



# NERA

Northeastern Regional Association  
of  
State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors Meeting

**Sheraton Oklahoma City Hotel**

**Oklahoma City, Oklahoma**

**September 14, 2009 [3:00-6:00PM]**

## Draft Minutes

Mike Vayda, Chair

### **In Attendance:**

Michael Vayda (VT), Chair  
Tom Brady (NH)  
Tom Burr (NYG)  
Ian Hart (CTS)  
Stephen Herbert (MA)  
Tim Phipps (WV)  
Daniel Rossi (NERA)  
Adel Shirmohammadi (MD)  
Jon Wraith (NH)  
Rubie Mize (NERA), Recorder

### **MAJOR DECISIONS**

- Approved the draft agenda for this meeting as posted in url---  
<http://www.nera.umd.edu/workshop/NERAAgendaSept2009.htm>
- Approved the minutes of the NERA meeting held at Portland, Maine on July 13-14, 2009, as posted in url---  
<http://www.nera.umd.edu/workshop/NERAMinutesJuly2009.html>

- Approved the MAC recommendations as follows:
  1. [Approved NE1024 Request to Write](#)
  2. [Approved the release of the 2010 NERA Planning Grant](#)
- Approved the Resolution of Appreciation to Dr. Robert Steele (PA)

**THE JOB JAR**  
(Work Assignments for the Executive Director)

- Release announcement for the third round of the NERA Planning Grant. Deadline for submission of proposals is November 18, 2009.
  - Request the directors and assist in collecting half-page bios of prospective participants for the Northeast Functional Foods Initiative regional conference.
  - Share report with the directors on the Biofuels for Aviation Summit that will be prepared by the National Center for Food and Agricultural Policy (NCFAP).
  - Assist follow-up actions of the regional center directors on future regional collaborations on water quality. Help set up a listserve. Include center directors when releasing announcement for the NERA planning grant.
  - Continue facilitating the work of the Northeast Urban Programs Initiative by building the website and conducting the online survey.
  - Assist in planning for the 2010 Northeast Summer Joint Session.
  - Prepare for the NERA Meeting on March 23-24, 2010 to be held at the Admiral Fell Inn, Baltimore, MD.
1. **Welcome and Introductions - Chair Mike Vayda**  
Chair Mike Vayda called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm. The directors gave brief introductions. Chair Vayda welcomed the new members, Dr. Tim Phipps (WV) and Dr. Adel Shirmohammadi (MD).
  2. **Approval of Agenda - Chair Mike Vayda**  
<http://www.nera.umd.edu/workshop/NERAAgendaSept2009.html>  
The motion made to approve the draft agenda as posted, was seconded and approved.
  3. **Approval of the July 13-14, 2009 Meeting Minutes - Chair Mike Vayda**  
<http://www.nera.umd.edu/workshop/NERAMinutesJuly2009.html>  
The motion made to accept the minutes posted was seconded and approved.
  4. **Executive Director's Report - Dan Rossi**
    - [Northeast Functional Foods Initiative Conference](#)  
The Northeast has comparative advantage in the area of functional foods. There are funding opportunities available at NIH, DoD, CSREES, etc. and we need to have a venue for our experts to get together. The Planning Committee had met and proposed that the conference/symposium be held in conjunction with a large meeting such as:
      - American Chemical Society – August 20, 2010 at Boston, MA
      - American Horticultural Sciences – January 5-7, 2010 at Boston, MA

- NERA Meeting – March 23-24, 2010 at Baltimore, MD

To help the committee develop the program, they asked that the directors identify prospective participants (note expectation for travel support from directors) and help collect short, half-page bios with a list of up to three of their most relevant publication. This will also help identify areas where we can get teams to work on proposals. The proposed agenda will have key presentations on the "state of science in key areas" and presentations from funding agencies.

Should speakers come from the Northeast, or are there experts beyond the region who should be invited? Will posters turn people off? Active faculty should already have posters, in particular the nutritional scientists who attend the national meeting or the International Food Technology Conference. Dr. Hart will find out more about the conference.

The end result is to get funding, but the primary objective is to get the scientists together. The program should have good speakers, posters and breakouts. The half-page bios should help focus the areas to be covered in the regional functional foods conference. Dr. Shirmohammadi suggested using the ASAE format to help focus the areas.

The next step is for the directors to help collect the short bios, and identify appropriate individuals from each institution that should include: breeders, nutritionists, applied biochemists, some from medical and pharmaceutical fields.

[Click here or the title above for the proposed outline of the Northeast Functional Foods Initiative Conference.](#)

- [Biofuels for Aviation Summit, Sept. 1-2, 2009](#)

The US Air Force target by 2012 is to have the capability of using 50% of aviation fuel produced from green sources. The summit was attended by scientists from around the country involved in biomass production, conversion engineering and economists. The objective is to assess where science is. The other regions lead in biomass/feedstock production. The Northeast has wood products and solid waste. We have no facilities that can be converted, have lots of airports and less Air Force facilities compared to the other regions. Collection and processing of solid waste are already in place in the Northeast. There is a considerable amount of woodstock but there is a need to organize logistics as these are several small-scale and privately owned operations. An advantage is that solid waste and forest products do not compete with food production.

The Air Force is looking for "ready-to-go" science that can be scaled up to reach its 2012 target. A report on the summit will be prepared by the National Center for Food and Agricultural Policy (NCFAP). Dr. Rossi will share this report with the directors as soon as it is available.

## 5. Multistate Activities Committee Report

The Multistate Activities Committee deliberated on the items below via e-mail.

1. [NE1024 Request to Write](#) - MAC recommends approval
2. [2010 NERA Planning Grant](#) - MAC recommends approval

The directors discussed and agreed that the grant money can be used to pay honorarium to a professional writer who will pull together the final proposal for a competitive grant.

3. [NRSP Project and Budget Recommendations](#) - Directors will vote at the ESS Meeting

A motion was made to approve the recommendations by MAC on the NE1024 Request to Write and the 2010 NERA Planning Grant. The motion was seconded and passed.

MAC Chair Mike Vayda briefly enumerated the recommendations by the NRSP Review Committee. He highlighted the concerns of the NRSP1 advisors on the draft proposal. The NRSP1 advisors met via teleconference with CSREES-IT staff on August 26. The advisors had concerns about continuing support to CRIS considering that the Vermont component of the system is being terminated. The proposal did not sufficiently address where the funding will be used. It is expected that NIMSS will continue to be supported under NRSP1, but under the off-the-top funding structure. A proposal should be ready for review by March 2010.

Another important topic that will be discussed and voted on at the ESS Meeting is the \$15,000 award taken off-the-top to be given to the winner of the National Multistate Research Award. The RFP will be sent through the NIMSS list to widely publicize the award.

#### 6. Nominations Committee Report

Advisors are needed for the following NRSP proposals. The role of the Advisors is to guide the technical committees in revising the proposals ensuring that concerns expressed by the NRSP Review Committee are adequately addressed:

- NRSP\_temp161 – National Animal Nutrition Program
- NRSP\_temp201 – The Specialty Crops Regulatory Assistance Program

Directors will be approached after the meeting to serve on these NRSP committees.

#### 7. Resolutions Committee Report - Tom Burr

##### **Resolution of Appreciation to Robert D. Steele**

*WHEREAS, Dr. Robert D. Steele has distinguished himself as Dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences of The Pennsylvania State University, as well as Director of the Pennsylvania Agricultural Experiment Station and the Pennsylvania Agricultural State University Cooperative Extension since 1997, and*

*WHEREAS, Dr. Steele served with distinction in state, regional and national capacities, most recently as Chair of the Budget and Advocacy Committee of the Board on Agriculture Assembly of the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities (formerly the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges, NASULGC), and*

*WHEREAS, Dr. Steele served as Co-Chair of CREATE 21 of the US Farm Bill Committee, the NASULGC Board on Agriculture Farm Bill Implementation Committee and the Special Think Tank Committee on the future of the land grant colleges of agriculture in partnership with USDA, and*

*NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Northeastern Regional Association of State Agriculture Experiment Station Directors meeting at Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, on September 14, 2009, expresses its sincerest appreciation to Dr. Robert D. Steele for his many contributions, and wishes him much success and happiness in his future professional as well as personal activities.*

Signed September 14, 2009

Michael Vayda, Chair

Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors

The motion made to accept the above resolution was seconded and approved.

**8. Future Meetings:**

- March 23-24, 2010 NERA Spring Meeting, Admiral Fell Inn, Baltimore, MD
  - July 12-13, 2010 - NERA Summer Meeting: Pier 5 Hotel, Baltimore, MD
  - July 11-13, 2010 - NE Summer Joint Session: Pier 5 Hotel, Baltimore, MD
- The Planning Committee had met and plans are underway. The theme will be on water resources. The venue is next door to the University of Maryland Biotechnology Center. The plan is to hold the first day's morning session at the Biotech Center with some hands-on laboratory demonstration.

**9. Best Practices Session: "Institutional and Regional Responses to Budget Reductions" - Tom Burr, Tom Brady and Ian Hart**

Drs. Burr, Brady and Hart related various cost reduction and saving strategies being implemented in their institutions. Departments and schools are being consolidated, inter and intra colleges. Retirements are also being encouraged. Unproductive facilities are being closed. Faculty numbers are being downsized to as much as 23%.

There is an increasing trend in offering online courses to mitigate the lack of faculty and facilities. The question is, "In 2015, can universities afford to have classes of 15 to 20 students?"

**10. Closing Remarks- Chair Mike Vayda**

Chair Mike Vayda reminded the directors to cast their votes on the NRSP recommendations at the ESS Meeting tomorrow. He thanked everyone and handed over the floor to incoming Chair Tom Burr.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 pm.

**Written Report Only:**

- [ESCOP Report](#) – Mike Vayda



[Back to Workroom](#)

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