



NERA hosted a best practices discussion last Tuesday; the topic was “research continuity and research re-initiation.” While there is breadth in the region on “when” closed laboratories will re-open, all institutions are engaged in planning for re-opening. That’s a silver lining!

“You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face... You must do the thing you think you cannot do.” -Eleanor Roosevelt, 1960. *You Learn by Living: Eleven Keys for a More Fulfilling Life*. HarperCollins Publisher, New York, NY.

### Action items:

- Last Tuesday, NERA hosted a conversation on research continuity and research re-initiation. While research re-initiation will occur gradually, the good news is that all the institutions that participated in the call reported planning for research continuity. To assist your planning, we share this link to [UC Berkeley's Principles and Framework Guiding a Phased Approach to Restarting University Research Activity](#). The resource is updated frequently and is open for your use.
- Save the date: The [ESS/AES/ARD Annual Meeting](#) is expected to be held as planned on September 28 – September 30, 2020 in Baltimore, MD. The theme of the meeting is “Inclusive Excellence.”
- Thanks for casting ballots! NERA has chosen the Northeast’s ESS Excellence in Leadership Award winner (to be announced later.) You also supported Gordian/Sightline’s proposal to do Phase 1 only and update the original report. This report is the foundation of the system’s ask for \$8.4 billion support for updating infrastructure.

### Reminders/Updates:

- NERA was a signatory on a letter to House and Senate leadership that requested support, \$380 million, for NIFA (\$80 million for Extension and \$300 million for AFRI, Hatch, McIntire-Stennis, Evans-Allen, and Tribal College Research.) This request was part of the Phase 4 COVID-19 relief package. Importantly, the letter had 270+ organizational signatories representing national, regional, and local ag interests from across the country.
- The Regional Rural Development Centers have developed a statement titled "[Rural Broadband Investment Urgently Needed in the COVID-19 Crisis](#)." It's a sobering and compelling read.

### Informational items:

- NIFA has released a request for regional proposals dedicated to establishing [Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Networks](#). The application deadline is July 25, 2020.

- The USDA Northeast Climate Hub is analyzing the long-term economic impact of implementing soil health-related practices on crop land, specifically comparing conventional tillage, no (or reduced) tillage and cover cropping over time. They hypothesize that improving soil health provides agricultural producers with greater resiliency to climate change factors and could help mitigate impacts. To that end, the Climate Hub is interested in identifying long-term research projects comparing tillage regimes and/or cover cropping practices that quantified crop yield and soil health indicators in the Northeast. The Hub understands that several long-term projects that meet their criteria have been conducted in the northeast that may or may not have been published and are seeking help to identify these projects and those in charge of curating the data. To provide information, please contact Michel Cavigelli, ARS, Beltsville, [Michel.cavigelli@usda.gov](mailto:Michel.cavigelli@usda.gov).
- NIFA has developed a website for providing [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Resources for Partners](#). Check it out.
- Second time: NIFA recently added a program area to its main Agricultural and Food Research Initiative RFA: Rapid Response to Novel Coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) Impacts Across Food and Agricultural Systems. Deadline to submit applications is June 4. NIFA will expedite application evaluation and awards review to ensure rapid project start-up. For more information and to apply, [view the AFRI funding opportunity](#).
- We've created an archive of the [Institutional COVID-19 Resources of NERA Members](#). This list includes the URLs for the publicly-facing pages posted by your institutions. We share this as a resource for you to quickly see how the collective membership is responding to the pandemic.



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