



As we approach the vernal equinox, we are focused on the virtual NERA Spring Meeting on March 15. (See the first [action item](#).) In anticipation of our Spring meeting, we ask that you join and please bring your expertise, thoughts, and enthusiasm!

“Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm.” – Ralph Waldo Emerson (1841) in *Essays, First and Second Series*. New York: Crowell, 1951.

Action items:

- **NERA Spring Meeting:** NERA will meet virtually on March 15 from 8:30 AM-12:00 PM. Please mark your calendar! We've created a [NERA Spring Meeting 2022 landing page](#), the meeting agenda and supporting materials are posted there.
- In the coming weeks, the Board on Agriculture Assembly (BAA) will be issuing a ballot that establishes the Communications and Marketing Committee (CMC) as a standing committee. First, if you are issued a ballot, please cast a vote. (Not casting a vote is a “no” vote.) As the Executive Director that backstops the CMC, my recommendation to you is to cast a vote in the affirmative. This action would elevate the communications and marketing efforts of the system and better support the Experiment Station Section.

Reminders/Updates:

- NERA's listserv is migrating to a new address as part of the University of Rhode Island's implementation of the Google Groups listserv module. The new address for the NERA listserv is nera-group@uri.edu. Stay tuned!
- The Center for Tropical and Subtropical Aquaculture (CTSA, University of Hawaii) is hosting a discussion on "Funding for Regional Aquaculture Centers (RACs)" on Wednesday, March 16, 2022, 9am – 10am Hawaii-Aleutian Time (2-3 pm ET; 1-2 pm CT; 12-1 pm MT; 11am-12pm PT). While the five RACS are viewed as important and relevant resources for the diversified nationwide aquaculture industry, funding for the RACs is one of the small lines in the NIFA budget and frequently zeroed in the President's budget. Please contact [Reggie Harrell](#) (Director of the Northeast Regional Aquaculture Center, NRAC, University of Maryland) for an invitation and a link to the meeting.
- If you had not heard, the Administrative Heads Section (AHS) and the Council for Agricultural Research, Extension and Teaching (CARET) are currently meeting, March 6-9. [Registration](#) is required. Here's a link to the [virtual event schedule](#).

Informational items:

- The College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences (CAHNRS) at Washington State University (WSU) Tri-Cities Campus seeks a visionary and distinguished leader to be [Founding Chair](#) of the newly established Department of Viticulture and Enology.
- The Agricultural Research Service-USDA seeks a [Supervisory Research Plant Physiologist/Geneticist \(Plants\)/Agricultural Engineer](#) to serve as the Research Leader for the Plant Physiology & Genetics Research Unit of the Arid-Land Agricultural Research Center in Maricopa, AZ.
- NIFA has released the [RFA for the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative](#) (OREI). OREI is particularly interested in projects that emphasize research, education and outreach that assist farmers and ranchers with whole farm planning by delivering practical research-based information. There's \$30M in the funding pool and awards are expected to range from \$50K to \$3M. Applications are due on March 31, 2022.
- The USDA intends to invest \$1B to support climate smart activities. The new [Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities](#) will finance pilot projects that create market opportunities for U.S. agricultural and forestry products that use climate-smart practices and include innovative, cost-effective ways to measure and verify greenhouse gas benefits. The USDA is now accepting project applications [here](#) for fiscal year 2022.
- Please hold June 5-7, 2022, on your calendar in anticipation of the NEED/NERA Joint Summer Meeting at the Portland Regency in Portland, ME.
- **And again, plenty of time:** The University of Tennessee will be hosting the [2nd U.S. Precision Livestock Farming Conference \(USPLF 2023\)](#) scheduled for **May 21 – 24, 2023** in Knoxville, TN. The conference theme is *Field Implementation of PLF*. Abstract submission will open on May 15, 2022, and papers are sought in the following topic areas: Sensors and Sensing in PLF; Data Management and Algorithm Development; Measuring, Modeling, and Managing of Dynamic Responses; and Societal Impacts of PLF.



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