



The dog days of summer are here as the pandemic continues to pose challenges to our operations. Please keep us posted on how you're navigating current events. During a recent Northeast Administrative Heads section teleconference, colleague Jan Nyrop shared that the Cornell Center for Data Science for Enterprise and Society had engaged in [COVID-19 modelling for Cornell's fall semester](#). The framework provided by the model was intended to support university leadership decision making. Interesting reading.

“No one gets fridge magnets for the travel this summer,
because this season we have gone too far.
And for all the trips you make inwards,
there are no souvenirs and no postcards.”

– Jasleen Kaur Gumber, 2015. *Ginger and Honey: An Unusual Free Verse Poetry Collection*.

Action items:

- NEED and NERA co-hosted a listening session on July 14 for the [Agriculture Innovation Agenda](#). A draft of the comments that NEED and NERA will be sending to the USDA has been sent to the directors and is [posted on the NERA website](#). We encourage you to share those comments with your scientists and stakeholders should they be interested in submitting comments to the USDA through the [Federal eRulemaking Portal](#).
- Last week, the Joint COPS met over a period three days. Here are our take-aways from the meeting. There is much interest across the system in the development of a strategic communications and marketing plan. An effective communications plan is necessary to support future advocacy which will revolve around increasing the level of capacity funds and competitive funds. (No surprises there.) There continues to be considerable interest in infrastructure. The former Sightlines study has been updated and the deferred maintenance figure for the “system” is north of \$11 billion. The APLU is still advocating for COVID-19 recovery support for NIFA through a \$300 million ask to offset the effects of the pandemic research shutdown. The good news: the Senate introduced a bill on Friday, July 23, 2020, called the Research Investment to Spark the Economy (RISE) which complements a companion bill filed in the House to authorize funding for disrupted research work. Stay tuned. NIFA is making progress hiring and is about at 50% capacity. (Of the 302 positions authorized for the agency, they currently have 156 of those filled.) NIFA has committed to improving trust, respect, and agility of the agency and is engaged in an effort called Collaboratively Achieving Functional Excellence (CAFÉ). Interestingly, the program was supported by Adel Shirmohammadi while he was on sabbatical with NIFA. CAFÉ is focused on us and our experiences with NIFA.

- The ballot of candidates for NERA committees, ESCOP committees, and Administrative Advisers passed by majority votes. Here are the new committee members.

- Multistate Activities Committee (10 approve; 0 reject; 0 abstain) – Puneet Srivastava and Jan Nyrop
- Liaison to NEED (10 approve; 0 reject; 0 abstain) – Mark Hutton
- Northeastern Regional Aquaculture Center (NRAC) Board of Directors (9 approve; 0 reject; 1 abstain) – Anton Bekkerman
- ESCOP Budget and Legislative (9 approve; 0 reject; 1 abstain) – Puneet Srivastava and Anton Bekkerman
- ESCOP NRSP Review Committee (10 approve; 0 reject; 0 abstain) – Matt Wilson

New Administrative Advisers all passed with a 10 approve; 0 reject; 0 abstain majority.

- *NE1943 Biology, Ecology & Management of Emerging Disease Vectors* - Mark Hutton
- *NE1944 Management of the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug* – Mark Hutton
- *NE1727 Influence of Ovary, Uterus, and Embryo on Pregnancy Success in Ruminants* –Dave Townson
- *NE1939 Improving the Health Span of Aging Adults through Diet and Physical Activity* – Jean Harvey
- *NECC29 Northeastern Corn Improvement Conference* – Margaret Smith
- *NE1720 Multi-state Coordinated Evaluation of Winegrape Cultivars and Clones* –Margaret Smith
- *NE1833 Biological Improvement of Chestnut through Technologies that Address Management of the Species and its Pathogens and Pests* – Brad Hillman
- *NRSP4 Facilitating Registration of Pest Management Technology for Specialty Crops and Specialty Uses* – Moses Kairo
- *NRSP10 National Database Resources for Crop Genomics, Genetics and Breeding Research* – Margaret Smith

Many thanks for casting a vote!

- We are still seeking [administrative advisers](#) for two NE multistate research projects (*NE1791 Mycobacterial Diseases of Animals* and *NE1938 Carbon Dynamics and Hydromorphology in Depressional Wetland Systems*), one NE Coordinating Committee (*NECC2001 Sustainable Farm Energy Production and Use*), and one NRSP (*NRSP3 National Atmospheric Deposition Program [NADP].*) As we've shared in the past, there is no requirement to be a disciplinary expert.

Reminders/Updates:

- In the newsletter of July 13, we sought your input on the impact of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) announcement that international students at colleges that were offering courses exclusively online as a consequence of the pandemic would not be issued student visas or otherwise be allowed to enter or remain in the United States. On July 14, ICE walked back the policy that would have forced international students out of the country if their classes moved online.

- Mark your calendars: The Annual ESS/ARD Meeting originally scheduled to be face-to-face in Baltimore will instead be held virtually. The Planning Committee intends to engage directors on the original dates, September 28-30, and is looking at hosting the meeting in 2-hours slots in the evening (6-8 PM EDT) to enable all directors, from the East Coast to the Western territories, to join.

- The APLU Annual Meeting will be held virtually on November 9-11, 2020. The theme for the meeting is **Resilience and Equity**.

Informational items:

- On July 23, NIFA announced new grant opportunities to assist early career researchers and small and mid-sized or minority-serving degree-granting institutions that previously had limited institutional success receiving federal funds. The New Investigator Grants will open in FY 2021.
- The Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development is seeking applications for two [one-year post docs](#).
- The University of Maine in collaboration with the Northeast Climate Hub is seeking applicants for the Northeast Climate Adaptation Fellows Vegetable and Fruit Program for Commercial Farmers and Agricultural Advisors. [Applications](#) are due on October 1st.
- Dr. Ali Fares, Prairie View A&M, is seeking a [postdoctoral researcher](#) to assist with ongoing academic research funded through NSF-INFEWS called Reducing Energy Barriers For Novel Water Supply Use in Sustainable Agriculture.



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