



# NERA

Northeastern Regional Association  
of  
State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors Meeting

**The Admiral Fell Inn**  
**Historic Fell's Point, 888 South Broadway Street, Baltimore, MD 21231**

**March 27-28, 2007**

## Minutes

Steve Goodwin, Chair

### **In Attendance:**

Steve Goodwin (MA), Chair  
Edward Ashworth (ME)  
Tom Burr (NYG)  
Joseph Dunn (USDA)  
James Fischer (USDA)  
Thomas Fretz, Presenter  
Reginal Harrell (MD)  
Ian Hart (CTS)  
Bradley Hillman (NJ)  
Michael Hoffman (NYC)  
Diane Hyman (DC)  
Bruce McPheron (PA)  
Anna Palmisano (CSREES)  
Daniel Rossi (NERA)  
Timothy Sanders (Cornerstone)  
Stacia Sower (NH)  
Kirby Stafford III (CTNH)  
Dariusz Sweitlik (USDA-ARS-NAA)  
Michael Vayda (VT)  
William Vinson (WV)  
Gloria Wyche-Moore (DC)  
Rubie Mize (NERA), Recorder

### **MAJOR DECISIONS**

- Approved the draft agenda for this meeting as posted in url---  
<http://www.agnr.umd.edu/users/nera/workshop/NERAAgendaMarch2007.html>
- Approved the minutes of the NERA meeting held at Lake Tahoe, NV, on September 25, 2006, as posted in url---  
<http://www.agnr.umd.edu/users/nera/workshop/NERAMinutesSept2006.html>
- Approved the MAC recommendations, posted in this url, and as follows:  
<http://www.agnr.umd.edu/users/nera/workshop/MACReportMarch2007.html>
  1. Approved the proposal, NE\_temp1221: "Rural Change: Markets, Governance and Quality of Life [NE1011]" 10-2007 to 2012. Submitted by Daniel Rossi (NERA).
  2. Approved the proposal, NE\_temp1241: "Ovarian Influences on Embryonic Survival in Ruminants [NE1007]" 10-2007 to 2012. Submitted by William Vinson (WV).
  3. Approved the proposal, NE\_temp1261: "Characterization and Mechanisms of Plant Responses to Ozone in the U.S. [NE1013]" 10-2007 to 2012. Submitted by Michael Hoffmann (NYC).
  4. Approved the proposal, NE\_temp1281: "Mastitis Resistance to Enhance Dairy Food Safety [NE1009]" 10-2007 to 2012. Submitted by Kirklyn Kerr (CTS).
  5. Approved a one-year extension of NE1012: "Sustaining Local Food Systems in a Globalizing Environment: Forces, Responses, Impacts" 10-2002 to 2008. Submitted by Margaret Brennan (NJ)
  6. Approved a Request to Write a Proposal entitled, "Assuring Fruit and Vegetable Product Quality and Safety Through the Handling and Marketing Chain", to replace NE1008, 10-2007 to 2012. Submitted by Steve Goodwin (MA).
  7. Approved a Request to Write a Proposal entitled, "Development of New Potato Clones for Improved Pest Resistance, Marketability, and Sustainability in the East", to replace NE1014, 10-2007 to 2022. Submitted by Kirby Stafford III (CTNH).
  8. Approve the off-the-top funding for FY2008 in the following amounts:  
<http://www.agnr.umd.edu/users/NERA/March2007Meeting/FinalFY2008NERARecommendations.doc>
    - NE-9: \$176,000
    - NE-59: \$40,788
    - NRSP-1: \$50,000
    - NRSP-3: \$61,000
    - NRSP-4: \$431,182
    - NRSP-5: \$96,000
    - NRSP-6: \$79,000
    - NRSP-7: Special request for FY2007 off-the-top was approved at the requested level of \$542,720. NERA directors recommended that this should be handled separately by electronic votes nationwide and if approved by the majority, should be collected from the stations as an assessment, and not as an off-the-top.
    - NRSP-8: \$400,000
- Approved the following nominations:
  - Tom Burr for the National Germplasm Coordinating Committee
  - Dan Rossi for the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development
  - Edward Ashworth (ME) for NE1017: Developing and Integrating Components for Commercial Greenhouse Production System (10/2003-2008)
  - Bradley Hillman (NJ) for NE1018: Postharvest Biology of Fruit (10/2003-2008)

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

- Inform USDA-CSREES on actions taken by the NERA Directors.
- Inform ESCOP of NERA actions on the FY2008 off-the-top requests, and specifically the recommendations for handling the NRSP-7 request for FY2007.
- Arrange visits of ED Dan Rossi to the stations in the Northeast.
- Assist in the planning for the 2007 Northeast Joint Session to be held at Providence Rhode Island on July 8-10.
- Assist in the planning for the ESS Meeting to be held at Philadelphia, PA on Sept. 16-19.
- Include in the NERA summer meeting agenda for "Best Practices in the Northeast" presentation/discussion: "How do we effect change? How do we keep our institutions agile? How do we replace unproductive tenured staff?"  
Case studies from Pennstate - a non union institution, and Rhode Island - a unionized institution.
- Send procedure for setting up 500-series multistate project to the directors.

*Tuesday, March 27, 2007*

**1. Call to Order - Chair Goodwin**

The meeting was called to order at 8:15am.

**2. Comments from the Members (States/stations Updates) - Chair Goodwin**

Each member gave a brief summary of administrative and budget issues in their institutions and states.

ARS Director Dariusz Sweitlik reported briefly that ARS will be funded in FY2007 at the FY2006 level. A fifth of their funds come from earmarks. ARS experienced a \$120 million loss in the President's budget. 25% of the earmarks will be released if the following criteria are met: (1) programmatic control of ARS, (2) integrated, and (3) consistency with the President's priorities. The NPLs should finish reviewing the activities funded with the earmarks by end June. D. Sweitlik also mentioned the planned merger of ARS and CSREES.

Stacia Sower reported that the new Dean and AES Director for New Hampshire will be Dr. Tom Brady. He will assume this position effective July 1.

**3. Approval of Meeting Agenda - Chair Goodwin**

The motion made to approve the draft agenda as posted, was seconded and approved. Adjustments will be made to allow time for more discussion of issues.

<http://www.agnr.umd.edu/users/NERA/workshop/NERAAgendaMarch2007.html>

**4. Approval of the September 25, 2006 Meeting Minutes - Chair Goodwin**

The motion made to accept the minutes posted was seconded and approved.

<http://www.agnr.umd.edu/users/nera/workshop/NERAMinutesSept2006.html>

**5. Interim Actions by the Chair and NERA Executive Committee Report - Chair Goodwin**

[Actions Taken by NERA Chair](#)

[Notes from the Executive Committee Meeting, March 26, 2007](#)

Dan Rossi's paper on "[Investment Opportunities Resulting from the FY2007 Continuing Resolution](#)" were distributed to the directors. How do the stations intend to use the increase in Hatch Funds? Will there be

problems in matching? Do the disadvantaged stations have projects to propose to help offset the loss of special grants? If funding stays as in 2007, what do we intend to do as a region? Chair Goodwin wants to create a forum where proposals or topics to address can be put forward.

There will be case studies presented on "Best Practices in the Northeast Region" by Cornell and Vermont. These will be moved up in the agenda as time allows.

Is there a need to revisit the procedure for approving NRSP off-the-top funding, in light of the special request of NRSP-7 for FY2007?

On impact reporting, NERA needs to decide on what format we want to present our impacts. Should we follow the Western or North Central formats? North Central will be requested to remove the inactive link to the impacts site for the Northeast. Chair Goodwin will make this request.

On the Regional Research Award, we need a decision if we want to continue. ESCOP has a committee that is currently looking into tying this with a national award given at the NASULGC meeting.

**6. Multistate Activities Committee Report distributed for consideration on March 28, 2007 - Bill Vinson**  
<http://www.agnr.umd.edu/users/NERA/workshop/MACReportMarch2007.html>

The MAC report and recommendations were distributed so the directors can review them before the discussion tomorrow.

**7. OED Report - Dan Rossi**

ED Dan Rossi gave the following report:

[OED Accomplishment Report.pdf](#)

New ED Dan Rossi reported that the transition of the NERA administration from the Univ. of Maryland to Rutgers University had started. The ED will be based at Rutgers and Rubie Mize will remain at the NERA Office located at the ARS-BARC facility in Beltsville, MD. He met with ARS Director Phyllis Johnson and Deputy Director Ron Korczak to confirm this arrangement.

Dan Rossi had also started visiting the stations in the Northeast. He is actively facilitating the planning for the 2007 summer joint session hosted by the Univ. of Rhode Island. The planning for 2007 started late but he hopes to start planning early for the 2008 meeting.

The NIMSS proposal to obtain the \$32,500 funding for FY2007 has been submitted to USDA-CSREES.

He has also met with the NPLs at CSREES. The meeting was arranged by NERA liaison, Anna Palmisano.

**8. CSREES Update - Anna Palmisano, CSREES**

Anna Palmisano gave the following update on USDA-CSREES.

- Farm Bill Update:

The Research Title of the Farm Bill proposed by the Administration includes \$100M for specialty crops, \$50M for bioenergy, and plans to merge CSREES and ARS. Dr. Buchanan has proposed the merger in direct response to stakeholder input as well as consideration of the CREATE 21 and NIFA proposals. The merger would result in a new agency: the Research, Education and Extension Service (REES) which would fall under a newly created Office of Science, along with NASS and ERS. A Chief Scientist, reporting directly to the Under Secretary, would set priorities across the new agency. Dr. Buchanan has appointed a Task Force to begin to develop an implementation strategy. Dr. Merle Pierson, Deputy Under Secretary, will chair the Task Force. Task Force members will include: Elbert Dickey, Larry Miller, Charlotte Kirk-Baer, Caird Rexroad II, Stephen Kappes, Steve Schaeffer, and a NASS representative. Dr. Buchanan suggests that implementation of the merger will take 12-18 months, following passage of the bill by Congress. He has said that he plans to maintain large programs, such as the NRI. He would like the new agency to co-locate to enhance communication among employees. Drs. Hefferan and Kipling have enthusiastically supported the reorganization.

- FY08 Budget Proposal:

Hatch funds are proposed at \$164M. The NRI is proposed at \$256M which will include \$45M for the 406 programs which would be moved under the NRI. New funds are proposed in the NRI for bioenergy research (\$19M), disaster resilience (\$2M), and a long term agroecosystem integrated project (\$1M).

- E-granting:

Submission of proposals through grants.gov (mandated by OMB) is going very well with >97% rate of successful submissions of proposals. The most common mistake is forgetting to convert a file to PDF, or forgetting to submit a critical file. Faculty members should work closely with their Administrative Officers in a timely manner to ensure successful submissions.

- New Science Advisor:

Dr. Larry Robinson of Florida A&M University will join CSREES in April as Science Advisor. Larry has had a distinguished career as an environmental chemist at Oak Ridge National Lab, director of the Environmental Science Institute at FAMU, provost of FAMU, and currently serves as the director of a NOAA center at FAMU.

#### 9. **Best Practices in the Northeast: Vermont Case Study - Michael Vayda** [Vermont Case Study PowerPoint Presentation](#)

Discussion:

- Mike Vayda's presentation explores how the Hatch funds are used in Vermont.
- How is the success of seed projects in getting/winning grants measured? After three years, VT-AES evaluates what has been accomplished: grants applied, grants won and publications.
- A Hatch Committee reviews the proposals. Chairs from each department appoint a member to this committee. The call for proposals come out in January for submission of full proposals in April. The committee reviews in mid-May. There is a 70-80% success rate.

#### 10. **Discussion of NPGCC's White Paper - "Recommendations from the NPGCC for Improved Communication and Funding of the Regional Germplasm Centers, NRSP-5 and NRSP-6" - Tom Fretz**

- [White Paper - Recommendations from the NPGCC for Improved Communication and Funding of the Regional Germplasm Centers, NRSP-5 and NRSP-6 \(1/05/2007\)](#)
- [Summary of FY2006 Hatch and Multi-state Fund Distribution and Projections to Restore NRSP-5 and -6](#)
- [NPGCC Report](#)

Discussion:

- The conclusion is to maintain the *status quo*, and continue the mechanism of funding regional centers by regional off-the-top.
- The NPGCC also recommended that 2008 commitments for NRSP5 and NRSP6 be stabilized at the FY2006 level.
- NERA's Multistate Activities Committee recommends sticking with the five-year plan of reducing off-the-top that was approved by ESS earlier.
- NERA directors will consider increasing support for NE-9.
- NRSP-5 (potato collection) should go down to "zero", but will allow for transition in FY2007. A suggestion was made that NRSP-5 should be fully under ARS.
- Collections are important and the US remains as the leading country in germplasm collection, i.e. potato. Are we using these collections efficiently? LGUs are providing the scientists to make the collection marketable.
- The message is that these are worthwhile projects, but should seek alternative funding so that other important activities can be funded. There should be a mechanism to sunset old NRSPs and start new ones. Do we already have the portfolio we want to support or do we want new projects?

- There is an urgency worldwide to collect rare germplasm. Collection is also becoming more complicated. Look at the value of the collection and determine the most appropriate way of funding this activity. The directors felt that the committee failed to address this sufficiently.

**11. Sun Grant Initiative Update - Tom Fretz**

- [2007 Northeast Sun Grant Initiative Competitive Grants Program RFA Announcement \(PDF=2 pages\)](#)
- [2007 Northeast Sun Grant Initiative Competitive Grants Program Request for Applications \(PDF=26 pages\)](#)
- [2007 Northeast Sun Grant Initiative Competitive Grants Program Homepage = http://www.nesungrant.cornell.edu/](#)

**12. Report from Cornerstone, Budgets FY07-08-09 - Tim Sanders, Cornerstone**

For FY2007, earmarks were eliminated but fortunately were kept in the USDA-CSREES budget instead of being moved elsewhere. Members can ask for earmarks, but are limited to not more than 5 requests. This year, the deadline is March 15 for the House and March 30 for the Senate. Cornerstone submits the request on behalf of the Land-grant system.

There are currently three proposals presented for consideration in the next Farm Bill. It is uncertain at this point which of these will gain traction in Congress.:

- CREATE-21 - from the Land-grant system
- Danforth proposal
- Merger of CSREES and ARS - from USDA

**13. Continuation of Best Practices in the Northeast: Cornell Case Study - Michael Hoffman**

[Cornell Case Study PowerPoint Presentation](#)

**14. Discussion of Proposed NERA Budget for FY 2007-2008 - Chair Goodwin and ED Dan Rossi**

Part of the ED salary is being picked up by Rutgers. There are expenses associated with the transition, but the NERA budget is sufficient to absorb these costs.

As there was no suggested increase in the assessment, a motion was made to approve the budget as proposed. The motion was seconded and approved.

**15. Comments from Chair before closing the day's meeting - Chair Goodwin**

Chair Goodwin asked the members to reflect on the topics that are still on the table:

*Wednesday, March 28, 2007*

**16. Bioenergy Initiative - James Fischer and Joseph Dunn, USDA**

["Building A Prosperous Future Where Agriculture Produces and Uses Energy Efficiently and Effectively", Presented by James Fischer](#)

Discussion:

- A national workshop will be held on October 2007: REE Energy Science and Education Workshop - Visions, Goals, Programs
- Conversion technology 'on site' is our strength. "Small scale conversion technology" for farm use is what we should develop and make it cost effective for users.
- We are constraining ourselves with ethanol, butanol, etc. We should do the "filtering for our clientele". What are the nutrient management implications, e.g. too much phosphorous? How do we deal with these implications? How about harvesting of small diameter trees, do we have environmental quality parameters? Social science aspect of most research is under-funded. We need to investigate the economic, nutrient management and environmental implications.

- DOE does not seem interested in the water quality, environmental and economic impacts. How do we convince farmers that it's worthwhile using alternative energy without subsidy? What is the comparative advantage, from "field to pump"?
- Food vs. fuel - what is the impact to consumers?
- Why should farmers invest in retooling their farms to produce energy? We need a coherent policy. Do we truck corn from the midwest? The Northeast will depend on trees, but states like PA, will not give up its forest resources. Do we convert pastures to dedicated energy crops? *Definition of "Dedicated Energy Crops" is yet to be determined.*
- USDA is uniquely positioned to address various issues related to bioenergy, alternative fuels: agricultural land use policy, environmental policy, economic policy related to consumers, and water quality.
- Fund basic research and extension studies on implications to society.
- Bioenergy is a hot topic and the region needs to position itself to be an active player.
- The workshop structure is critical. Who are expected to attend and what are the expected outcomes? How do we engage the system into the discussion - ESCOP, ECOP and ACOP. There will be an ESS Meeting in Sept. 2007. Bioenergy will be proposed to be included in the agenda and can be one of the breakout groups.
- Other feedback should be forwarded to James Fischer or Joseph Dunn at USDA.

#### 17. **Multistate Activities Committee Report - Bill Vinson**

<http://www.agnr.umd.edu/users/NERA/workshop/MACReportMarch2007.html>

A motion was made to approve the recommendations for item nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7. The motion was seconded and approved.

For items #6 and #7, the advisors were requested to send the message back to their technical committees that it is necessary that they demonstrate interdependence in their proposals. The advisors can help provide the pros and cons of becoming a coordinating committee, if the committees decide to use this format. Coordinating Committees are allowed, within reasonable limit, to spend multistate funds for research activities. This format will fit those groups of scientists who are doing independent research and get together annually to compare results. A few Northeast multistate projects have transformed into coordinating committees after so many years of working together. NE1008 and NE1014 should determine whether they should convert to coordinating committees.

Item #8 referring to mid-term reports submitted by the advisors for multistate projects NE1015 and NE1019, were noted.

The directors discussed the off-the-top funding requests separately as follows:

#### **NE-9, Conservation and Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources:**

This is a regional off-the-top support for the collection in Geneva. This project has strong LGU and ARS partnership. Level funding is no longer acceptable if the center is expected to continue its operations. ARS is doing its part and the LGU should bear some responsibility. MAC recommendation was to maintain level funding at \$145,000, but the directors amended the recommendation and agreed to increase the level of support for FY2008 to \$176,000.

#### **NE-59, Multistate Research Coordination - support for the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development**

There was no increase requested. MAC recommendation was to maintain level funding at \$40,788 for FY2008.

#### **NRSP-1, Research Planning Using the Current Research Information System (CRIS)**

The MAC recommendation is to fund only the support for NIMSS in NRSP1 which is \$50,000 for FY2008. The intention is to send a message to NRSP1 that the directors have no input in CRIS or the development of One Solution. The regional advisors requested last year to include an ESCOP representative to the Steering Committee for One Solution. To date, ESCOP has not been invited. The technical committee will plan to meet again this summer and the same issues will be raised. In the meantime, USDA should be requested to

cover fully the support for CRIS and the SAESs will cover, through off-the-top, the support for NIMSS. At the Sept. 2007 ESS Meeting, the question will be raised whether the system should cover fully the salary and benefits of the NIMSS programmer. Prior to hiring a fulltime NIMSS Programmer, Dan Rossi will have tasks laid out to justify the fulltime employment. Among projects foreseen are: development of a system to collect impacts and a "mini-NIMSS" that will help facilitate the management of Hatch projects at the station level.

#### **NRSP-3, The National Atmospheric Deposition Program (NADP)**

The directors were happy to note the yearly reduction of off-the-top funding. The request for FY2008 of \$61,000 was approved.

#### **NRSP-4, National Agricultural Program to Clear Pest Control Agents for Minor Uses**

The amount requested for FY2008 which is \$481,182 is consistent with the recommendations of the NRSP Review Committee, and therefore the amount recommended by MAC. Dan Rossi noted that this amount goes to salaries and the State of New Jersey covers all the benefits.

#### **NRSP-5, Develop and Distribute Deciduous Fruit Tree Clones Free of Viruses and Virus-like Agents**

MAC's recommendation for NRSP-5 is to get it back in line with the planned reduction and proposed \$46,000 for FY2008. This will significantly affect the project's operations and may need to lose some personnel. The directors amended this recommendation to equal the FY2007 level of \$96,000. The committee has been informed in the past that they should seek alternative sources of funding. There is an expectation from the Northeast directors that FY2008 will be the last off-the-top support for NRSP-5. This amendment was seconded and approved with 10 members voting "for" and 2 "against".

#### **NRSP-6, Inter-Regional Potato Introduction Project**

The MAC recommendation is to fund NRSP-6 for FY2008 at the requested level of \$110,000. The directors amended the recommendation to \$79,000 to remain consistent with the annual reduction of off-the-top support. This amendment was seconded and approved with 11 members voting "for" and 1 "against".

#### **NRSP-8, National Animal Genome Program**

Off-the-top support for this project was increased and remained at \$400,000 after the aquaculture genomics group joined. It is expected to terminate on Sept. 2008. Should it be allowed to sunset? ARS Director Dariusz Sweitlik will find out ARS' views on the future of NRSP-8.

A motion was made to accept the MAC recommendations, including those amended above. The motion was seconded and approved.

**NRSP-7, A National Agricultural Program for Minor Use Animal Drugs** The directors felt that this request for FY2007 off-the-top funding should be considered separately. The FY2007 requests have already been considered and voted on at the ESS Meeting in September 2006 at Lake Tahoe, Nevada. There is no legal mechanism to re-open those requests and include NRSP-7. There is also no provision in the rules that special cases, like this, fall within the purview of the NRSP Review Committee. Votes should be solicited nationwide from all the experiment station directors. If a majority approves, the stations will be invoiced and asked to pay their share through an assessment. The NERA directors recommend that NRSP-7 should be funded at the requested level of \$542,720 for FY2007 so as not to disrupt its operations.

A motion was made to support NRSP-7 at the level requested for FY2007 only in the amount of \$542,720 through a nationwide vote, and if it passes, should be collected from the stations as an assessment. The motion was seconded and approved with 8 voting "for", 3 "against" and 1 "abstain".

### **18. Nominations Committee Report - Chair Goodwin and Bruce McPheron**

Names were put forward for the following positions:

- Dr. Edward Ashworth (ME) for NE1017: Developing and Integrating Components for Commercial Greenhouse Production System (10/2003-2008)
- Dr. Bradley Hillman (NJ) for NE1018: Postharvest Biology of Fruit (10/2003-2008)
- Tom Burr for the National Germplasm Coordinating Committee

- Dan Rossi for the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development

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

## 19. Future Meetings:

### ***Summer Meeting:***

The 2007 Northeast Summer Joint Session will be hosted by the University of Rhode Island. It will be held at the Renaissance Hotel, Providence, RI.

- This will be a good venue to have a regional discussion of Bioenergy. Social and policy issues should be integrated as they pertain to USDA. What does Extension see as a gap in alternative energy? Is it energy conservation? Are there best practices being done in Research and Extension in the Northeast? What role will NEED play if, for example, there is a bio-diesel distribution network in the community? What are the public issues: cost of fuel, cost of feeds? Who should serve as the clearinghouse for farmers/producers wanting to put small bio-refineries? Who will help the public make informed decisions? We will be able to define the outcomes of the summer meeting if we choose Bioenergy: utilize research and extension capacities, use Sun Grant as the central repository, and how can we build a regional resource.
- A suggestion was made to move the Bioenergy forward, and perhaps create a 500-series project. There are some pressing issues. For instance, Maryland may lose its poultry industry if the price of corn goes up, and the producers decide to move South where feeds are cheaper. Ramifications can be very significant. A possible title for the project is -- *Regional Impacts of Bioenergy - Biomass Initiatives*.
- Another topic for the summer meeting could be "urban agriculture", and focus on urban serving institutions' initiatives and issues. This was proposed for next year and the District of Columbia has offered to host the meeting (perhaps jointly with the Delaware AES) in Washington, DC.

### ***ESS/SAES/ARD Workshop:***

The meeting will be hosted by the Pennsylvania Experiment Station. Bruce McPherson is soliciting suggestions for the regional session.

- The first half day session is an opportunity for the region to highlight our activities. One suggestion is the topic on "the relationship between the LGUs and state departments of agriculture". States can showcase their best practices.
- Another important topic in the Northeast is "Dairy". We can look at the production and consumption components of dairy. There is a three-state (PA, VT and NY) consortium that we can build into as an example of a successful regional collaboration.
- There are pricing policy questions and dairy issues related to the Farm Bill. What are impacts of importing feed grains? How is bioenergy affecting nutrient management in the dairy industry? Where is science in the whole RbST use issue? What about organic milk production?
- There can be breakouts set up to discuss specific problems facing the dairy industry. Issues related to Dairy include the national pricing policy of the 1930's, effects of bioenergy activities, land use - open land preservation, food and fuel prices - how will this affect our urban consumers, and water quality.
- We need to identify presenter(s) who can set the stage and speak for about half an hour (an ag. economist, agroecologist and a land use specialist for 5-10 mins. each). Dan Rossi also suggested inviting newspaper reporters who will consolidate the reports from the breakout groups. It is surprising how these writers can present different perspectives. There should be one reporter with a rural background and another with an urban point of view.
- Another topic, that may also be of national interest, is the issue on "student enrollment in the College of Agriculture". How do we define our prospective students? What role does the AES have to play in working with the academic program? Northeast is an urbanizing region, how does the college remain relevant in an urbanizing environment? Perhaps this can be a joint summer session topic to encourage the academic program directors to attend.

## 20. Open Discussion:

***Continue "Best Practices in the Northeast" in future NERA meetings:***

The directors agreed that this was a good topic and should be continued in future NERA meetings. Topics suggested are:

- "How do we effect change? How do we keep our institutions agile? How do we replace unproductive tenured staff?"  
Case studies from Pennstate - a non union institution, and Rhode Island - a unionized institution (Note: Include this in the NERA Summer Meeting Agenda).
- Infrastructure maintenance and upgrade
- Partnerships to prolong each other's existence

***Use of FY2007 Hatch Funding:***

- Create 500-series multistate projects that address needs or opportunities:
  - Honey Bee Health (PA-McPheron)
  - Functional foods that contribute to a healthy population (CTS-Hart and VT-Vayda)
  - Wood utilization (ME-Ashworth)
  - Organic Dairy (NH-Sower)
- Renovate or build infrastructure or replace equipment. Note that funds can only be used and reported for a specific Hatch project(s).
- Identify existing multistate projects that scientists falling under the special grants can join. The NERA staff can assist the stations in identifying these projects.

**21. Summary Comments and Closing - Chair Goodwin**

Chair Goodwin thanked everyone for a great discussion and a productive meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.



[Back to Workroom](#)

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