

Report and Recommendations

NORTHEAST MULTISTATE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE MEETING

May 29, 2018

1:00pm-2:30pm EDT, Teleconference

In attendance: Fred Servello (Chair – Maine), Brad Hillman (Rutgers), Eric Wommack (Delaware), Gary Thompson (Penn State)

Ex officio: Rick Rhodes (NERA), David Leibovitz (NERA)

Requests to Write

1. NE18515: *Development and Evaluation of Broccoli Adapted to the Eastern US*, 10/2018 – 09/2023 [New Project Request, submitted by Thomas Bjorkman, Cornell and Lincoln Zota, Florida]
 - Expensive faculty are not required for broccoli screening – the proposal includes a component about measuring yield
 - No objections to the concept, but the research component should be stronger
 - Are breeders (university based or otherwise) involved?
 - How will the proposal deal with genomics?
 - **MAC recommendation: Approve the request to write with revision. The group will be advised to revise the objectives to better address a research component beyond purely screening.**

Request to Approve Peer Reviewed Project

1. NE_TEMP1834: *Genetic Bases for Resistance and Immunity to Avian Diseases*, 10/2018 – 09/2023 [Renewal of NE1334, AA: Robert Taylor-WVU]
 - NOTE: This proposal has been revised in response to peer reviewers' and the MAC's comments from February 2018.
 - Project has a strong, productive history
 - Faculty are well-represented across the region
 - Lots of outputs, the group works well together beyond the aggregation of those outputs
 - Placeholder: NE_TEMP1834 is a strong candidate for the 2019 Northeast Award for Excellence in Multistate Research
 - **NERA previously approved NE_TEMP1834 and the OED will send to NIFA for final approval.**
2. NE_TEMP1835: *Resource Optimization in Controlled Environment Agriculture*, 10/2018 – 09/2023 [Renewal of NE1335, AA: Adel Shirmohammadi-Maryland]
 - Reviews were generally positive
 - Scientific merit was not emphasized – the emphasis was on key areas in the 'controlled environment agriculture' area of focus
 - This group works together in areas where the region needs to have expertise

- Quality will rise and fall based on participation and leadership within the group
 - Digital Agriculture / Ag Engineering interface is important for the region
 - **A motion for the MAC to approve the project was introduced by Gary Thompson, seconded by Eric Wommack, and unanimously approved.**
 - **MAC recommendation: Bring NE_TEMP1835 to NERA for approval**
3. NE_TEMP1838: *Development of a Weed Emergence Model for the Northeastern United States*, 10/2018 – 09/2023 [New Project Proposal, AA: Margaret Smith-Cornell]
- The project seems more targeted to a specific outcome than others
 - Description deals with weed emergence and climate
 - Activities include validating and expanding models for weed emergence
 - Northeast region does have a need for a weed proposal
 - Reviews were split: two reviews gave ‘unacceptable’ grades and strong criticism on technical merit
 - i. Does the team have the capability to build a model beyond those that currently exist?
 - Participation list is strong (representation from around the Northeast, plus Virginia Tech, UC Davis, Indiana, Michigan)
 - **MAC recommendation: Return the project to the technical team, have them respond to peer reviews, include on the next MAC meeting agenda**

Administrative Adviser Assignment

1. NE18515: Development and Evaluation of Broccoli Adapted to the Eastern US, 10/2018 – 09/2023 [New Request to Write]
 - Looks like a strong fit for a Geneva, NY Administrative Adviser
 - **Rick will reach out to Jan Nyrop to ask if he can serve as AA during the MAC review/approval process**
2. NE1602: *Explorations in the Turfgrass Phytobiome: Understanding Microbial Associations and Developing Tools for Management*, 10/2016-9/2020 [Interim AA: Bill Miller, UMass]
 - New UMass AA has not yet been identified

Informational Items (Proposals not discussed during this MAC meeting)

1. ***Proposals in Draft Status:***
 - NECC_TEMP1812: Northeast Coordinating Committee on Soil Testing, 10/2018 – 09/2023 [Renewal of NECC1312, AA: Rick Rhodes, NERA]
 - NE_TEMP1832: Biological Control of Arthropod Pests and Weeds, 10/2018 – 09/2023 [Renewal of NE1332, AA: Jan Nyrop, Cornell]
2. ***Proposals Submitted as Final (Awaiting Peer Review):***
 - NEERA_TEMP1806: Management of the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug, 10/2018 – 09/2023 [Renewal of NEERA1306, AA: Ted Andreadis, CAES]
3. ***Proposals Under Peer Review:***

- NE_TEMP1833: Biological Improvement of Chestnut through Technologies that Address Management of the Species, its Pathogens and Pests, 10/2018 – 09/2023 [Renewal of NE1333, AA: Brad Hillman, Rutgers]
- NE_TEMP1836: Improving Quality and Reducing Losses in Specialty Fruit Crops through Storage Technologies, 10/2018 – 09/2023 [Renewal of NE1336, AA: Chris Watkins, Cornell]
- NE_TEMP9: Conservation and Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources, 10/2018 – 09/2023 [Renewal of NE9, AA: Jan Nyrop, Cornell]
- NECC_TEMP29: Northeastern Corn Improvement Conference, 10/2018 – 09/2023 [Renewal of NECC29, AA: Margaret Smith, Cornell]