

Report and Recommendations
Northeast Multistate Activities Committee Meeting
via Zoom
Monday, September 11, 2017

Voting members in attendance: Fred Servello - Chair (NERA/Maine), Eric Wommack (NERA/Delaware), Brad Hillman (NERA/New Jersey), Gary Thompson (NERA/Pennsylvania), Pat Vittum (NEED/Massachusetts), Dennis Calvin (NEED/Pennsylvania)

Ex-officio: Rick Rhodes (Executive Director, NERA), David Leibovitz (Coordinator, NERA)

1.) Requests to Write

- 1.) *Genetic Bases for Resistance and Immunity to Avian Diseases* [Rewrite of NE1334] – Bob Taylor, WVU (Proposed AA); Rodrigo Gallardo, UC Davis
- 2.) *Biological Improvement of Chestnut through Technologies that Address Management of the Species, its Pathogens and Pests* [Rewrite of NE1333]
- 3.) *Sustaining Herbaria as Key Resources for Addressing Agricultural and Environmental Issues* – Dave Barrington, UVM [New Coordinating Committee]

Recommendation: The MAC unanimously recommends approval of the requests to write.

2.) Regional Off-the-Top Budget Discussion

- 1.) NE9, Geneva
 - NE9 supports a germplasm center in Geneva at \$262,298 per year (support level in FY'17), approximately 2.2% of the Northeast regional take.
 - Each region supports a germplasm center for different plants: South (\$480k / 3%), West (\$308k / 2.3%), North-Central (\$523k / 3.5%)
 - Should we continue to support regional off-the-top funding?
 - The Geneva germplasm center would have difficulty operating if funding was discontinued, and it could have an effect on the other regional germplasm centers. We'll pay for it one way or the other – if it's not regional off-the-top, it will be off the top.
 - What crops does the NE germplasm center support? What stations are using it besides Geneva?
 - Tom Burr provided a summary to NERA last time a "decision point" discussion occurred on regional off-the-top funding and convinced the association to stay the course.
- 2.) NE59, Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development, Penn State
 - Penn State AgSci subsidizes the NERCRD.
 - NERCRD has obtained additional funding from outside sources and is encouraged to continue doing so.
 - The region gets a lot of benefits from its collective support of the NERCRD.
 - NERCRD requests \$40,788 (partially supports a communications manager, administrative assistant and director.)

Recommendation: The MAC recommends continuation of funding for NE9 and NE59. In the upcoming year, NERA will discuss our philosophies associated with regional off-the-top funding.

NERA will request a summary report on the Geneva germplasm facility from Jan Nyrop. The following websites list the germplasm that are archived at the different regionally supported centers.

Northeast (Geneva, NY): <https://www.ars.usda.gov/northeast-area/geneva-ny/plant-genetic-resources-research/>.

West (WASU, Pullman, WA): <https://www.ars.usda.gov/pacific-west-area/pullman-wa/plant-germplasm-introduction-and-testing-research/>

South (Griffin, GA): <https://www.ars.usda.gov/southeast-area/griffin-ga/pgrcu/>

North Central (ISU, Ames, IA): <https://www.ars.usda.gov/midwest-area/ames/plant-introduction-research/>

4.) Request to Approve Peer-Reviewed Coordinating Committees

1.) NECC_TEMP1702 - *Establishment of a Formal Structure for the Minor Use Animal Drug Program*, 10/2017 – 09/2022 [Successor to NRSP7] AA: Seeking replacement

- Drafted by NRSP7 AA Margaret Smith, Cornell as a successor to NRSP7
- Goal is to have a robust conversation about minor use animal drugs
- CC would serve as a mechanism to bring people together as an interim step for the next output
- Odd objective basically proposes seeking other funding pathways besides NIFA

Recommendation: The MAC unanimously supports approval of NECC_TEMP1702, with the requirement that the technical team revises Objective 3. The objective should describe the need or problem the group is trying to address rather than describing the group's solution of choice.

2.) NECC_TEMP1700 – *Equine Clinical Studies*, 10/2017 – 09/2022 [Renewal of NECC1200; AA: Cameron Faustman, stepped down, seeking replacement]

- Questions about whether this warrants a renewal. The group could be making a “check the box” level of effort
- Not many opportunities in the Northeast for folks interested in Equine Clinical Studies to get together.
- CC has been established for five years, why have the objectives not yet been met?
- Suggestion for approval with a mid-term review, to clearly gauge the progress of the CC.

Recommendation: The MAC unanimously recommends approval of NECC_TEMP1700, with the requirement that it undergoes a mid-term review to gauge the group's movement toward set outcomes.

5.) Administrative Adviser Recommendations

- 1) NE1962 - *Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Other Green Environments: Understanding Human and Community Benefits and Mechanisms*, 10/2017-9/2022. [Old NE 1962 AA: Fred Servello]
- 2) NE1731 - *Collaborative Potato Breeding and Variety Development Activities to Enhance Farm Sustainability in the Eastern US.*, 10/2017-9/2022. [NE 1231 AA: Fred Servello]
- 3) NE1720 - *Coordinated Evaluation of Winegrape Cultivars*, 10/2017-9/2022. [NE 1020 AA: Brad Hillman]

Recommendation: The MAC recommends that NERA approve AA assignments for NE 1962, NE 1731 and NE 1720.

- 4) NRSP6 - *The US Potato Genebank: Acquisition, Classification, Preservation, Evaluation and Distribution of Potato (Solanum) Germplasm*, 10/2015-9/2020 [Ed Ashworth: retired]
- 5) NRSP9 - National Animal Nutrition Program, 10/2015-9/20 [Cameron Faustman, stepped down]
- 6) NECC_TEMP1700 – Equine Clinical Studies, 10/2017 – 09/2022 [Renewal of NECC1200: Cameron Faustman stepped down]

Recommendation: The MAC recommends that NERA decide on these AA assignments in Philadelphia. AAs for NRSP6, NRSP9 and NECC_TEMP1700, NERA have been solicited in a recent NERA newsletter. Directors can reach out to designees if they identify somebody appropriate.

Numbers 7 and 8 below anticipate the recommendation and approval of the projects and suggest these Administrative Adviser appointments:

- 7) NE_TEMP1748, *Mastitis Resistance to Enhance Dairy Food Safety*, 10/2017-9/2022 [Renewal of NE1048] – Kumar Venkitanarayanan, UConn as proposed AA to replace Cameron Faustman, UConn (**Support from Cameron Faustman**)
- 8) NECC_TEMP1702, *Minor Use Animal Drug Program*, 10/2017-9/2022 [Successor to NRSP7] – seeking AA, suggestion for Margaret Smith, Cornell to serve (**Support from Jan Nyrop**)

Number 9 seeks a change in Administrative Adviser:

- 9) NE1334, *Genetic Bases for Resistance and Immunity to Avian Diseases*, 10/2013-9/2018 – Bob Taylor, WVU replacing Mark Rieger, Delaware (**Support from Dan Robison**)

Recommendation: The MAC recommends assignment of AAs for NE_TEMP1748, NECC_TEMP1748 and NE1334 as described above.

6.) Informational - NRSP Discussion

- 1.) Administrative Advisers for NRSPs
 - NRSP Guidelines dictate that NRSPs require representative Administrative Advisers from each region.

- NRSPs were never meant to be renewed indefinitely; they're meant to be phased out and groups could reorganize into multistate projects or coordinating committees.
- Example: NRSP7 (Minor Use Animal Drug Program) was phased out and the group is reorganizing as a coordinating committee.

7.) Informational – NERA Decision on Peer-Reviewed Project Proposals

The MAC made recommendations to NERA on three peer-reviewed project proposals, NERA cast votes and results are listed below:

- NE_TEMP1748 (Mastitis): Approve-13, Reject-0, Abstain-0, Comments-none
- NE_TEMP1701 (Mycobacterial): Approve-13, Reject-0, Abstain-0, Comments-none
- NE_TEMP1749 (Rural Econ): Approve-12, Reject-1, Abstain-0, Comments (paraphrased)-
 - a. send strong message to group: project will be evaluated mid-term.
 - b. Project has incorporated the reviewer's suggestions.
 - c. I vote to reject, no need to accept mediocrity.
 - d. I am grudgingly supporting...

Action: Based on the votes cast (13 of 15 stations), NERA has sent all three proposals to NIFA for final review and approval. NE_TEMP1749 will undergo a mid-term review.

8.) NERA Planning Grants

1.) [17-1] - *Scientists Interested in Identifying Non-antibiotic Alternative Therapies for the Treatment of Bovine Mastitis in the NE Region* – Kasey Moyes, Maryland

- Proposal meets the RFA and addresses a problem area for the Northeast
- Antibiotic free meat / products in the Northeast are on target with the demand
- Team is strong, but proposal does not clearly define a strong research and extension core

Recommendation: The MAC unanimously recommends funding of the planning grant, with the inclusion of above comments in the group's funding letter.

2.) Discussion – future of NERA Planning Grants

- Participation was low (1 submission); could have been a result of an 8/31 due date with low activity in the summer
- We may have already tapped into the audience who could be interested in these planning grants. People are seeing them but choosing to pass on the opportunity.
- We could build in lead time between the deadline we provide and the MAC meeting date, so the team can revise in advance to ensure the proposal meets the intent of the RFP. For example, NERA could review submissions to determine if a research/extension component is clearly defined. If not, NERA could return the proposal to the PI for revision prior to the "actual" submission date.
- The program could shift from Planning Grant team programs to a local workshop program. We could support workshops at ~\$15-20k.
- NERA or the MAC could develop a sample "a la carte" menu for distribution to the region - \$5k planning grants, a workshop, perhaps both

Recommendation: The MAC should brainstorm to better focus a discussion on a NERA Planning Grant/Workshop RFA. Ultimately the association needs to decide how to proceed with the next RFA. As an association, we can identify strategies in September, and, if needed, continue discussing in March.

9.) NEED/NERA Seed Grants

1.) Not discussed at MAC meeting; no proposals received.