



We've been on the road recently working on your behalf at the Joint COPS Meeting and the New Administrators Orientation (the meetings were held concurrently) in Kansas City. You'll see some reporting from both of those sprinkled in this short newsletter.

In the meantime, we hope that you all have an opportunity to enjoy the summer.

"Summer was our best season: it was sleeping on the back screened porch in cots, or trying to sleep in the tree house; summer was everything good to eat; it was a thousand colors in a parched landscape." - Harper Lee (1960) in *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Harper/Collins, New York, NY

Action items:

- Dr. Manjit Misra, the new director of NIFA, attended Joint COPS/New Administrators Orientation and visited with directors from each of the sections. He'll be serving a 6-year term. As Dr. Misra begins his leadership role of NIFA, what are your expectations of him? What are your hopes for NIFA? This will be a discussion item during our **virtual NERA Business meeting on August 10 at 8:30 AM**.
- Legislation season is upon us. Just ask Anton as the chair of the Budget and Legislative Committee. This past Friday we forwarded to the NERA directors, a [request from the Western Association](#) to the Budget and Legislative Committee, seeking relief on several items in the Farm Bill. We're seeking your thoughts, please forward those to [David](#).
- The Northeast did not have representation at the New Administrators Orientation. Was that a reflection of not knowing about the event, not thinking the event was relevant, bad timing, or something else? We invite you to [ring in on the topic](#).
- We hope you have noticed that we've added a photo at the end of the newsletter that either captures "local flavor" or is indicative of current events. If you have a picture that you'd like to share with the NERA News followers, [please send those to us](#) with a caption and photographer acknowledgement.

Reminders/Updates:

- Bill Hoffman, former Chief of Staff at the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture (UTIA) and former Chief of Staff at USDA National Institute of Food & Agriculture (NIFA), has been named as the Executive Director for the Cooperative Extension System (CES) and Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP).
- *Hold the date:* We've scheduled a **virtual NERA Business meeting on August 10 at 8:30 AM**. The primary item on the agenda is a discussion of the NERA budget. The good news is that we have a healthy carry forward per the direction of the Association and we don't expect any changes in fiscal year 2024 assessments. We'll be forwarding connection information and a detailed agenda by email.

Informational items:

- The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS), Fellowship Programs, has announced a funding opportunity to support the [Cochran Fellowship Program \(CFP\)](#). We've also posted the opportunity on the [NERA website](#). Applications are due on August 25, 2023.
- *Second time:* The Center for Agriculture, Food and the Environment at the University of Massachusetts is seeking an [Associate Director for Operations and Communications](#).
- *Hold the date:* The annual meeting of agInnovation (formerly known as the Experiment Station Section) is scheduled for September 24-26 in Grand Rapids, MI. The theme for the meeting is **Catalyzing Solutions to Climate Change Impacts on Food Security through Partnerships**.



Matt Wilson, agInnovation chair, leading agInnovation's Executive Committee (ESCOP) Meeting in Kansas City on July 19, 2023. (Photo by David Leibovitz.)

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