the new project should work with NRSP8 to ensure success.

Will new project include specialty crops?

It would be good if the proposal intends to bring together all existing databases. Dan Rossi will raise these issues with the other EDs, and also Tim Phipps at the NRSP-RC meeting this summer.

- How unifying is this new project? How will it interface with other databases. How much coordination role will project play?
- Is there plan to include specialty crops?

**RENEWING: NRSP\_TEMP003 (NRSP-3), “The National Atmospheric Deposition Program (NADP).”**

NRSP3 is down to minimum support of \$50K. They bring in more external funding and have been very successful in leveraging NRSP support.

**RENEWING: NRSP\_TEMP301 (NRSP-7), “A National Agricultural Program for Minor Use Animal Drugs.”**

NRSP7 has funding problems. This project is requesting one year of funding to explore additional and alternative funding models.

It was a spin-off of IR-4, but it did not develop industry support like IR-4. Should it return to IR-4 now that they have some commodity collaboration?

The Directors were hesitant to approve additional funding. They would like to see NRSP7 in their new proposal as a much improved organization, perhaps following the IR-4 model. NRSP7 had not done much to seek industry support, unlike the animal nutrition project that is working hard to get industry funding.

**Midterm Review of NRSP-1, “National Information Management and Support System (NIMSS)”**

Due to the current problems NIMSS is facing, the Directors should expect an increase in the budget request for NRSP1. It is hard to estimate at this point how much additional costs NIMSS will entail when it is transferred to a new server/host. 3-4 institutions have expressed interest in hosting NIMSS and re-designing the system.

Other NRSP concerns—

**NRSPs Cap of \$2M**

- On the new NRSP proposal, another concern is the budget requested at \$400K. The ESS approved a motion to establish a cap on NRSPs that we could spend up to \$2M on NRSPs. This proposal will exceed that limit if we continue all other projects. Currently, there is about \$244K available to fund a new NRSP project.

**Timing of Midterm Reviews for NRSPs**

- Timing of NRSP reviews is stated in the guidelines to be on its third year. It is a matter of interpretation by the region in charge of the NRSP-RC. Ideally, it should be conducted towards the end of the third year or beginning of the fourth year, as this is the time when the technical committee is looking at future years and planning for their renewal project.

- 2014 National Multistate Research Award

**Action:** Tom Burr will prepare a write-up for NE9 and submit it as a nomination.

- 2014 NERA Planning Grant

Eleven proposals were received and the following two were selected for funding:

- NE1401 - Focusing Chemical Ecology on Agricultural Pest Management Priorities (Funding Requested = \$ 9,750)
- NE1410 - Organic Lawn Care Practices for the Northeast (Funding Requested = \$ 5,600)

**Action:** The planning grant has been very successful based on the rate of return (see summary table below). The Directors would like the program to continue in 2015. Dan Rossi asked for input if there are particular areas or topics that they want the 2015 planning grant to focus on.

### **19. US-Canada Climate Change Collaboration and Other Initiatives – Mike Hoffmann**

Mike's presentation - <http://www.nera.umd.edu/March2014Meeting/HoffmannMarch2014.pdf>

### **20. Climate Change and Animal Agriculture – Jennifer Lynne Pronto, Cornell University**

Jennifer's presentation - <http://www.nera.umd.edu/March2014Meeting/ProntoMarch2014.pdf>

### **21. Jack and the Beanstalk: A Modern Day Secret to Success – Kathleen Liang, Univ. of Vermont**

Kathleen's presentation - <http://www.nera.umd.edu/March2014Meeting/LiangMarch2014.pdf>

Three foundational grants, as follows, were funded as a result of the NERA Planning Grant that allowed the group to get together and work on their proposals.

(1) USDA Foundational Program, Entrepreneurship Division (PD and PI - Kathleen Liang at UVM, Co-PIs - Oregon State University, Penn State University, City University of New York, University of Maryland at Eastern shore)

#### **Understanding and Designing Long-Term Resilience in the US Food System: the Role of Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Supporting Regional Food Networks** **\$500,000 July 2014 – June 2017**

This project will introduce a novel approach to identify, characterize, link, and evaluate the entrepreneurial potential and innovativeness of Regional Food Networks by integrating social, economic, and ecological factors. The focus is to study integrated and entrepreneurial/innovative concepts of RFNs and their contributions to resilience at both the enterprise level and the community level, which directly relates to identifying new and creative economic and social opportunities for rural communities and food security.

(2) USDA Foundational Program, Rural Development Division (Co-PI – Kathleen Liang at UVM, with PI in University of New Hampshire and Co-PI at University of Maine)

#### **Sustaining and Enhancing Local Agriculture in Rural Areas: Assessing Key Producer and Consumer Issues in Northern New England** **\$500,000 July 2014 – June 2017**

This project is designed to assess the major issues and constraints faced by suppliers and marketers of produce grown in rural northern New England (Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont). We will identify the locally produced fruits and vegetables with the highest probability of profitable production in northern New England, and to identify issues in consumer preferences for local/organic/sustainably grown produce and the potential premium these products command. We will construct an integrated extension component in all three states

which will coordinate involvement of stakeholder groups, and provide foundation for the consumer surveys and integrate project results into current and future extension programming dealing with small producers and marketers in this predominantly rural region.

(3) USDA Foundational Program, Small and Medium Sized Farm Division (Co-PI – Kathleen Liang at UVM, PI-Mary Peabody and Co-PI Jason Parker both at UVM)

### **Examining Farm Labor Decisions on Long-term Profitability and Farm Enterprise Development**

**\$500,000 July 2014 – June 2017**

The goal of this project is to identify the relationships among farm labor decision-making, profitability, household dynamics (goals and needs, demographics), optimal diversification balance (i.e. number of unique enterprises) and scale of production, marketing channel, and maintenance or enhancement of quality of life on small and mid-size farms in rural communities such as Vermont and other states.

### **22. USDA Climate Hubs – Howard Skinner, ARS**

Howard Skinner reported that USDA had selected the regions for the climate hubs:

[http://www.usda.gov/oce/climate\\_change/regional\\_hubs.htm](http://www.usda.gov/oce/climate_change/regional_hubs.htm)

USDA's regional hubs will deliver information to farmers, ranchers and forest landowners to help them adapt to climate change and weather variability. The Hubs will build capacity within USDA to provide information and guidance on technologies and risk management practices at regional and local scales.

The idea of developing an inventory of capacity in the arena of climate change for the region was discussed. Dan Rossi noted that a previous inventory was developed in 2007-08 for the area of renewable energy and conservation. Our interest was to identify human and facility capacity to support research, teaching and extension programs. An online survey similar to this can be used for this purpose. Dan Rossi will send the info on the energy survey to Howard Skinner.

### **23. Nominations Committee Report – Adel Shirmohammadi**

- Advisor assignments to multistate research projects/activities
  - **Adel Shirmohammadi (MD) for NE1044:** Whole farm dairy and beef systems: gaseous emissions, P management, organic production, and pasture based production [10/2010-09/2015]
  - **Susan Brown (NYG) for NE1231:** Collaborative Potato Breeding and Variety Development Activities to Enhance Farm Sustainability in the Eastern US [10/2012-09/2017]
  - **Theodore Andreadis (CTNH) for NE1043:** Biology, Ecology & Management of Emerging Disease Vectors [08/2009-09/2014]
  - **Mark Rieger (DE) for NE1040:** Plant-Parasitic Nematode Management as a Component of Sustainable Soil Health Programs in Horticultural and Field Crop Production Systems [10/2009-09/2016]
- Committee assignments
  - Tim Phipps (WV), re-appointed to MAC for another term (2013-2016) and as MAC Chair until Sept. 30, 2014 and NRSP Review Committee Representative
  - Cameron Faustman (CTS), MAC Member (2014-2017)

**Action:** The motion made to approve the above recommendations by the Nominations Committee was seconded and approved.

**Note:** After the meeting, **Michael O'Neill (RI)** was appointed as Extension Co-Advisor for NEERA1004: Northeast Region Technical Committee on Integrated Pest Management [10/2011-09/2016]

## **24. Resolutions Committee Report – Tom Burr**

**Action:** The motion to approve the following resolutions of appreciation to Stephen Herbert (MA) and Kirby Stafford III (CTNH) read by Tom Burr was seconded and passed.

### **Resolution of Appreciation to Stephen Herbert**

WHEREAS, Dr. Stephen Herbert has distinguished himself as Associate Dean, Director of the Massachusetts Center for Agriculture and Associate Director of the Massachusetts Agricultural Experiment Station (AES) since 2009, and Director of UMASS Extension since 2011, and

WHEREAS, Dr. Herbert has played a significant role in the reorganization of the College of Natural Sciences at UMASS having taken the leadership of the new Center for Agriculture. Under his direction, the agriculture, food and environmental programs of the Center for Agriculture has gained stature and visibility, and are well received by the stakeholders, and

WHEREAS, Dr. Herbert is well known for his work in solar photovoltaic research having built the first research project in the US examining dual use of farmland and solar PV. He helped obtain funding for an industry partner to install solar PV and STEM education in high schools, and

WHEREAS, Dr. Herbert provided vision and leadership for a successful UMASS Agricultural Learning Center involving more than 40 acres of farmland near campus that is used as an agricultural laboratory for undergraduate students and extension. This program had garnered significant private and public support and had attracted funding for other related programs such as the preservation of the 1894 Horse Barn and Blaisdell House.

WHEREAS, Dr. Herbert has ably represented his institution in various state and regional councils, commissions, commodity advisory board and committees while wearing both Research and Extension hats. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development. He also served as a member of the Multistate Activities Committee from 2010 to 2011.

WHEREAS, Dr. Herbert served as Advisor for multistate project NE1044: Whole farm dairy and beef systems: gaseous emissions, P management, organic production, and pasture based production, and as the Extension Co-Advisor for Coordinating Committee NEERA1004: Northeast Region Technical Committee on Integrated Pest Management, and,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors at their meeting in Baltimore, Maryland, on March 12, 2014, express sincere appreciation to Dr. Herbert for his dedicated service and many valuable



contributions to the Association and the Land-grant system, and wish him much success in his future professional activities and personal endeavors.

March 12, 2014

Signed by

Fred Servello, Chair

Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors

### **Resolution of Appreciation to Kirby Stafford III**

WHEREAS, Dr. Kirby Stafford III has distinguished himself as Vice Director of the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station since 2004, having started his career at the Station as Assistant Scientist in 1987 and rising through the ranks to Vice Director/Chief Scientist/State Entomologist in 2004, and

WHEREAS, Dr. Stafford III is an expert on the ecology and control of the blacklegged tick, *Ixodes scapularis*, carrier of Lyme disease, human babesiosis and human ehrlichiosis. His expertise also includes the biological control of fly pests in livestock, and poultry pest management, and

WHEREAS, Dr. Stafford III served as Chair of the Multistate Activities Committee since 2010, and served two three-year terms as MAC member since 2008. He also served as Advisor for multistate projects NE1043: Biology, Ecology & Management of Emerging Disease Vectors, and NE1231: Collaborative Potato Breeding and Variety Development Activities to Enhance Farm Sustainability in the Eastern US, and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors at their meeting in Baltimore, Maryland, on March 12, 2014, express sincere appreciation to Dr. Stafford III for his dedicated service and many valuable contributions to the Association and the Land-grant system, and wish him much success in his future professional activities and personal endeavors.

March 12, 2014

Signed by

Fred Servello, Chair

Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors

### **25. Future Meetings – Dan Rossi**

- North Central/Northeast Joint Summer Session – July 13-15, 2014 at The Madison Concourse Hotel, Madison, WI  
<https://host.cals.wisc.edu/nenc/>
- Joint COPs Meeting, Sheraton San Diego Hotel and Marina, Sand Diego, CA , July 23-24, 2014  
<http://www.cvent.com/events/2014-joint-cops-summer-meeting/event-summary-70cf486eeb814b49933517fe9688f37a.aspx>
- ESS Annual Meeting and Workshop, Jekyll Island Club Hotel, GA, September 30 – October 2, 2014

<http://escop.ncsu.edu/Docs/2014%20ESS-AES-ARD%20Hotel,%20Registration%20and%20Travel%20Information-1.pdf>

- APLU Meeting, Hilton Bonnet Creek Resort, Orlando, FL, November 2-4, 2014  
<http://www.cvent.com/events/aplu-127th-annual-meeting/event-summary-fe9b397c57c94d85b1d9591e16a36261.aspx>

## **26. Summary Comments and Adjournment – Fred Servello, Chair**

Chair Servello thanked Dan Rossi and Rubie Mize for their assistance in preparing for the meeting. He praised the level of cooperation and collaboration among our directors, and thanked everyone for a productive meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:52pm.

**NERA Meeting**  
**March 11-12, 2014**  
**Admiral Fell Inn, Baltimore, MD**

**Report of the Office of the Executive Director**  
**September 26, 2013 – March 7, 2014**

NERA and Regional Activities

- NERA Planning Grants Program
  - Supported 2013 award recipients
  - Announced 2014 program
  - Supported the MAC in the review of the 2014 proposals
  - Notified the 2014 award recipients
  - Supported the 2014 award recipients
- Eastern US and Canada Climate Change Collaboration
  - Continue to coordinate with the NC US and Canada Climate Team through monthly conference calls
  - Assisted in the planning and organizing of a climate change workshop focused on improving partnerships and regional communications networks, December 9-10, 2013 in Syracuse, NY
- 2014 Northeast Summer Session
  - Supporting the planning for the joint Northeast-North Central summer session scheduled for July 13-15, 2014 in Madison, WI
- NERA Chair Support
  - Assisted in the development of the March 2014 NERA meeting agenda and compiled agenda materials
    - Prepare NERA Chair's Interim Actions report
    - Prepare NERA ESCOP Report
    - Prepare NERA OED report
    - Prepare 2014-15 NERA Budget Proposal
  - Assisted in the development of the March 2014 NERA Executive Committee meeting agenda
- NERA Surveys
  - Supported Dr. Servello in updating results of the cost recovery survey
  - Supported Dr. Faustman in preparation of a proposal for a joint NERA/NEAPS meeting focusing on the interrelationships between teaching and research
- Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development
  - Planned and chaired annual NERCRD Board of Directors Meeting, October 16-18, 2013, College Park, MD
  - Completed term as Chair of the Board of Directors
- Northeast Regional Aquaculture Center Mid-Atlantic
  - Member of Board of Directors

- Approved as necessary appointments to the Industry and Technical Advisory Committees
- Reviewed NRAC 2014 Full Grant and Mini-grant Proposals
- Participated in NRAC Annual Meeting, January 7-8, 2014, College Park, MD
- IR-4 (NRSP-4)
  - Serve as Regional Administrative Advisor
  - Assisting in the planning for the development of a strategic planning effort and a new five year NRSP-4 proposal
- NE-1049
  - Serve as Administrative Advisor
- Multistate Activities Committee (MAC) Support
  - Assisted MAC Chair in developing agenda and compiling materials for the MAC meeting
  - Assisted advisors and technical committee members in submitting their proposals and participation forms and coordinated peer reviews for the following projects:
    1. NE\_TEMP2162: Hydropedology of Vernal Pool Systems, 10/2014-9/2019 [Renewal of NE1038]
    2. NE\_TEMP2143: Changing the Health Trajectory for Older Adults through Effective Diet and Activity Modifications, 10/2014-9/2019 [Renewal of NE1039]
    3. NE\_TEMP2161: Environmental Impacts of Equine Operations, 10/2014-9/2019 [Renewal of NE1041]
    4. NE\_TEMP2144: Poultry Production Systems and Well-being: Sustainability for Tomorrow, 10/2014-9/2019 [Renewal of NE1042]
  - Assisted advisors and technical committee members in submitting the following Requests to Write:
    1. Adaptive Management for Improved Nutrient Management, 10/2014-9/2019 [Renewal of NEERA1002]
    2. Biology, Ecology & Management of Emerging Disease Vectors, 10/2014-9/2019 [Renewal of NE1043]

### National Activities

- ESCOP Chair Support
  - Assisted in the planning, organizing and development of the agenda of ESS Business meeting, September 25, 2013 in Columbus, OH
  - Completed term as the Executive Vice-Chair of ESCOP
- ESCOP Science and Technology Committee Chair Support
  - Continued to serve as the Executive Vice-Chair of the Science and Technology Committee
  - Prepared a committee reports for the September 25, 2013 ESS meeting, November 11, 2013 ESCOP Executive Committee meeting, and the March 3, 2014 ESCOP meeting
  - Prepared monthly reports for ESCOP CAC calls

- Assisted in organizing and preparing an agenda for a Committee conference call
- ESS Awards Programs
  - Prepared and distributed announcement for the Experiment Station Section Awards for Excellence in Leadership
  - Prepared and distributed announcement for the 2014 Excellence in Multistate Research Awards Program
  - Provided overall coordination to the program
- ESS/CES Communications and Marketing Committee Co-Chair Support
  - Served as the ESS Executive Director point person
  - Assist in planning and developing agenda for monthly Executive Committee and Full Committee conference calls
  - Assist in planning and developing agenda for Committee meeting, March 2, 2014
  - Prepared monthly reports for ESCOP CAC calls
  - Prepared a committee report for the March 3, 2014 ESCOP meeting
- NRSP-1 Management Committee
  - Provide support to the NRSP-1 Management Committee
  - Facilitated quarterly conference calls of the NRSP-1 Management Committee
- NIMSS
  - Coordinating with UMD to rewrite the NIMSS programming
  - Serve as regional NIMSS Coordinator
  - Provided national level support for the operations of NIMSS
  - Oversee upgrades to NIMSS
  - Supported NIFA Management Dashboard access to NIMSS data
- National Futuring Steering Committee
  - Supported chair (Mike Hoffmann) of the Steering Committee
  - Assist in planning and developing the agenda for Committee conference calls
- Capital Infrastructure Task Force
  - Supported chair (Mike Hoffmann) of the Task Force
  - Assist in planning and developing the agenda for Task Force conference calls
- National Water Program
  - Assist in the development of a proposal for a National Water Program
- New Deans/Directors Orientation
  - Assisted in the development of the program of the New Deans/Directors Orientation Session, December 4-5, 2013
- LEAD 21 Program
  - Serve on Board of Directors (completed term as Secretary/Treasurer, now serving as Program Chair)
  - Reviewed applications for grant support
- Program Monitoring and Feedback
  - Farm Bill development
  - NIFA budget developments
  - NIFA competitive grants programs
  - NIFA operational web and teleconferences
  - NIFA Hatch MRF utilization

## Travel

- September 23-26, 2013 – ESS/SAES/ARD Workshop, Columbus, OH
- October 16-18, 2013 – NERCRD Board of Directors Annual Meeting, College Park, MD
- November 11, 2013 – ESCOP Executive Committee Meeting, Washington, DC
- November 21-22, 2013 – REE Action Plan Meeting, Washington, DC
- December 3-5, 2013 – Meeting with NIFA on REEport and New Deans/Directors Orientation, Washington, DC
- December 19, 2013 – National Water Resources Initiative Meeting, Linthicum, MD
- January 7-8, 2014 – NRAC Board of Directors Annual Meeting, College Park, MD
- February 17-19, 2014 – ESCOP Social Science Subcommittee Annual Meeting, Washington, DC
- March 2-5, 2014 – ESS/CES Communications and Marketing Committee Meeting, AHS/CARET Annual Meeting, ESCOP Meeting, ESCOP Budget and Legislative Meeting, IR-4 Project Management Committee Meeting, and Cooperative Extension 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Hill Reception, Washington, DC

**NERA Meeting**  
**March 11-12, 2014**  
**Admiral Fell Inn, Baltimore, MD**

**Experiment Station Committee on Organization and Policy Report**  
**Sept. 2013 - March 2014**

ESCOP Officers

- Chair - Steve Slack
- Chair-Elect – Robert Shulstad
- Past Chair – Mike Hoffmann
- Executive Vice Chair – Jeff Jacobsen
- ESS Rep to BAA Policy Board – Steve Slack
- Budget and Legislative Committee Chair – Bret Hess
- Communications & Marketing Committee Co-Chair – Nancy Cox
- Science & Technology Committee Chair – John Russin
- NRSP Review Committee Chair – Bret Hess

NERA Representatives to:

- ESCOP:
  - Adel Shirmohammadi
  - Fred Servello
  - Tim Phipps
- ESCOP Budget & Legislative Committee
  - Tim Phipps
  - Gary Thompson (Incoming Chair)
- ESS/CES Communications and Marketing Committee
  - Rick Rhodes
- ESCOP Science & Technology Committee
  - Cameron Faustman
  - Tom Burr
- NRSP Review Committee
  - Fred Servello (as Acting MAC Chair)

Meetings

- The ESCOP Executive Committee met on November 11, 2013 at the APLU Annual Meeting in Washington, DC.
- ESCOP met on March 3, 2014 at the AHS/CARET Annual Meeting in Washington, DC.

- ESCOP will next meet at the Joint COPs meeting, Sheraton San Diego Hotel and Marina, Sand Diego, CA , July 23-24, 2014
- ESS Annual Meeting and Workshop, Jekyll Island Club Hotel, GA, September 30 – October 2, 2014
- APLU Meeting, Hilton Bonnet Creek Resort, Orlando, FL, November 2-4, 2014

#### Budget and Legislative Committee

The ESCOP Budget and Legislative Committee monitored the FY2014 USDA-NIFA budget and is providing input into the FY2015 budget development through the BAA Budget and Advocacy Committee. The Committee developed a budget priority setting survey to seek input from the Directors to provide input into the FY2016 budget. The Committee also monitored and provided input into the Farm Bill development through the BAA Committee on Legislation and Policy (CLP).

#### Communications and Marketing Committee

The AES/CES Communications and Marketing Committee continues to work closely with kglobal and Cornerstone on a targeted educational effort to increase awareness and support for basic and applied research and transformational education provided by Land Grant Universities through Agricultural Experiment Stations and Cooperative Extension. A number of communications mechanisms are used including the AgisAmerica website, social media, earned media and direct contact through local connections to targeted audiences. The Directors voted at the Fall ESS meeting to commit another three years of support for the AES/CES Communication and Marketing Project. We are into the second year of a two year partnership with ECOP to support the Project. ECOP has not yet made a decision to extend the partnership. The Committee is monitoring and providing input into the development of the ESCOP-ECOP Impacts Training program. The Committee is also examining the following issues: handling of kglobal reports; future scale and partners in the Communications and Marketing Program; and themes for the coming year.

#### Science and Technology Committee

The announcement for the 2014 Multistate Research Award has been forwarded to the Directors. Nominations were due by February 28, 2014 to the regional association offices. The regional associations will select regional winners and these will be forwarded to the Committee for its review and recommendation for the national winner. The Committee will meet in May and forward its recommendation to the ESCOP Executive Committee. The announcement for the five regional 2014 Leadership Excellence Awards has been forwarded to the Directors. Nominations were due by February 1, 2014 to the regional association offices. Copies of the Science Roadmap brochure have been distributed to various individuals and organizations. CARET members will receive copies at their March meeting.

#### National Research Support Review Committee

The NRSP Review Committee will meet in June to consider renewing two projects (NRSP-3 and NRSP-7), one new project (Database Resources for Crop Genomics, Genetics and Breeding Research), and one mid-term review (NRSP-1).



## Other Activities

- Impact Reporting
  - ECOP has developed a Strategic Opportunities and Measuring Excellence System
  - Scott Cummings of TAMU developed and has maintained Extension's metrics database since 2007 and over the past year, has worked on their impact database
  - ESCOP has decided to join ECOP in utilizing the impact database to make available for search and retrieval impact statements of AES research.
  - The estimated cost to ESS for development of the research impact portion of the database at TAMU will be \$12,500 for the first year. This will include development, testing, and implementation of the system; ESS's share of developing a 'Land-Grant' public front-end web site; and other modifications of the current sites to reflect the whole land-grant system. Continuing maintenance cost for ESS is expected to be approximately \$2,000 to \$2,500 total per year after the development phase is complete.
  
- Pest Management Working Group
  - In 2012, the BAA formed a national Working Group on Pest Management to develop recommendations to strengthen the nation's responses to crop production challenges and the threats of disease, insect pests, and weeds.
  - The Working Group's recommendations focus on improving support for the agricultural, as well as the urban sector, through the identification of several core programs ("Essential Elements") within a new Pest Management Program.
  - The recommendations also address better collaboration and streamlining of a number of important, but currently standalone, NIFA budget lines.
  
- Water Resources Working Group
  - The Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities' Board on Agricultural Assembly (APLU-BAA) and its Policy Board of Directors has formed a national Water Resources Working Group.
  - The Working Group will develop a report that will: (1) identify and prioritize water quality and quantity issues that our Land Grant University have a critical role in addressing; and (2) prioritize the essential elements of an integrated response that includes research, education and extension missions of the universities.
  
- Futuring Task Force
  - ESCOP proposed to the BAA PBD and the Board approved embarking on a system-wide futuring initiative to help position the Land-grant System to address the grand challenges facing society, now and as they intensify in the future. This futuring initiative will not duplicate the roadmap and strategic planning efforts made by the various BAA Sections in recent years, but rather use those and other relevant plans as a starting point to develop a long-range integrated vision for the system 20 - 25 years in the future.
  - The first step was the appointment of National Futures Steering Committee consisting of representation from the various BAA sections. The charge to the Steering Committee is to determine charge, goals, outputs, timeline and composition of a Futuring Task Force that would guide the initiative.
  - The Steering Committee met by conference call on February 25<sup>th</sup>.

- Capital Infrastructure
  - Sonny Ramaswamy has requested an estimate of the backlog of capital infrastructure needs among APLU institutions. ESCOP was asked to coordinate a process to develop such an estimate. A Capital Infrastructure Task Force with representation from all elements of our system was appointed.
  - The charge to the Task Force is to work with a firm (Sightlines) that specializes in the measurement and strategic assessment of facilities assets to design a survey to collect information to allow Sightlines to extrapolate capital infrastructure needs on our campuses.
  - Sightlines has prepared a proposal to conduct the survey and to generate an estimate of total needs. The Committee met by conference call on February 25<sup>th</sup> to discuss the proposal. It is recommending that the proposal be forwarded to NIFA.

## **Experiment Station Section Awards for Excellence in Leadership**

### **Purpose**

To recognize those who have served the Regional Associations, the Experiment Station Section (ESS) and/or the national Land-Grant System with exemplary distinction. Through this person's leadership, he/she shall have personified the highest level of excellence by enhancing the cause and performance of the Regional Associations and ESS in achieving their missions and the Land-Grant ideal.

### **Award and Presentation**

Up to five awards, one from each ESS region, will be presented each year. The awards shall be signified by the creation of a suitably inscribed piece approved by the Experiment Station Committee on Organization and Policy (ESCOP) Executive Committee and presented to the recipient or his/her proxy at the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities (APLU) annual meeting and will be further memorialized by a resolution to be read during the ESS fall meeting. The home institution shall be made aware of the recognition by formal letter from the ESCOP Chair to the Chief Executive Officer of the institution and its governing body (Board of Trustees, Board of Regents, etc.) with others copied as appropriate. The expense of the actual award recognition will be borne by the Regional Association while the expenses associated with travel of the winners to the APLU meeting will be borne by the Associations and/or home institutions.

### **Eligibility**

Eligible for this award are former or current State Agricultural Experiment Station (SAES) leaders who have provided service as assistant director, associate director, director, or as chief operating officers with equivalent but variant titles (e.g. vice chancellor, associate vice chancellor, associate vice president, dean for research) and/or as a regional executive director. This award is distinctive in its expectations and not necessarily coincident with retirement, election to specific office or any other specific professional benchmark.

### **Nominations**

Nominations shall include a statement of accomplishments prepared by the nominator(s) unbeknownst to the candidate and supported by letters from three (3) to five (5) former or current members of the ESS. Other letters of support from the home and other institutions may be submitted with the discretion of the nominator(s). Nominations shall address the contributions of the nominee to the land-grant ideal through service to include offices held, committee assignments, other service and, in particular special and extraordinary service activities. Such service should include for example: active participation in affairs of the Regional Association and/or ESCOP; regional, national and/or international special assignments with distinctive performance that has advanced the mission of the ESS and the land-grant ideal; and a record of

significant accomplishments in the agricultural sciences. Specific examples of contributions may include the enhancement of cooperation across institutions, creation of model administrative systems useable by other institutions, and development of new strategic directions for the Regional Associations or the ESS. Although testimony as to the nominee's contributions to his/her home state and institution are welcomed, they are not pivotal to assessing the contributions to the section and related activities.

### **Submission and Review**

Nominations for the recognition should be submitted to the Regional Associations by February 1 of each year. The Regional Associations will review the nominations and will select one regional winner. The Associations will submit the names of the winners to the ESCOP Chair by July 1 and he in turn will forward them to APLU. The winners will be announced at the fall ESS meeting and the awards will be presented at the APLU annual meeting.

Date: February 10, 2014

To: NERA Directors

From: Fred Servello, Chair

NERA

Associate Dean, College of Natural Sciences, Forestry, and Agriculture

University of Maine

**Subject: Request for Input on NERA Budget Planning**

I am writing as the current chair of NERA to request your input on our organization's future budgets and institutional assessments. A subcommittee of directors was asked to propose a five-year budget plan to address the anticipated operating deficit for FY15 and to put future budgets on a sustainable path. I am seeking your input on this proposal as part of a two-step process to approve a FY15 budget and establish a five-year budget plan at the winter meeting of NERA on March 11-12, 2014. The five-year plan will guide future budget development; however, please note that each annual budget will still require directors' approval at our annual winter meeting.

I have described the current status of NERA budgets and explained the need for a new budget plan below. You should have received the following supporting materials: 1) the NERA annual budgets for FY13-FY14 along with two budget scenarios for FY15, one based on continuation of current assessments and a second based on proposed new assessments and 2) a table outlining proposed budgets and assessments for FY15-FY20.

I am requesting your input on the proposed budget plan and projected future assessments. Please send all responses directly to me at fred.servello@maine.edu. I will compile all comments, remove institutional identifiers, and otherwise keep institutional identities confidential. Your compiled comments will be shared with the NERA Executive Committee as it prepares a final FY15 budget proposal and five-year plan for discussion and a vote on March 12<sup>th</sup>. The Executive Committee's revised budget and plan will be sent to all directors prior to the March meeting.

Current Situation

- The NERA FY14 budget currently has a projected shortfall between assessment revenues and expenditures. This is being covered by use of reserve funds accumulated over several years. The budget deficit (annual revenue vs. expenses) for FY15 is projected to be \$84,388.
- The remaining carryforward from FY14 into FY15 is projected to be \$130,000; hence \$45,612 would remain if the carryforward was used to address the expected deficit assuming no change in assessments. NERA has maintained a positive budget balance for a number of years, which has been used to support its operating budget. There will soon be no budget reserves to absorb unexpected costs should they occur.

- NERA revenue from assessments has not increased since 2002. In that year it increased 1.3%. There have been no other significant sources of revenue to support annual budgets during that period.
- The current budget is 89% salary and benefits. A substantial increase in the fringe benefit rate at Rutgers University last year raised NERA's expenses relatively suddenly. There also was a recent increase in salaries, the first in a number of years.

#### Proposed Budget Description

The proposed budget for FY15 seeks to both close the annual operating deficit and ensure a three-month reserve in the future. The subcommittee considered a 3-month reserve to be prudent because personnel costs are the major expense item in the budget. In this proposal, the bulk of the projected FY14 carryforward would be used to establish the three-month reserve. The subcommittee also recommended including a 4% inflation adjustment for budgets in an attempt to avoid this situation in the future. For FY15, the proposed budget plan would result in increased assessments to close the deficit for that year after applying the remaining portion of the FY14 carryforward and for the inflation adjustment. Changes in project assessments for FY16-20 in the budget table reflect increases for the inflation adjustment.

Please provide your input by February 21. The collective input from the directors will put the executive committee in a much better position to craft an acceptable budget plan for consideration and a vote at the March meeting. The executive committee plans to meet the last week of February to consider your input and develop one or more proposed budgets. It is my intent to distribute the final proposed budget to all directors on or about March 1<sup>st</sup> so that it can be discussed at your home institution before arriving in Baltimore. It is important that we adopt a plan to address the projected budget deficits at that meeting so that we can move forward.

Thank you in advance for your input.

**Proposed FY2015 NERA Executive Director's Office Budget and Assessments and Five-Year Projections**

	<b>FY14</b>	<b>FY15</b>	<b>FY16</b>	<b>FY17</b>	<b>FY18</b>	<b>FY19</b>	<b>FY20</b>
4% inflation	\$392,684	\$408,391	\$424,727	\$441,716	\$459,385	\$477,760	\$496,871
Value of 3-month cushion	NA	\$102,098	\$106,182	\$110,429	\$114,846	\$119,440	\$124,218
Use of Carryover reserves	\$68,695	\$130,000					
Differential cost of 3-month cushion	NA	\$ (27,902)	\$4,084	\$4,247	\$4,417	\$4,594	\$4,778
<b>Total NERA Assessment</b>	<b>\$323,989</b>	<b>\$380,489</b>	<b>\$428,811</b>	<b>\$445,963</b>	<b>\$463,802</b>	<b>\$482,354</b>	<b>\$501,648</b>
<b>Remaining Carryover</b>	<b>\$130,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>					

**Assessments to each Station:**

Station	Share	----- Annual NERA Assessments -----						
		<b>FY14</b>	<b>FY15</b>	<b>FY16</b>	<b>FY17</b>	<b>FY18</b>	<b>FY19</b>	<b>FY20</b>
CT- New Haven	0.01770	\$ 5,735	\$ 6,735	\$ 7,590	\$ 7,894	\$ 8,209	\$ 8,538	\$ 8,879
CT-UCONN	0.04620	\$ 14,968	\$ 17,579	\$ 19,811	\$ 20,604	\$ 21,428	\$ 22,285	\$ 23,176
Delaware	0.04780	\$ 15,487	\$ 18,187	\$ 20,497	\$ 21,317	\$ 22,170	\$ 23,057	\$ 23,979
Maine	0.06660	\$ 21,578	\$ 25,341	\$ 28,559	\$ 29,701	\$ 30,889	\$ 32,125	\$ 33,410
Maryland	0.08380	\$ 27,150	\$ 31,885	\$ 35,934	\$ 37,372	\$ 38,867	\$ 40,421	\$ 42,038
Massachusetts	0.08180	\$ 26,502	\$ 31,124	\$ 35,077	\$ 36,480	\$ 37,939	\$ 39,457	\$ 41,035
New Hampshire	0.04790	\$ 15,519	\$ 18,225	\$ 20,540	\$ 21,362	\$ 22,216	\$ 23,105	\$ 24,029
New Jersey	0.09680	\$ 31,362	\$ 36,831	\$ 41,509	\$ 43,169	\$ 44,896	\$ 46,692	\$ 48,560
NY-Geneva	0.04980	\$ 16,135	\$ 18,948	\$ 21,355	\$ 22,209	\$ 23,097	\$ 24,021	\$ 24,982
NY-Ithaca	0.12890	\$ 41,762	\$ 49,045	\$ 55,274	\$ 57,485	\$ 59,784	\$ 62,175	\$ 64,662
Pennsylvania	0.15750	\$ 51,028	\$ 59,927	\$ 67,538	\$ 70,239	\$ 73,049	\$ 75,971	\$ 79,010
Rhode Island	0.04960	\$ 16,070	\$ 18,872	\$ 21,269	\$ 22,120	\$ 23,005	\$ 23,925	\$ 24,882
Vermont	0.04200	\$ 13,608	\$ 15,981	\$ 18,010	\$ 18,730	\$ 19,480	\$ 20,259	\$ 21,069
Washington, DC	0.01380	\$ 4,471	\$ 5,251	\$ 5,918	\$ 6,154	\$ 6,400	\$ 6,656	\$ 6,923
West Virginia	0.06980	\$ 22,614	\$ 26,558	\$ 29,931	\$ 31,128	\$ 32,373	\$ 33,668	\$ 35,015
	<b>1.000</b>	<b>\$ 323,989</b>	<b>\$ 380,489</b>	<b>\$ 428,811</b>	<b>\$ 445,963</b>	<b>\$ 463,802</b>	<b>\$ 482,354</b>	<b>\$ 501,648</b>

Assumptions:

- (1) A three month or 25% budget cushion
- (2) A 4% inflation factor for planning purposes
- (3) The difference (\$27,902) between the estimated FY14 carryover (\$130,000) and the estimated FY15 3-month cushion (\$102,098 is used to absorb some of the projected assessment increase in FY15

***DRAFT***

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***For NERA Directors Review***

***March 12, 2014***

***Cost Recovery at Agricultural Experiment Station  
Research Facilities in the Northeast Region***

***Northeastern Regional Association of  
State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors***

***Month, day, 2014***



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## 1.0 Purpose and Scope

It is common for agricultural experiment stations or associated academic units to require research sponsors, faculty and staff, and external users to provide reimbursement for direct costs incurred for services provided in support of projects or activities at research facilities. While common, formal systems to recover costs based on fee schedules or direct reimbursement are not universal. Instituting these systems typically requires a significant commitment of staff time for development (i.e., financial analyses, creating administrative systems, obtaining institutional approval) and substantial communication with faculty and other facility users to be successful. A challenge for research directors is that comprehensive information on system design and best practices is not available or easily accessible. The purpose of this document is to provide information on (1) direct cost recovery systems for five types of research facilities commonly used by agricultural experiment station scientists and (2) best practices for system design, implementation, and administration. The intended audience includes research directors, facility managers, facility advisory committees, faculty, business office administrators, and institutional sponsored program administrators.

The types of research facilities included in this report are

- Crop farms
- Greenhouses
- Growth chambers
- Large animal/livestock facilities
- Laboratory animal facilities

Information for this document came from a 2013 survey of members of the Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors (NERA) and policy and procedure documents for existing direct cost recovery systems at these institutions.

A library of policy documents and web-based information on direct cost recovery systems at NERA institutions is available on the NERA website ([www.nera.umd.edu/](http://www.nera.umd.edu/)).

## 2.0 Introduction

Agricultural experiment stations and agricultural colleges typically maintain a number of research facilities to provide support services critical to their research and outreach missions. Common types of research facilities include crop and livestock farms, greenhouses, and growth chamber facilities. Faculty and student researchers also use small animal facilities, which are often managed at the institutional level. And research farms and greenhouses are frequently used for extension education, and facilities on or near university campuses are often integral to undergraduate and graduate teaching programs.

The cost of maintaining research facilities and providing services is an on-going challenge. Aging infrastructure and increasingly expensive technology and equipment add to the difficulty of funding routine operations. And research farms are typically too small to achieve operating efficiencies close to norms in private industry. More importantly, the annual workload and

operating costs for these facilities also can be greatly influenced by the number, size, and types of research projects or teaching and outreach activities requiring services.

Direct costs to facilities are those expenses that can be assigned to an individual sponsored project or activity, whether research, instructional, or outreach, with a reasonable degree of accuracy. These costs are in contrast to indirect costs for facility operations, which are incurred for common needs or joint objectives (e.g., infrastructure, utilities, and administration) and cannot be easily assigned to a particular project or activity. Depending on institutional policy, indirect cost funds from grants and contracts may be returned to colleges or units to help offset facility and administration expenses. In the absence of a formal system for recovery of direct project costs or when there is inadequate indirect cost return, it is not unusual for facility managers to employ ad hoc approaches to help cover facility expenses. Examples of ad hoc approaches include asking for voluntary contributions from principal investigators for equipment repairs, requiring reimbursement for certain types of supplies (e.g., growing medium) or use of staff, or requiring reimbursement for revenue lost as a result of research activities (e.g., reduction in crop or milk revenue). A formal direct cost recovery system uses a fee schedule to recover costs for defined services provided to projects or activities at facilities. A well-designed direct cost recovery system can provide an objective and more transparent approach to recover all or a portion of service costs associated with projects and activities and may yield other benefits.

The specific objectives of this document are to:

- Summarize the benefits and costs of direct cost recovery systems for facility management.
- Document current use of formal direct cost recovery systems at NERA institutions for the five facility types listed in Section 1.0.
- Describe the core elements of current systems for each facility type.
- Provide information on best practices for system design, implementation and administration.

### **3.0 Benefits and Costs of Direct Cost Recovery**

The following are potential benefits and costs of direct cost recovery systems at experiment station facilities:

#### **Potential Benefits**

- Provides revenue for facilities that is aligned with project or activity-related expenses.
- Encourages facility users to seek extramural funds to support facility operations. Avoids the disparities that can develop when facility managers rely on appeals to the good will of project or activity directors to cover one-time facility costs.
- Encourages more efficient use of facility services by project and activity directors. This also tends to reduce competition for space or access to facility resources.
- When first implemented, these systems often force “long overdue” discussions with individual project directors, academic units, or external users about disproportionate

use of facility resources. Financial analyses that underpin direct cost recovery systems add formal cost information to these discussions.

- Increases clarity about services that will be provided to facility users, a benefit to both facility managers and users.
- Financial analyses for establishing service fees for specific functions are helpful in understanding facility costs and improving financial management.
- Service fees facilitate assignment of facility resources as matching support in grant proposals.
- Customer service becomes more relevant to facility managers.

#### Potential Costs

- Increased business office staff workload for initial and annual financial analyses, billing, and account management.
- Increased workload for facility managers to track projects and activities and help assign costs.
- Increased stress for facility users and managers that comes with a cultural change in how users receive services from facilities.
- Reduction in numbers of research projects or other activities. Greatest impacts may be on pilot projects or activities with minimal funding support or projects where it is difficult to secure funding for service fees from research sponsors. Consequently, project directors may elect to work at other locations to avoid fees.

## 4.0 Direct Cost Recovery Systems in the Northeast Region

All NERA member institutions (N = 15) reported information on direct cost recovery systems. Information for the Ithaca and Geneva units of the New York Agricultural Experiment Station (Cornell University) are reported jointly. Direct cost recovery systems are common at NERA institutions overall (station, college, or university), but use varied substantially among facility types and institutions (Table 1). Cost recovery systems were relatively common for greenhouse facilities (N = 9), growth chambers (N = 7), large animal facilities (N = 7), and laboratory animal facilities (N = 6), and less common for crop farms (N = 3). Rutgers University and University of Maine reported the most comprehensive use of direct cost recovery with systems in place for all five facility types. Three institutions (Cornell University, University of Maine, University of Maryland) reported systems for four facility types. Several institutions noted intentions to develop direct cost recovery systems in the near future. While we have no comparable historical data, anecdotal evidence from the survey suggests that use of direct cost recovery systems is trending upward.

It is notable that crop and animal farms, greenhouses, and growth chambers are most commonly operated by experiment stations or colleges of agriculture, whereas, laboratory animal facilities are often managed by institutional offices of the vice president for research (x/N reported) or other institutional entities (x/N reported).

Direct Cost Recovery at Agricultural Experiment Station Facilities

**Table 1.** Present use of formal direct cost recovery systems at research facilities of member institutions of the Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors, 2013.

Institution	Crop farms	Green-houses	Growth chambers	Large animal/ livestock facilities	Laboratory animal facilities
Rutgers University	X	X	X	X	X
Cornell University - Ithaca & Geneva	X	X	X		X
University of Maine	X	X		X	X
Pennsylvania State University		X			X
University of Connecticut				X	
Univ. of Connecticut – New Haven					
University of Delaware				X	
University of the District of Columbia					
University of Maryland		X	X	X	X
University of Massachusetts		X	X		X
University of New Hampshire			X	X	
University of Rhode Island		X			
University of Vermont		X	X	X	
University of West Virginia		X	X		

## 5.0 System Elements

### 5.1. Terms and Definition

One of the difficulties in comparing direct cost recovery systems among institutions is that the terminology used for similar concepts is highly variable and basic system elements may be defined uniquely at each institution. For example, respondents to the NERA survey used the following diversity of terms for cost recovery: cost recovery, full cost recovery, recovery of true costs, recovery of defined services, full recovery of non-subsidized costs, and recharge.

Similarly, there was a similar diversity of terms used in responses to a cost sharing question: fees set below full costs, fees set below defined costs, subsidized costs, and supplemental funds. For this report we strived to use the following terms and definitions as consistently as possible except we used given names when reporting on specific services and fees at individual institutions. In addition, for each term below we have discussed the range of usage and potential implications for comparing systems.

**Indirect costs** are costs incurred for common or joint objectives and therefore cannot be identified with a particular sponsored project, an instructional activity, or any other institutional activity. Examples of indirect costs are general facility and administrative costs, including utilities, infrastructure repairs and general maintenance, and administrative compensation.

**Direct costs** are costs that can be identified specifically with a particular sponsored project, an instructional activity, or other institutional activity and that can be assigned to such activities relatively easily with a high degree of accuracy. Examples of direct costs are the compensation of employees performing work directly in support of an activity, the cost of material consumed or expended, and equipment costs and maintenance. In some cases, utility costs directly attributable to a particular project and separately metered may be considered a direct cost.

**Services** are resources of a facility that are provided in support of a project or activity except those associated with indirect costs. It is common to provide different levels of services: 1) basic service, 2) a higher tier service, and 3) services unique to a particular project such that cost recovery is more appropriately handled with an individual project agreement. Services are generally defined as specific functions (e.g., plant care in greenhouse), but the resources provided are comprised of labor, materials and supplies, commercial services, equipment, and other direct costs.

A **unit** is defined as a logical unit of measure to which direct costs for services are applied. Units for costing may be acre or square foot (e.g., crop farms), bench (e.g., greenhouses), animal (animal facilities), or sample analyzed (laboratory service center).

The **unit cost** is the total direct cost for defined service divided by the number of units. Unit costs are established annually based on the actual direct costs that are incurred in providing basic or other services and are developed in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles.

The **service fee** is a per-unit billing rate set to recover all or a portion of the direct costs associated with providing services at a facility. A labor fee for commitment of facility staff to projects and activities also is sometimes established for recovery of direct costs when labor and non-labor service fees are billed separately or when unique projects are billed for itemized costs rather than using a defined fee. Service fees should be audited and revised annually as needed. Note that terms such as land use fees, plot fees, or space fees are avoided in this report unless used as part of formal service or fee names of institutions. The term “service fee” is a more comprehensive representation, and some space-based terms may incorrectly signal potential conflicts with indirect cost accounting. Note that published fees often appear highly variable among institutions for a number of reasons. The defined set of services provided for similar functions may vary among institutions. Institutions also may choose to exclude certain types of costs when calculating the cost basis for service fees. And finally fees are sometimes set at a rate lower than the calculated unit cost. These latter cases are sometimes referred to as subsidized costs or subsidized fees.

For this report **cost sharing** of the service fee means the station or unit with budget responsibility for the facility pays a portion of the fee for a particular project or activity. Or in the case of unique projects where cost recovery is by direct reimbursement, the station or unit pays a portion of the total direct cost of the project.

The above definition is relatively narrow. There is much additional complexity in the concept of cost sharing. Other entities within the university might pay a portion of a service fee and this would be commonly referred to as cost sharing. This type of common cost sharing is not relevant to the purpose of this document because it is functionally equivalent to a second project sponsor paying the required fee. Another complexity is that when some categories of direct costs are purposefully excluded from the cost basis of a service fee or when the fee is set below the actual cost then there is in effect an undeclared cost sharing of full direct costs for all users. In some cases survey respondents referred to this as a subsidy. One survey respondent used the term waiver in a response to a question about cost sharing. The waiving of an applicable fee (i.e., no entity pays the fee) for a facility user is technically not cost sharing. Waivers also are problematic because federal sponsors cannot be charged higher fees than those charged to other users.

## **5.2. Types of Costs Recovered**

At the most basic level, the types of costs typically recovered for service to projects or activities at facilities are labor, materials and supplies, equipment costs, and services provided by external vendors (e.g., veterinarian care, equipment service contracts). Utility costs (e.g., electric, water) may be recovered in certain situations; however, it is often not possible to segregate direct (project-specific) and indirect (base facility operation) utility usage. There was no indication in survey responses or policy documents that equipment or infrastructure depreciation was included in the cost basis for fees. (Note: Utility and infrastructure costs may be more commonly incorporated into direct cost recovery systems for aquaculture research facilities because utility costs can be substantially influenced by research activity and restructuring of tank systems for individual projects is common.)

The specific types of costs recovered for each facility type are summarized below and in Table 2. There is considerable variation in the types of costs targeted for recovery at each institution. This is a product of four factors. Institutional decisions on the package of services to be provided on a fee basis determine the types of facility costs targeted for recovery. And some categories of facility costs may be explicitly excluded from the cost basis in the fee setting process for local reasons. Facilities differ among institutions in cost efficiency for local reasons. Lastly, fees may be set below calculated costs. In combination these factors produce high variation among institutions in fees for similar facility types. To illustrate, at a particular crop farm, labor and consumables for common field activities (e.g., tillage, planting, nutrient management, pest control) may be provided on a fee basis while other associated services (e.g., composting, rotational crops, irrigation, equipment depreciation, greenhouse support) may be unavailable or be provided to all facility users without charge. As examples, institutions reported excluding costs for salaries of staff paid on state funds, director's salaries, salaries of full time employees, production of marker stakes, and utility costs.

### **Crop Farms**

At institutions with cost recovery systems for crop farms, it is common to charge basic service fees on a per acre basis to recover labor and supply costs for tillage, cultivation, lime and fertilization, and pest management (Table 2). Some institutions may include other services for the basic service fee. For example, the following are provided at some institutions and included in the cost basis for fees: irrigation when available, machine harvest, cover/rotation crops, mowing field margins, pruning perennial plants, safety training, and project support by the facility manager. At some institutions, certain activities are explicitly excluded, e.g., pruning of perennial plants. At one institution, weeding and harvesting are provided based on an hourly fee in addition to the basic service fee. Also at one institution, rates for farms differed to reflect differences in soil type, irrigation capability, and available infrastructure on farms (coolers, fencing, greenhouses, high tunnels, etc.)

There were at least three distinct approaches for structuring fee systems at crop farms. At least one institution (University of Maine) recovered costs for labor and other expense categories with a single standard fee/acre. At least one institution (Cornell University) segregated costs for labor and equipment from a general operating expense categories and had separate fees for each. Labor and equipment fees also were charged as general labor or labor plus equipment (hourly basis). Charging for labor independently was deemed more equitable for projects with staff that could perform their own field work. A third model (Rutgers University) used separate fees for different categories of service: land preparation, plot maintenance, and irrigation.

At some institutions, there are systems to recover costs (labor, supplies, and miscellaneous costs) for unique projects or activities where standardized fees are not easily applied. For example, hourly rates may apply for use of facility staff for usual project activities or off-farm research. Or full reimbursement may be required for infrastructure modifications or consumables to support unusual projects. Or reimbursement may be required to offset unusually high revenue losses from project activities.



**Table 2.** Summary of services provided on a fee basis in direct cost recovery systems for five types of research facilities at member institutions of the Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors.

Facility Type	Services commonly provided for basic service fees <sup>a</sup>	Additional services sometimes provided for basic fees or at additional cost <sup>a</sup>
Crop farms	Tillage, lime and fertilizer application, cultivation, pesticide application, mechanical harvest, field border mowing, tree pruning, equipment costs.	Cover/rotation crops, irrigation, hand-weeding, safety training. Fees also may reflect the benefits of available coolers, high tunnels, and soil fertility.
Greenhouses	Watering, pest and disease control, environmental control, greenhouse maintenance, routine sanitation, fertilization, seasonal application of shade materials.	Propagation, biological pest control, transplanting, pruning, harvesting. Supplies: Potting mixes, pots, stakes, labels.
Growth chambers	Supplies and labor for maintenance and repair of chambers.	User supplies: potting media, lime, fertilizers, stakes, rooting hormones.
Large animal/livestock facilities	Supply costs and labor for animal inputs (water, food, and bedding) and stall cleaning. Other consumable supplies and routine facility needs related to animals.	On-farm forage production, health care, waste management, regulatory and registry costs, site-specific training
Laboratory animal facilities	Supplies for animal housing including cage replacement, sanitation, feeding, watering, daily monitoring of animals, and basic health care. Recovery of labor costs is likely but the degree is unclear.	Quarantining animals, carcass disposal, provision of general supplies at initial setup only, higher level veterinarian medical care, and animal health surveillance.

<sup>a</sup>Not all institutions with direct cost recovery systems provide all services for the basic or higher-tier service fees.

### Greenhouses

At institutions with cost recovery systems for greenhouses, it is common to charge standard service fees to recover labor and supply costs for basic plant care; management of lighting, irrigation and ventilation systems; general housekeeping; and pest management (Table 2). Fees are typically charged on a bench unit or square foot basis. Some institutions exclude all or some labor costs. Some institutions may include other services for the basic or higher-tier service fees.

One institution noted that greenhouse utility costs were excluded in the cost basis for fees whereas several noted that all operating costs were included. However, it was not clear how utility costs are handled in these systems.

## **Growth Chambers**

Information on direct cost recovery systems for growth chambers from the NERA survey and existing policy documents was limited. Fees appear to be generally based on recovery of costs for supplies, equipment, and labor; however, recovery of labor costs was implied but not explicitly described or noted in some cases (Table 2). Fee structures were based on chamber size. Plant care supplies were sometimes included in service. Plant care was the responsibility of the user. Some survey respondents noted that chamber depreciation was not included in the cost basis of fees. This was consistent with other comments that chamber replacement was a challenge for maintaining growth chamber service on the long term.

## **Large Animal/Livestock Facilities**

At institutions with cost recovery systems for large animal facilities, it is common to charge service fees to recover labor and supply costs for feed, bedding, other routine animal or facility supplies, cleaning animal stalls, waste management, and preventative health care (Table 2). Fees are typically charged on a per-animal/per diem basis. Notably some stations reported that labor costs were excluded. Some institutions may include other services in the cost basis for fees. For example, the following services are provided at some institutions:

- Food and bedding production costs
- Regulatory and registry costs
- Animal-related equipment maintenance
- Costs for raising replacement animals
- Safety training

## **Laboratory Animal Facilities**

At institutions with cost recovery systems for laboratory animal facilities, it is common to charge basic service fees to recover labor and supply costs for food, bedding, cage and room cleaning, environmental management, and record-keeping (Table 2). A number of other services are charged separately or varied on whether they were included as part of the basic per diem fee. Based on the survey responses and system documentation it was unclear whether infrastructure and utility costs were commonly recovered. And with these facilities often managed by the institutional office of the vice-president for research, it was unclear whether institutional subsidies may influence service fees. For example, some survey respondents indicate that some salaries were excluded from the cost basis at their institutions or the VPR office subsidized facilities.

## **5.2 Fees and Level of Cost Recovery**

A goal of the NERA survey was to better understand the degree that institutions were attempting to achieve full recovery of direct costs for projects and activities. Assessing the variation in cost recovery within facility types and across institutions was not possible based on the survey information and policy documents because of variation in the packages of services provided for service fees, the types of costs included or excluded in costing services, and the unknown degree to which reported fees recovered full calculated costs for services. Full cost recovery also depends on how it is defined. For example, most institutions charge a fee to cover

costs for a defined set of services. In contrast, other services appeared to be provided without charge. These cases could be viewed as either full cost recovery for the defined services or less than full cost recovery for the full suite of services provided. Some institutions also excluded certain types of costs in costing services at crop farms and greenhouses. One institution also reported limiting cost recovery for a dairy facility to expenses for services above and beyond what was required to maintain the herd and operate the dairy. And finally it is generally unknown whether current fees at institutions were set at or below full costs for defined services. For example, one institution set its cost recovery goal for its crop farms at 10% of total annual operations and also capped the number of acres (10 acres) per project per farm for fees. This structural variability allows only a comparison of fees for each facility type and not an assessment of relative cost recovery. Available information on service fees for crop farms, greenhouses, and growth chambers are summarized in Table 3. Rates are clearly highly variable but as noted above difficult to compare among institutions in a meaningful way.

**Table 3.** Available information on fees for services<sup>a</sup> provided at three types of facilities at member institutions of the Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors in 2014.

Member Institutions	Crop farms <sup>b</sup>	Greenhouses <sup>b</sup>	Growth chambers
Cornell University	Land use and infrastructure fee: \$100-350/ac <sup>c</sup> Labor & equipment: \$30/hr; General labor: \$20/hr	<b>Facility level 1:</b> basic plant care (\$0.31/ft/mo) <sup>d</sup> extended plant care (\$0.37/ft/mo) <sup>d</sup> <b>Facility level 2:</b> basic plant care (\$0.38/ft/mo) <sup>d</sup> extended plant care (\$0.44/ft/mo) <sup>d</sup>	\$21-72.60/chamber/mo <sup>d</sup> depending on chamber size
University of Maine	Annual crop farms: \$950-1500/ac <sup>d</sup> Perennial crop farms: \$2500-3700/ac <sup>d</sup> Labor for other services: \$20/hr	\$5.12 per bench (32 ft)/mo.	
Rutgers University	Land preparation: \$160/ac <sup>d</sup> Plot maintenance: \$170/ac <sup>d</sup> Irrigation: \$170/ac <sup>d</sup>		Small chamber: \$22/week <sup>d</sup> Large chamber: \$118/week <sup>d</sup>
Pennsylvania State University			Reach-in model: \$2.00/day <sup>d</sup> Walk-in model: \$4.00/day <sup>d</sup>
University of Vermont		\$3.06-4.14/ft/mo <sup>d</sup>	

<sup>a</sup>Specific services provided vary among institutions within facility type.

<sup>b</sup>It is common for requests for less than a full acre or bench to be charged for a minimum unit area.

<sup>c</sup>Excludes labor costs. Labor costs are charged separately

<sup>d</sup>Includes labor costs.

### **5.3 Processes for Determining Costs and Setting Fees**

The NERA survey provided limited information on processes for determining costs. Some institutions reported that costing analyses were done by college or station business offices using fiscal year expense data for facilities to estimate break even costs for defined services. Analyses must conform to rules for federal allowable costs. Some institutions reported that processes were dictated by their university division of financial affairs (e.g., Cornell University Policy 3.10, Recharge Operations and Service Facilities). One institution reported that a department committee determined rate schedules for greenhouses, but the specific process was not reported. Some but not all institutions noted that costs were audited annually. Generally, costing analysis requires working with facility managers and staff to segregate labor and operating costs by specific activities to estimate costs for defined services.

### **5.4 Application to Facility Users**

Where direct cost recovery systems are in place, payment of fees appears to be uniformly required of all university faculty and staff requesting service in support of research and outreach activities. It is not clear from survey responses or policy documents to what extent academic programs are required to pay for service in support of teaching. One institution's policy indicated that service fees apply to academic courses and that graduate students or advisors are required to pay fees for service for graduate research projects. A second institution noted that academic units were charged for use of greenhouse space for teaching activities.

Survey responses were limited, but it appears that users from private industries and organizations are generally required to pay fees. One institution reported applying a rate of twice the standard service fee for private companies that contract for service at one crop farm but steward the work themselves. At other locations, all work by external users must have an internal project leader and work is billed at the standard rate.

There may be situations where a project director has his/her staff do all or part of the work defined as basic or higher-tier service. Depending on local policy, service fees may not apply if the facility did not provide resources in support of that activity.

### **5.5 Cost Sharing of Fees**

Based on survey responses, payment of full fees (i.e., no cost sharing) is generally expected for research and outreach activities. Several institutions indicated that cost sharing was allowable, but not current practice. The following practices occurred at individual institutions: cost sharing only approved for plant breeding or variety evaluation work to date, cost sharing approval required prior to grant proposal submission for livestock work, cost sharing negotiated as part of startup packages for new faculty, and cost sharing requests were considered using a formal proposal process.

Given that the application of service fees to teaching activities is unclear, there was little information on associated cost sharing. One institution noted that decisions on cost sharing for academic courses at facilities were made in consultation with academic chairs and directors as part of routine planning for academic programs. One institution established a separate limited

fund to cost share a percentage of teaching activity costs in greenhouses. And it was also noted that some unique aspects of teaching programs (e.g., horticultural plant collection) may require special cost-sharing arrangements.

## 5.6 Fee Collection

It is common for facilities to use service request forms to initiate project or activity tracking and ultimately to provide quantitative data on services used to station or college business offices. It appears common for business offices, in consultation with the facility manager, to compile and review activity records and subsequently bill project accounts. Service fees are billed as a direct expense to grant, contract, or other accounts through university accounting systems. Project accounts may be billed periodically or at the termination of the project depending on local needs. It was common for accounts to be billed at the end of growing seasons or quarterly. Greenhouses and growth chamber facilities sometimes were billed more frequently (e.g., monthly).

One institution reported using custom built software to facilitate completion of work records for transmittal to its business office. Another institution reported that it was in the process of developing a reservation and billing systems for all its farm and greenhouse operations.

## 5.7 Revenue Use

Information from the survey on revenue use was limited. In the case of crop farms and greenhouse, two institutions reported that revenue was returned to the facility or responsible academic unit to offset expenses. At one institution, fees from multiple facilities were aggregated centrally and used for equipment and infrastructure replacement and to offset some expenses at individual facilities. In the case of large animal facilities, four institutions reported that revenue was returned to the facility operating budget. There was limited information for small animal facilities and growth chamber facilities.

## 6.0 Implementation

Directors provided the following comments and recommendations related to implementation of direct cost recovery systems:

- Some facility users will resist establishment of formal direct cost recovery systems. Others will see benefits for the long term. Directors should recognize that instituting a system will result in a cultural change for a facility community. In mature systems, additional stress occurs when subsidies are reduced.
- It can be a challenge to coordinate or normalize fee structures on crop farms with different cultures and requirements. This is less of a challenge when facilities are managed centrally by the station or college.
- Project directors may struggle with assembling budgets for multi-institutional proposals because fees for similar facilities at different institutions may range widely.
- Posting of fees, rules, and guidance on appropriate fee descriptions for budget justifications will make proposal writing easier for project directors and minimize errors. The institutional office of sponsored programs should have access to this information.

- The initial costing analyses for facility operations will require an extended time line because it is an iterative process involving facility managers, business office staff, and other administrators. Anticipate this need in the implementation time line.
- Facility users may have activities where their project staff do all or part of the work provided as fee-for-service. There may be a number of these situations all with unique histories at the time of system implementation. There should be a general policy on allowable work by project staff and on how fees will be applied in these cases. Expect project directors to adjust their use of project staff over time in response to new policies and fees.
- Public groups or activities at facilities that have received free service or access may need special attention when rolling out a new cost recovery program.
- Accommodating existing teaching in a new direct cost recovery system can be a challenge if a facility has heavy use for student courses. Cost sharing strategies are one approach to managing service fees for teaching.

## 7.0 Best Practices and Recommendations

Directors recommend the following best practices:

- Work with your university office of sponsored programs during system planning. Talk to key folks in other institutions to learn about approaches for costing and administrative procedures and to become aware of pitfalls.
- Commit to a substantial and extended effort to explain the need for implementing a system and why it will be beneficial to facility users in the long run.
- Be conservative initially and avoid inclusion of any direct cost category that might suggest a conflict with indirect cost accounting.
- Strive toward consistency in practice across facilities.
- Centralize facility management at the station or college level as feasible or appropriate to facilitate creation and administration of a common direct cost recovery system.
- Establish an advisory group(s) to assist in developing the direct cost recovery system and evaluating future policy adjustments. Be transparent by showing project directors and others facility cost information during system development.
- For simplicity, strive to charge similar fees at like facilities. And strive to limit annual fluctuations in service fees. One way to achieve uniformity and stability is to set fees below cost across facilities and at a level where annual fluctuations in facility costs will likely not require a fee increase at any unit in the near term.
- In communications with users, emphasize the concept of “fee for services” rather than using terms such as plot or land use or bench fees.
- Encourage entrepreneurial endeavors that serve to offset facility costs and reduce service fees.

## Appendix

Below is a list of policy and procedures documents and website-accessible information for direct cost recovery systems at member institutions of the Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors (NERA). Documents are available on the NERA website. Website links were current as of [month, 2014].

### Crop Farms

#### Documents:

- Rutgers University, Snyder Operations Policy, <http://snyderfarm.rutgers.edu/forms/Snyder-Farm-2013-SF-Policy.doc>
- Cornell University: Fee and Rate Structure, <http://cuaes.cornell.edu/cals/cuaes/ag-operations/campus-farms/loader.cfm?csModule=security/getfile&PageID=1051230>
- University of Maine: Policies and Procedures on Direct Cost Recovery and Sharing at Crop, Greenhouse, and Livestock Facilities, <http://umaine.edu/mafes/home/resources-for-staff/>

#### Information on websites:

- University of Maine: Farm and Greenhouses – Service Fees and Labor Rates at Farms, <http://umaine.edu/mafes/home/service-fees-and-labor-rates/>

### Greenhouses

#### Documents:

- Rutgers University, Greenhouses and Growth Chambers: Rental of Greenhouse and Growth Chamber Space, <http://njaes.rutgers.edu/research-greenhouse/rental.asp>
- Cornell University: Greenhouse Use Policy, <http://oeh.cals.cornell.edu/GHUse2.html>
- University of Maine: Policies and Procedures on Direct Cost Recovery and Sharing at Crop, Greenhouse, and Livestock Facilities, <http://umaine.edu/mafes/home/resources-for-staff/>
- Pennsylvania State University: Guide to Greenhouse and Growth Chamber Policy and Use – Greenhouse and growth chamber space rental policies, <http://agsci.psu.edu/faculty-staff/services/greenhouses-and-plant-growth-facilities/information/guide-to-greenhouse-and-growth-chamber-policy-and-use>

#### Information on websites:

- University of Maine: Farm and Greenhouses – Service Fees and Labor Rates at Farms, <http://umaine.edu/mafes/home/service-fees-and-labor-rates/>

### Growth Chambers

#### Documents:

- Rutgers University, Greenhouses and Growth Chambers: Rental of Greenhouse and Growth Chamber Space, <http://njaes.rutgers.edu/research-greenhouse/rental.asp>

- Cornell University: Interim Growth Chamber Use Policy, <http://cuaes.cornell.edu/cals/cuaes/ag-operations/greenhouses/loader.cfm?csModule=security/getfile&PageID=1075536>
- Pennsylvania State University: Guide to Greenhouse and Growth Chamber Policy and Use – Greenhouse and growth chamber space rental policies, <http://agsci.psu.edu/faculty-staff/services/greenhouses-and-plant-growth-facilities/information/guide-to-greenhouse-and-growth-chamber-policy-and-use>

**Information on websites:**

**Large Animal/Livestock Facilities**

**Documents:**

- Rutgers University: Research and Farm Operating Policy, <http://njaes.rutgers.edu/animalcare/perdiem.asp>
- University of Maine: Policies and Procedures on Direct Cost Recovery and Sharing at Crop, Greenhouse, and Livestock Facilities, <http://umaine.edu/mafes/home/resources-for-staff/>

**Information on websites:**

- University of Maine: Farm and Greenhouses – Service Fees and Labor Rates at Farms, <http://umaine.edu/mafes/home/service-fees-and-labor-rates/>

**Laboratory Animal Facilities**

**Documents:**

- University of Maine: Small Animal Research Facility (SARF) – Per Diem Description and Rates

**Information on Websites:**

- Rutgers University: <http://las.rutgers.edu/?q=content/diem-rates>

**Related Financial Policy Documents for Service Facilities**

- Recharge Operations and Service Facilities, Policy 3.10. Cornell University Policy Library. [www.policy.cornell.edu/vol3\\_10.cfm](http://www.policy.cornell.edu/vol3_10.cfm)



# **Report and Recommendations**

## **NORTHEAST MULTISTATE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE MEETING**

**The Admiral Fell Inn - Board Room [5th Floor]  
Historic Fell's Point, 888 South Broadway, Baltimore MD 21231**

**March 10, 2014  
2:30pm to 4:00pm**

**Chair, Tim Phipps (WV)**

**Members Present: Fred Servello (WV), Gary Thompson (PA) and Bill Hare (NEED)**

1. Request to approve the proposal NE\_TEMP2162: Hydropedology of Vernal Pool Systems, 10/2014-9/2019 [Renewal of NE1038]

Discussion: Proposal had strong peer reviews and this is an important project.

Action: MAC recommends approval.

2. Request to approve the proposal NE\_TEMP2143: Changing the Health Trajectory for Older Adults through Effective Diet and Activity Modifications, 10/2014-9/2019 [Renewal of NE1039]

Discussion: Midterm review will be critical and MAC wants to see real synergy and integration to be a truly regional multistate project. Need to show linkages among the participants. Strength will be in looking at rural and urban populations. Need more Extension participation.

Action: MAC recommends approval.

3. Request to approve the proposal NE\_TEMP2161: Environmental Impacts of Equine Operations, 10/2014-9/2019 [Renewal of NE1041]

Discussion: MAC felt that an important suggestion from one of the reviewers was not addressed. Need an economist and the additional objective. Also, a MAC member suggested looking closely at the HAC RFP, and integrated curriculum may be more useful.

Action: MAC recommends conditional approval to include an economist and the additional objective in the revised proposal.

4. Request to approve the proposal NE\_TEMP2144: Poultry Production Systems and Well-being: Sustainability for Tomorrow, 10/2014-9/2019 [Renewal of NE1042]

Discussion: Strong reviews. Need to clarify the economics component of the project. Impacts of costs and benefits of technology to the industry is critical and the committee wants that clearly demonstrated and the economist(s) identified.

Action: MAC recommends conditional approval.

5. Request to approve the Request to Write a Proposal entitled, Adaptive Management for Improved Nutrient Management, 10/2014-9/2019 [Renewal of NEERA1002]

Discussion: This is a good project. Need to get annual reports uploaded in NIMSS for last two meetings.

Action: MAC recommends approval.

6. Request to approve the Request to Write a Proposal entitled, Biology, Ecology & Management of Emerging Disease Vectors, 10/2014-9/2019 [Renewal of NE1043]

Discussion: An important project. Recommend to narrow the focus to mosquitoes or broaden and include tick and other vectors.

Action: MAC recommends approval.

7. Request for off-the-top funding for Northeast Multistate Projects:

- NE9: Conservation and Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources  
FY2014 Budget Request = \$ 240,750  
FY2015 Budget Request = \$ 247,727

Discussion: NE9 did not get the sequestration cut for FY2013. MAC suggested that since FY2014 level is restored, the committee approves the request at \$240,750, and recommends approval of FY2015 with the stipulation that Hatch funding will not be reduced.

- NE59: Multistate Research Coordination, Northeastern Region  
FY 2015 Budget Request = \$ 40,788

The funding requested is to support the Northeastern Regional Center for Rural Development.

Discussion: No increase requested.

Action: Recommend approval for NE9 for FY2014 and FY2015 (see stipulation above) and NE59 FY 2015.

8. NRSPs

New/Renewing Projects:

- NEW: NRSP\_TEMP321, “Database Resources for Crop Genomics, Genetics and Breeding Research,” was submitted this fall. This project has submitted all required materials and will be distributed to the NRSP-RC members in March 2014.
- RENEWING: NRSP\_TEMP003 (NRSP-3), “The National Atmospheric Deposition Program (NADP).” This project has submitted all the required materials and is in the process of being peer reviewed. After responding to peer reviewers, the submission will be distributed to the NRSP-RC.
- RENEWING: NRSP\_TEMP301 (NRSP-7), “A National Agricultural Program for Minor Use Animal Drugs.” This project is requesting one year of funding to explore additional and alternative funding models. [For information only]

#### Mid-Term Reviews:

- NRSP-1, “National Information Management and Support System (NIMSS)” will undergo a mid-term review by the project’s Administrative Advisors in February 2014. The outcome of that mid-term review will be disseminated to the NRSP-RC. [For information only]

Discussion: Budgets for the two NRSP proposals should be corrected to start on FY2014-15.

NRSP3 receives \$50K from the system, and brings in additional resources. Land-grants benefit from this project with minimal investment.

On NRSP\_temp321, needs clarification on the expected outcomes of the project. This system is needed, but will it serve as the only platform for underserved crops? Another concern is the budget requested. The ESS approved a motion to establish a cap on NRSPs that we could spend up to \$2M on NRSPs. This proposal will exceed that limit if we continue all other projects. Currently, there is about \$244K available to fund a new NRSP project.

#### 9. 2014 National Multistate Research Award

MAC will ask for suggestions from the Advisors at the NERA Meeting.

#### 10. Advisor assignments:

**NEERA1004:** Northeast Region Technical Committee on Integrated Pest Management [10/2011-09/2016]

- to replace Dr. Stephen Herbert (MA) as the Extension Co-Advisor
- Dennis Calvin (PA) will be approached

**NE1044:** Whole farm dairy and beef systems: gaseous emissions, P management, organic production, and pasture based production [10/2010-09/2015]

- to replace Dr. Stephen Herbert (MA) as Advisor
- Dr. Adel Shirmohammadi (MD) agreed to take this assignment.

**NE1231:** Collaborative Potato Breeding and Variety Development Activities to Enhance Farm Sustainability in the Eastern US [10/2012-09/2017]  
- to replace Dr. Kirby Stafford III (CT-NH) as Advisor  
- Susan Brown will be approached.

**NE1043:** Biology, Ecology & Management of Emerging Disease Vectors [08/2009-09/2014]  
- to replace Dr. Kirby Stafford III (CT-NH) as Advisor  
- Dr. Theodore G. Andreadis (CT-NH) had agreed to take this assignment.

**NE1040:** Plant-Parasitic Nematode Management as a Component of Sustainable Soil Health Programs in Horticultural and Field Crop Production Systems [10/2009-09/2016]  
- to replace Dr. Janine Sherrier (DE) as Advisor  
- Dr. Mark Rieger (DE) had agreed to take this assignment.

Discussion: Suggestion is to approach Extension directors who have research background

#### 11. 2014 NERA Planning Grant

MAC held a teleconference on December 17, 2013 and reviewed 11 submissions. MAC's recommendation to award the 2014 NERA Planning Grant to the following proposals was approved by the NERA Directors by electronic ballot on January 4, 2014:

- NE1401 - Focusing Chemical Ecology on Agricultural Pest Management Priorities (Funding Requested = \$ 9,750)
- NE1410 - Organic Lawn Care Practices for the Northeast (Funding Requested = \$ 5,600)

#### 12. Other Business

- Need replacement for Dr. Kirby Stafford III as MAC Member. Dr. Cameron Faustman will be nominated.
- Need to extend appointment or replacement for Dr. Tim Phipps. His first three-year term has expired (2010-2013). He had agreed to a 2<sup>nd</sup> three year term and will be MAC Chair until Sept. 30, 2014.
- Dr. Tim Phipps, as MAC Chair, will also serve as the Northeast Delegate to the NRSP Review Committee.

Current MAC members:

- Tim Phipps, WV (2013-2016)
- Gary Thompson, PA (2012-2015)
- Fred Servello, ME (2012-2015)
- Bob Schrader, MA-Extension (2011-2014)
- Bill Hare, DC-Extension (2012-2015)
- Cameron Faustman, CTS (2014-2017)

**REGIONAL RESEARCH PROJECT NE-9**  
**CONSERVATION AND UTILIZATION OF PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES**

A cooperative effort among:

THE STATE AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATIONS  
OF THE NORTHEAST REGION

and

THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,  
AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE

**PROJECT BUDGET REQUEST**

**FY 2014**

### **Introduction and Justification:**

America's abundant and inexpensive supply of food and fiber is based on a productive and progressive agricultural system. The foundation for this productivity has been based on scientific knowledge and exploitation of useful genetic diversity for developing new, higher quality cultivars that can resist pests, diseases, and environmental stresses. However, genetic diversity for various crops is diminishing, in a large part due to the extensive use of modern cultivars with genetic uniformity but a noteworthy lack of genetic diversity for developing new traits and combating against new biotic and abiotic stresses.

The genes that are needed to provide a continued source of new varieties that produce higher yields with better quality and nutritional value, and better withstand pests, diseases, and abiotic stresses can only come from diverse plant germplasm. Most of the food crops important in the American diet have their origins in other parts of the world. Genetic diversity of plant species has evolved in centers of origin wherever this has occurred in the world. This source of different genes continues to be essential for plant breeders and other scientists to breed new varieties that are important to American consumers today. To meet this need and sustain the future success of American agriculture, the United States Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service (USDA, ARS) has established a National Plant Germplasm System (NPGS) in which hundreds of thousands of plant germplasm collections are preserved. USDA-ARS Plant Genetic Resources Unit (PGRU) at Geneva, New York is a vital part of this system and preserves the germplasm of apple, grape, tart cherry, Cruciferous vegetables, onion, tomato and many others.

Continuing safeguarding these germplasm is critical to meeting future production challenges of these crops in the United States, including many U.S. northeastern states where these crops are a key source of income for farmers. Many northeastern State Agricultural Experiment Stations (SAESs) have research and extension responsibilities for these valuable commodities and access to critical germplasm resources is essential for progress in research and crop improvement of these crops. While preserving this germplasm is critical, evaluation and characterization of this germplasm and making it more accessible to breeders and researchers are also important.

There are ongoing efforts nationwide to promote increased consumption of fruits and vegetables because of their nutritional and therapeutic value to the human diet. PGRU will contribute to these efforts because many fruit and vegetables we preserve, such as apples, grapes, broccoli, onion and tomato, contain certain compounds, such as polyphenolics or glucosinolates, that have been linked to reduced risk of various chronic conditions or life-threatening diseases. PGRU can further enhance the success of these efforts by evaluating, characterizing and identifying various plant trait attributes with health benefits in these germplasm. This NE-9 Project has been an important source of funding for sustaining the PGRU germplasm activities in the past and it will become even more important in the future.

**Budget Request:**

**ACCESSION NO.** xxxxxxxx **SUBFILE:** CRIS  
**PROJ NO:** NYG-xxxxxx **AGENCY:** CSREES NY.G  
**PROJTYPE:** HATCH **PROJ STATUS:** NEW **MULTISTATE PROJ NO:** NE9  
**START:** 01 OCT 2013 **TERM** 30 SEP 2018 **FY:** 2014

**INVESTIGATORS:** Zhong, G.; Robertson, L.R.; Griffiths, P., Chao, C.C.; Labate, J.; J.A.; Baldo, A.  
**PERFORMING INSTITUTION:**  
HORTICULTURAL SCIENCE, NY AGRICULTURAL EXPT. STATION  
GENEVA, NEW YORK 14456

**BUDGET REQUEST FOR FY 2014**

**NORTHEAST REGIONAL PROJECT NE-09**

Item

Salaries and benefits	<b>\$215,588</b>
Field Technician – Vegetable Germplasm Manages field operations for seed propagated collections.	\$ 42,530
Supervisory Farm Manager (clonal crops) Manages field and greenhouse operations for clonally propagated collections.	\$ 75,380
Field Assistant (clonal crops) Assists with field maintenance and propagation of clonally propagated collections.	\$ 39,397
Field Assistant (clonal crops) Assists with field maintenance, and characterization of clonally propagated collections.	\$ 39,480
Temporary field laborer – Vegetable Germplasm (6 Mon. @ \$12/hr) Assists with spring/summer green house and field operations	\$ 12,534
Temporary field laborer – Vegetable Germplasm (3 Mon. @ \$12/hr) Assists with spring/summer green house and field operations	\$ 6,267
Operational costs (utilities, FRU, etc.)	<b>\$25,162</b>
Supplies	\$3,581
Field research - land maintenance, pesticides, etc.	\$6,760
Field equipment repairs	\$3,903
Seed storage, vernalization, etc.	\$5,447
Seed testing	\$5,471
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$240,750</b>

### Base Funding at ARS in Geneva for FY14\*

•	Salary costs	<b>NE9 related projects</b>	<u>\$k</u> 1302.1
•	Operational costs	<b>NE9 related projects</b>	<u>571.5</u>
		<b>Total NE9-related projects</b>	<b>1873.6</b>

\*Base funding figures are estimates because for federal budget uncertainties.

### Impacts of Collections:

#### Current and past use of germplasm maintained at PGRU, Geneva, NY:

- The recent spread of grape cultivation throughout the U.S., especially in the northeast, has been made possible by use of the PGRU *Vitis* germplasm collection for improvement of adaptation of *Vitis vinifera*, the most widely cultivated grapes in mild climates.
- PGRU is the only institution that maintains the 100+ founding ancestors of popular apple cultivars.
- Genes for resistance to apple scab, fire blight, wooly apple aphids, and powdery mildew maintained in the collection have been deployed in apple rootstocks and cultivars.
- Genes from wild tomatoes have been exploited to increase ease of harvesting, disease resistance and for stress and drought tolerance.
- More than 20 genes from the PGRU tomato collection for bacterial speck, spotted wilt virus, tobacco mosaic virus, leaf mold, fusarium wilt, verticillium wilt, light blight, and nematode resistance have been bred into modern cultivars.
- Evaluation of the radish collection has identified accessions with high levels of natural pigments.

#### Future use of germplasm maintained at PGRU, Geneva, NY:

- Tomato germplasm nutritional characterization at PGRU will be exploited by breeders for enhancement of fruit quality for flavor, texture, and nutritional components.
- Onion germplasm from PGRU is being used to develop IYSV resistance.
- Brassica germplasm is being evaluated for use to develop natural pigments.
- Germplasm of apple progenitors in Central Asia is being screened for important disease resistances and fruit quality traits and is being incorporated into breeding programs.
- The grape germplasm collection at PGRU is being exploited for improving resistance of grapes to biotic and abiotic stress and screened for nutraceutical properties for enhancing the health benefits of grapes and grape products.
- The vegetable and fruit collections are being evaluated by genotyping by sequencing (GBS) to develop highly diverse subsets and to associate important traits to specific markers. This will make breeding for those traits more efficient.



ACCESSION NO. SUBFILE: CRIS										Date:	2/19/2013
PROJ NO: NYG- AGENCY:											
PROJTYPE: HATCH PROJ STATUS: REVISED MULTISTATE PROJ NO: NE9											
START: 01 OCT 2013 TERM 30 SEP 2018 FY: 2014											
INVESTIGATORS:Zhong, G-Y.; Robertson, L.R.; Chao, C.T.; Griffiths, P., Labate, J.A.; Baldo, A.											
PERFORMING INSTITUTION:											
HORTICULTURAL SCIENCE, NY AGRICULTURAL EXPT. STATION											
GENEVA, NEW YORK 14456											
<b>NE-9 Budget Proposal for Fiscal Year 2013 through 2018</b>											
Period - October - September											
In collaboration with USDA, ARS, Plant Genetic Resources Unit, Geneva, NY 14456											
- ARS Project No. 1910-21000-019-00D "CONSERVATION AND CHARACTERIZATION OF GERmplasm OF SELECTED VEGETABLE CROPS"											
- ARS Project No. 1910-21000-020-00D "CONSERVATION AND UTILIZATION OF THE GENETIC RESOURCES OF APPLES, GRAPES, AND TART CHERRIES"											
Proposed budget includes 4% inflation factor											
Incremental increases have not been added											
<b>Salary costs:</b>											
	FY13/14		FY14/15		FY15/16		FY16/17		FY17/18		
	Dollars	FTE	Dollars	FTE	Dollars	FTE	Dollars	FTE	Dollars	FTE	
Field Techncn - Vegetable Germplasm	\$42,530	1	\$43,806	1	\$45,121	1	\$46,475	1	\$47,870	1	
Farm Manager - Fruit Germplasm	\$75,380	1	\$77,642	1	\$79,972	1	\$82,372	1	\$84,844	1	
Field Techncn -Fruit Germplasm	\$39,397	1	\$40,579	1	\$41,797	1	\$43,051	1	\$44,343	1	
Temp field laborer - Vegetable Germplasm (1 - 6 Mon @12/hr)	\$12,534	0.5	\$12,911	0.5	\$13,299	0.5	\$13,698	0.5	\$14,109	0.5	
Temp field laborer - Vegetable Germplasm (1 - 6 Mon @12/hr)	\$6,267	0.25	\$6,456	0.25	\$6,650	0.25	\$6,850	0.25	\$7,056	0.25	
Field Techncn - - Fruit Germplasm	\$39,480	1	\$40,665	1	\$41,885	1	\$43,142	1	\$44,437	1	
<b>Total Salaries:</b>	<b>\$215,588</b>	<b>4.75</b>	<b>\$222,059</b>	<b>4.75</b>	<b>\$228,724</b>	<b>4.75</b>	<b>\$235,588</b>	<b>4.75</b>	<b>\$242,659</b>	<b>4.75</b>	
<b>Operational costs:</b>											
Supplies	\$3,581		\$3,653		\$3,727		\$3,802		\$3,879		
Field research - land maintenance, pesticides, etc.	\$6,760		\$6,896		\$7,034		\$7,175		\$7,319		
Field equipment repairs	\$3,903		\$3,982		\$4,062		\$4,144		\$4,227		
Seed storage, vernalization, etc.	\$5,447		\$5,556		\$5,668		\$5,782		\$5,898		
Seed testing	\$5,471		\$5,581		\$5,693		\$5,807		\$5,924		
<b>Total operational costs:</b>	<b>\$25,162</b>		<b>\$25,668</b>		<b>\$26,184</b>		<b>\$26,710</b>		<b>\$27,247</b>		
<b>TOTAL NE9 BUDGET ESTIMATE FOR 5 YEARS:</b>	<b>\$240,750</b>		<b>\$247,727</b>		<b>\$254,908</b>		<b>\$262,298</b>		<b>\$269,906</b>		
<b>Other sources of Funding</b>											
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>											
	FY13/14		FY14/15		FY15/16		FY16/17		FY17/18		
	Dollars	FTE	Dollars	FTE	Dollars	FTE	Dollars	FTE	Dollars	FTE	
Salaries: 1910-21000-020-00D - Fruit Gerplasm	\$587,152	6.75	\$598,895	6.75	\$610,873	6.75	\$623,090	6.75	\$635,552	6.75	
1910-21000-019-00D - Vegetable Germplasm	\$714,945	8.02	\$729,244	8.02	\$743,829	8.02	\$758,705	8.02	\$773,879	8.02	
<b>Total Salaries:</b>	<b>\$1,302,097</b>		<b>\$1,328,139</b>		<b>\$1,354,702</b>		<b>\$1,381,796</b>		<b>\$1,409,432</b>		
Note: Fringe benefit rate is 30%											
Travel	\$16,313		\$16,639		\$16,972		\$17,311		\$17,658		
R&M	\$14,140		\$14,423		\$14,711		\$15,005		\$15,306		
Contracts and shipping	\$36,273		\$36,998		\$37,738		\$38,493		\$39,263		
Equipment	\$8,657		\$8,830		\$9,007		\$9,187		\$9,371		
RSA support - Clonal	\$85,980		\$87,700		\$89,454		\$91,243		\$93,068		
Facility and admin support	\$296,920	1.5	\$302,858	1.5	\$308,916	1.5	\$315,094	1.5	\$321,396	1.5	
Supplies	\$113,252		\$115,517		\$117,827		\$120,184		\$122,588		
<b>Total Operational Costs:</b>	<b>\$571,535</b>	<b>16.27</b>	<b>\$582,966</b>	<b>16.27</b>	<b>\$594,625</b>	<b>16.27</b>	<b>\$606,518</b>	<b>16.27</b>	<b>\$618,648</b>	<b>16.27</b>	
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$1,873,632</b>		<b>\$1,911,105</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>\$1,949,327</b>		<b>\$1,988,313</b>		<b>\$2,028,080</b>		
Percentage of ARS Net-To-Location	11.4%		11.5%		11.6%		11.7%		11.7%		

MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 13, 2014

FROM: Gary Thompson, Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education

TO: Members of the Northeast Multi-State Activities Committee (NE-MAC)  
Kirby Stafford III, Chair  
Tim Phipps  
Bob Schrader  
Fred Servello, NERA Chair  
Gary Thompson  
Bill Hare

RE: Action Item for NERA Meeting

By means of this email, I am requesting off-the-top funding in the amount of \$40,788 for the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development, for the period October 1, 2014 through September 30, 2015, for NE-59, Regional Research Coordination, Northeast Region. The regional funds are used to support the salaries of the Center directors and staff. Penn State pays all the fringe benefits associated with these personnel services. This means that the bulk of the USDA-NIFA special research funds for rural development are used to support the program.

The Center continues, through its Director and staff, Board of Directors, and Technical Advisory Committee, to provide excellent leadership, coordination, and financial assistance for rural development and land use research in the region. I strongly support the continuation of these regional research dollars for this purpose.

If you have any questions, please call me. Thank you.

cc: Directors of Agricultural Experiment Station, NE Region  
S. Goetz  
K. Burke  
R. Mize  
T. Shaffer

**NRSP 2014-2015  
Requests for Off-the-Top Funding**

Project	Request FY2012	Authorized FY2012	Request FY2013	Authorized FY2013	Request FY2014	Authorized FY2014	†Request FY2015
NRSP1	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	75,000	75,000	75,000
NRSP3	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
NRSP4	481,182	481,182	481,182	481,182	481,182	481,182	481,182
NRSP6	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000
NRSP7	325,000	325,000	325,000	325,000	325,000	325,000	-
NRSP8	500,000	500,000	500,000	-	500,000	500,000	500,000
NRSP9	175,000	175,000	175,000	175,000	175,000	175,000	175,000
NRSP_temp003							50,018
NRSP_temp301*							325,000
NRSP-temp321							398,631

†Assuming an acceptable midterm review during year three, all NRSP budgets were approved during 2012 Fall ESS Meeting for the duration of their current, five-year cycle.

\*Only one year of funding is being requested.

Project Number	Project Name	Project Period	Midterm Review Year
NRSP-1	National Information Management and Support System (NIMSS)	2011-2016	2014
NRSP-3	The National Atmospheric Deposition Program (NADP)	2009-2014	-
NRSP-4	Enabling Pesticide Registrations for Specialty Crops and Minor Uses	2010-2015	-
NRSP-6	The US Potato Genebank: Acquisition, Classification, Preservation, Evaluation and Distribution of Potato ( <i>Solanum</i> ) Germplasm	2010-2015	-
NRSP-7	A National Agricultural Program for Minor Use Animal Drugs	2009-2014	-
NRSP-8	National Animal Genome Research Program	2008-2013	-
NRSP-9	National Animal Nutrition Program	2010-2015	-
NRSP_temp003	The National Atmospheric Deposition Program (NADP) (NRSP-3 renewal)	2014-2019	2017
NRSP_temp301	A National Agricultural Program for Minor Use Animal Drugs	2014-2015	-
NRSP_temp321	Database Resources for Crop Genomics, Genetics and Breeding Research	2014-2019	2017

## **2014 Experiment Station Section Award for Excellence in Multistate Research**

### **Purpose**

The fundamental mandate of the Multistate Research authority allows State Agricultural Experiment Stations (SAES) to *interdependently* collaborate in projects that two or more states share as a priority, but for which no one state could address singularly. This is a very high standard for any research project, and has become a hallmark of the Multistate Research Program's management objectives.

The Multistate Research authority allows other non-SAES partners to join in these project-based collaborations. Thus, many multistate projects include extension specialists as members as well as Agricultural Research Service or Forest Service research scientists. In addition, many projects even have private sector and foreign participants. Moreover, the majority of multistate projects have participants from more than a single region, with many having representation from all regions such that they are national in scope.

To many, the Multistate Research Program is one of the "best kept secrets" of the Land-Grant University System.

The purpose of this Experiment Station Section Excellence in Multistate Research Award program is to annually recognize those scientists who are conducting exemplary multistate activities and in doing so, enhance the visibility of the multistate program. A recipient Multistate Project will be selected from the pool of nominees submitted by the five regional research associations (NCRA, NERA, SAAESD, WAAESD, and ARD), and deemed by the review panel to exhibit sustained, meritorious and exceptional multistate activities.

### **Award and Presentation**

The national winning project will be recognized by the Experiment Station Committee on Organization and Policy (ESCOP) Chair and USDA/NIFA Administrator during the Awards Program held at the APLU Annual Meeting. Each of the regional award winning projects will also be included in the awards brochure. The title of the national winning project will be added to a plaque located at the USDA Waterfront Centre.

For the past several years, the Experiment Station Directors have approved a monetary prize of \$15,000 of Hatch MRF for the Excellence in Multistate Research Award winner. Up to \$5,000 has been available to cover travel for two members of the recipient project (the Administrative Advisor and Chair or their designees), to attend the awards ceremony at the APLU annual conference. The remaining \$10,000, and any unused travel funds, have been available to support activities which enhance and contribute to the research and/or outreach objectives of that multistate project, consistent with the appropriate use of Hatch funds. Use of these funds is a project committee decision made in conjunction with its Administrative Advisor.

## **Eligibility**

Any current Multistate Project listed in the NIMSS (<http://nimss.umd.edu/>) is eligible for consideration for an Excellence in Multistate Research Award.

## **Basis for Nomination**

Each of the five regional research associations may nominate one Multistate Project chosen from the entire national portfolio of active projects. Nominations shall be made to the Chair of the respective regional multistate review committee (MRC) via the regional Executive Director's office.

Such nominations should describe the:

- Accomplishments that have been realized by the Project as measurable outputs, outcomes and benefits (either directly or through indicators); and
- Synergistic advantages of the particular project derived through interdependency.

The documentation for this type of nomination should be sufficient to allow the review committee members to evaluate the Project according to the criteria listed below.

## **Criteria and Evaluation**

Selection of multistate teams for an Award for Excellence will be based on panel evaluations of nominations that demonstrate: high standards of scientific quality; research relevance to a regional priority; multistate collaboration on the problem's solution; and professional leadership in the conduct of the project. All nominated shall be evaluated using the same criteria including, in descending order of importance, the Project's:

1. Accomplishments, indicated by outputs, outcomes, and impacts,
2. Added value, from the Project's interdependency;
3. Degree of institutional participation (SAES and others as well);
4. Extent of multi-disciplinary activity; and,
5. Amount of integrated activities (i.e., is it multi-functional).
6. Evidence of additional leveraged funding to further the goals of the project.

## **Selection Process**

The ESCOP Science and Technology Committee will serve as the review panel and will select from among the regional nominees a national winner in time for public announcement and award presentation at the APLU Annual Meeting each year.

## **Timeline**

- October – Announcement sent to Directors, Administrative Advisors and NIMSS participants by ESCOP Chair
- February 28 – Nominations due at Offices of the Executive Directors
- March – Nominations reviewed by regional multistate research review or multistate research collaboration committees and recommendations submitted to regional associations
- March/April – Regional associations approve regional nominations at Spring meetings
- April 30 – Associations submit regional nominations to ESCOP Science and Technology Committee
- May – ESCOP Science and Technology Committee reviews regional nominations and submits recommendation for national winner to ESCOP Executive Committee
- June – ESCOP Executive Committee selects national winner
- July – National winner submitted to APLU
- September – National winner announced at ESS meeting
- November – Award made at APLU meeting

## Format for Applications or Nominations

An application or nomination should be a very concise statement. It should include:

**Nominating Region:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Nominator:** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Project or Committee Number and Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Technical Committee Chair:** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Administrative Advisor:** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Summary of Significant Accomplishment(s)** (noting the following):

- The issue, problem or situation addressed by the project or committee;
- The project or committee's objectives;
- The outcome(s) of the research;
- The impacts of the project or activity (actual or anticipated);
- The extent of links to extension that have been formed; and
- Any additional and relevant partnerships, associations or collaborations that deserve mention.

**List of Participating Institutions: Add as an appendix**

Nominations should be **no more than 3 single spaced pages** (Times Roman 12 point and one inch margins) not including appendices and should be submitted by email to the Office of the regional Executive Director, by **c.o.b. February 28, 2014:**

Chris Hamilton, North Central <chamilton@cals.wisc.edu>  
Rubie Mize, Northeast <rgmize@aesop.rutgers.edu>  
Donna Pearce, South <donna\_pearce@ncsu.edu>  
Sarah Lupis, West <Sarah.Lupis@colostate.edu>  
Dr. Carolyn Brooks, ARD-1890's <cbbrooks@umes.edu>

## **Recipients of the Experiment Station Section Award for Excellence in Multistate Research**

### **2013**

SERA005: Sweet Potato Collaborators Conference

### **2012**

NCERA208: Response to Emerging Threat: Soybean Rust

### **2011**

S1032: Improving the Sustainability of Livestock and Poultry Production in the United States

### **2010**

NE1033: Biological Improvement of Chestnut through Technologies that Address Management of the Species, its Pathogens, and Pests

### **2009**

S1039: Biology, impact, and management of soybean insect pests in soybean production systems

### **2008**

NC229: Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Disease: Methods for the integrated control, prevention and elimination of PRRS in United States Swine Herds.



**NERA Planning Grant Update**

March 2014

<u>Number</u>	<u>Proposal Title</u>	<u>Team Leader/Institutions</u>	<u>Funding Status</u>	<u>Results</u>
<b>NE0807</b>	Biochar as a Beneficial Soil Amendment in Agriculture —Development, Performance and Environmental Impact	Joseph Pignatello, CT-AES [Cooperators: CT, MA, ME, NY, VT]	Budget = \$10,000 Expenses = <b>\$1,928.37</b>	USDA(CSREES)/US DoE BRDI preapplication proposal, Biochar – A High-Value, Recyclable Co-product for Environmentally Sustainable Biofuels Production: Development, Performance and Environmental Assessment (\$4.0 million requested), not approved but subsequent proposals prepared. A <b>\$5 million</b> gift has been received.
<b>NE0901</b>	Addressing Research and Extension Needs of the Emerging Cold-Climate Wine Industry in the Northeast and Upper Midwest	Timothy E. Martinson, Cornell [Cooperators: CT, MA, MN, NH, NY, PA, VT, WI]	Budget = \$10,000 Expenses = <b>\$8,789.61</b>	USDA-NIFA SCRI CAP proposal, " Northern grapes: Integrating viticulture, winemaking, and marketing of new cold-hardy cultivars supporting new and growing rural wineries" ( <b>\$2.5 million</b> ); includes NY, CT, MA, VT, IA, MI, ND, SD, IL, MN, NE, WI
<b>NE0905</b>	Integrating Pest Management and Pollinator Protection in Insect-Pollinated Specialty Crops	Kimberly Stoner, CT-AES and Anne Averill, UMASS [Cooperators: CT, MA, ME]	Budget = \$9,900 Expenses = <b>\$1,922.81</b>	USDA-NIFA SCRI grant award "Pollination Security for Northeastern Fruit and Vegetable Crops," ( <b>\$3.5 million</b> ); includes NH, MA, ME NY and CT. Also Connecticut Conservation Innovation Grant from the Natural Resources Conservation Service ( <b>\$75K</b> )
<b>NE0906</b>	The Role of Cultural Specialty Crops in Providing Food Security and Entrepreneurship Opportunities for Refugee and Emerging Ethnic Farmer Populations in the Northeast	Jane Kolodinsky, UVM [Cooperators: DC, VT]	Budget = \$10,000 Expenses = <b>\$508.60</b>	A proposal was submitted to the USDA-NIFA SCRI but it was not funded.

**NERA Planning Grant Update**

March 2014

<b>NE1005</b>	Addressing the Nutritional and Reproductive Research and Extension Needs of the Organic Dairy Industry in the Northeast	David H. Townson, UNH [Cooperators: CT, NY, USDA-ARS, Penn Dutch Cow Care Vet. Practice, NE Organic Dairy Producers Alliance NODPA]	Budget = \$10,000 Expenses = <b>\$4,322.31</b>	USDA-NIFA OREI grant award "Assisting organic dairy producers to meet the demands of new and emerging milk markets" ( <b>\$2.8 million</b> ); includes NH, ME, NY, VT, PA(ARS). A planning grant for <b>\$75K</b> was also received.
<b>NE1008</b>	Healthful Berries: Improving Marketing for Northeast Berry Crops	Mary Ellen Camire, UMaine [Cooperators: MA, NJ, NY, VT]	Budget = \$8,740 Expenses = 0	
<b>NE1104</b>	Evaluating, Maintaining and Enhancing Managed Honey Bees and Bumble Bees in Insect-Pollinated Specialty Crops in the Northeast	Nicholas W. Calderone, Cornell [Cooperators: CT-NH, DE, MA, ME, Beekeepers: D. Mendes and D. Hackenberg]	Budget = \$9,900 Expenses = 0	
<b>NE1201</b>	Oilseed Crop Growth and Processing for Northeast Farm Profitability	Ryan Elias, Penn State [Cooperators: VT, ME, MA, NY-Cornell]	Budget = \$9,761 Expenses = <b>\$5,528.46</b>	The NE1201 group met on March 18, 2013 and had a roundtable discussion with farmers/producers on March 19 at the 2013 Oilseed Producers Meeting in Vermont.
<b>NE1203</b>	Development of Proposals that Reduce Childhood Obesity through Local Procurement, Meal Preparation, and Activity Based Interventions	Jane Kolodinsky, UVM [Cooperators: NY-Cornell, Community Partners: Family Cook Productions, Vermont Food Education Every Day (FEED)]	Budget = \$7,000 Expenses = <b>\$1,525.33</b>	A proposal was submitted to the USDA AFRI, entitled "Increasing food skills and decreasing distance from the food system to address teen obesity" with a budget of \$3,091,524

**NERA Planning Grant Update**

March 2014

<b>NE1204</b>	Development of Proposal in Response to the AFRI RFA for Obesity Prevention Among Older Teens/Emerging Adults	Carol Byrd-Bredbenner, NJ [Cooperators: RI, ME, NH, WV]	Budget = \$6,000 Expenses = <b>\$2,332.71</b>	<p>The group revised and submitted the proposal again last year but was not funded (only 2 grants were funded via AFRI). Although this multistate group was one of the 2 grant recipients, it was not for this project (PI is at U Tennessee).</p> <p>They are awaiting release of the AFRI RFP (was supposed to occur in February) to determine how to proceed with the AFRI grant program this year. They are exploring other funding possibilities at USDA.</p>
<b>NE1205</b>	Prevalence and Control of Foodborne Pathogens from Foods Purchased at Farmers' Markets, Farm Stands, Cooperatives, and/or Other Direct Retail Outlets in the Northeast	Catherine Cutter, PennState [Cooperators: CT-S, VT, ME, RI, NH, MA, NY-Cornell]	Budget = \$9,500 Expenses = <b>\$6,042.16</b>	<p>The group continued to submit proposals and Letters of Intent (LOI) to USDA for this project.</p> <p>Recently, they submitted a full proposal addressing this topic to USDA-AFRI for a fellowship in support of a doctoral student who is conducting the research for this study.</p> <p>They also submitted a LOI for this year's USDA-AFRI Foundational Food Safety Program and will decide on next steps after they hear back from USDA regarding the LOI.</p>

**NERA Planning Grant Update**

March 2014

<b>NE1301</b>	Examining the Role of Regional Food Networks (RFNs) and Their Relationships to Long-Term Resilience in the US Food System through the Linkages of People, Place, and Prosperity	Kathleen Liang, UVM [Cooperators: PA, MD, OR, CUNY, USDA]	Budget = \$8,680 Expenses = <b>\$6,848.98</b>	The group met on Feb. 23-24, 2013 in Washington, DC. The planning grant resulted to three USDA funded projects worth <b>\$1.5 million</b> . See details on page 5.
<b>NE1304</b>	Tree biomechanics and mitigating tree hazards	Mark Rudnicki, CT [Cooperators: NJ, MA, WV]	Budget = \$6,000 Expenses = <b>\$4,163.06</b>	The team assembled and submitted a proposal to the 2014 NUCFAC challenge grant. It made it through several rounds and on March 7 the group was informed that it made it to the final round and have been invited to submit a full proposal to NUCFAC.
<b>NE1401</b>	Focusing Chemical Ecology on Agricultural Pest Management Priorities	Michael Mazourek, NY [Cooperators: MA, PA, IN]	Budget = \$9,750	
<b>NE1410</b>	Organic Lawn Care Practices for the Northeast	James A. Murphy, NJ [Cooperators: CT, MA, MD, NY, PA, USDA-ARS]	Budget = \$5,600	
			Total expenses = <b>\$43,912.40</b>	Total awards/gifts = <b>\$15,450,000</b>

## NERA Planning Grant Update

March 2014

USDA Foundational Program, Entrepreneurship Division (PD and PI - Kathleen Liang at UVM, Co-PIs - Oregon State University, Penn State University, City University of New York, University of Maryland at Eastern shore)

**Understanding and Designing Long-Term Resilience in the US Food System: the Role of Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Supporting Regional Food Networks**

**\$500,000 July 2014 – June 2017**

**Summary:** This project will introduce a novel approach to identify, characterize, link, and evaluate the entrepreneurial potential and innovativeness of Regional Food Networks by integrating social, economic, and ecological factors. The focus is to study integrated and entrepreneurial/innovative concepts of RFNs and their contributions to resilience at both the enterprise level and the community level, which directly relates to identifying new and creative economic and social opportunities for rural communities and food security.

USDA Foundational Program, Rural Development Division (Co-PI – Kathleen Liang at UVM, with PI in University of New Hampshire and Co-PI at University of Maine)

**Sustaining and Enhancing Local Agriculture in Rural Areas: Assessing Key Producer and Consumer Issues in Northern New England**

**\$500,000 July 2014 – June 2017**

This project is designed to assess the major issues and constraints faced by suppliers and marketers of produce grown in rural northern New England (Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont). We will identify the locally produced fruits and vegetables with the highest probability of profitable production in northern New England, and to identify issues in consumer preferences for local/organic/sustainably grown produce and the potential premium these products command. We will construct an integrated extension component in all three states which will coordinate involvement of stakeholder groups, and provide foundation for the consumer surveys and integrate project results into current and future extension programming dealing with small producers and marketers in this predominantly rural region.

USDA Foundational Program, Small and Medium Sized Farm Division (Co-PI – Kathleen Liang at UVM, PI-Mary Peabody and Co-PI Jason Parker both at UVM)

**Examining Farm Labor Decisions on Long-term Profitability and Farm Enterprise Development**

**\$500,000 July 2014 – June 2017**

The goal of this project is to identify the relationships among farm labor decision-making, profitability, household dynamics (goals and needs, demographics), optimal diversification balance (i.e. number of unique enterprises) and scale of production, marketing channel, and maintenance or enhancement of quality of life on small and mid-size farms in rural communities such as Vermont and other states.