



Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors

With the inauguration now completed, the Biden Administration is moving forward with implementation of changes in the Department of Agriculture and, in agriculture, in general. Much of the focus on agriculture will be dedicated to climate change. Be on the watch for opportunities on regenerative agriculture, carbon sequestration in agriculture, ecosystem services, and database creation related to greenhouse gas reduction through conservation. Further, as we've shared previously, the "system" is seeking opportunities that might arise from COVID19 relief. Check out the first action item bullet on infrastructure. It's not a new topic, but it's one for which we'd like to hear your opinion.

While this is a short newsletter this week, we have much to look forward to.

"We look ahead in our uniquely American way – restless, bold, optimistic – and set our sights on the nation we know we can be and we must be." – President Joseph R. Biden, [Inaugural Address, January 20, 2021](#).

### Action items:

- The effort dedicated to seeking support for infrastructure continues and we're seeking your input and perspectives on this initiative. As we reported to you on January 14 in the NERA newsletter supplement and in our mailing to NERA directors on January 16, the APLU hosted a webinar, *Agricultural Research Infrastructure Advocacy*, on January 11. The webinar shared the intent of the APLU to advance a \$11.5 billion request for research infrastructure support to address a nationwide issue of deferred maintenance in our colleges of agriculture. The NERA Executive Committee drafted a [document](#) expressing reflections on the effort. As background, the key points of the webinar are described in this [PowerPoint presentation](#).

As a supplement to the Advocacy Webinar, the ESS has assembled an **ARIA Advocacy Toolbox**, located [here](#). It includes a [leave behind](#), [slide deck](#), [talking points](#), and a [timeline](#).

- Ali Mitchell, NEED Executive Director, and I submitted [comments](#) to the National Science Foundation's RFI on its 2022-2026 Strategic Plan. In short, NEED/NERA made suggestions for collaboration in areas of convergence science (e.g., climate science, preservation of natural resources, and stable and safe food supply) and advocated for broad participation on review panels; investment in workforce education and development; investing in competitive research that supports small 1862 institutions, 1890 Land-grant universities and colleges, and an 1994 Tribal Colleges; support for core science infrastructure; and investment in engagement/outreach networks. While there were not many submissions through the comment portal, Ali and I appreciated the opportunity to share thoughts on behalf of NEED and NERA.

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### Reminders/Updates:

- *To recap:* NIFA will be migrating project initiation data from REEport to the NIFA Reporting System (NRS) in preparation for the roll-out of the new research initiation module for AREERA capacity-funded research, which is scheduled to go live in mid-March 2021. The cutoff date for submitting new research project initiations in REEport is February 12, 2021, for Hatch regular and Hatch Multistate. Project initiations must be submitted by February 12 and approved by NIFA by March 1 to be migrated into the new research initiation module. Additional guidance can be found at [NIFA Reporting System](#).

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***Informational items:***

- Bill Hoffman, former NIFA chief of staff, was recently named as a NIFA National Science Liaison stationed in Washington, DC. In this role he will work with various stakeholder groups to strengthen the social sciences and Extension with DC-centric agency interactions, as well as providing linkages between those stakeholders and the appropriate NIFA staff based in Kansas City. We look forward to continuing to work closely with Bill.
- *Second time:* The Final Rule for the U.S. Domestic Hemp Production Program was posted on January 15 and was formally published in the [Federal Register](#) on January 19, 2021. The Final Rule becomes effective on March 22, 2021. New guidance materials on sampling, testing, and disposal/remediation are available on the Agricultural Marketing Service's [Hemp Program](#) website.
- The University of Maryland College of Agriculture and Natural Resources is seeking applicants for an Agricultural Technician Lead position. Visit <https://ejobs.umd.edu> for more information and to apply.



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