



Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors

While we are not looking for things to do, I'd share it's been refreshing around the NERA office to see a slowdown in the number of zoom calls. We're hoping that you've had similar experiences. On the flip side, I did my first NERA travel since the beginning of the pandemic and joined Calvin Keeler's Dean's Team at the University of Delaware for a conversation about the strategic deployment of Hatch funds. I found the face-to-face visit energizing. I hope that our society comes to grips with the pandemic by getting vaccinated or encouraging vaccination. Reduction of the viral reservoir is the only way we're going to beat this thing.

"This pandemic has magnified every existing inequality in our society – like systemic racism, gender inequality, and poverty. And it's impossible to pick one issue as more serious because so many people live at the intersection of all of those challenges." – Melinda Gates quoted in [The Guardian, September 15, 2020](#).

Action items:

- On behalf of Bret Hess and Chris Pritsos, the hosts of the 2021 Fall ESS Meeting, we sent a [poll](#) on August 4 to NERA directors to gauge your intent to attend the fall meeting in Olympic Valley, CA. We ask that you complete and submit the survey by this Friday. The meeting planning team expects to use the results of the survey to assist in making decisions on moving forward with the meeting.
- You might have seen that Gerald Parker (Texas A&M) on behalf of the Bipartisan Commission on Biodefense and the Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs is seeking input on the potential roles of Land-grant Universities to address biodefense and emerging infectious disease preparedness and response with an emphasis on animal health and the agriculture. To provide input, an online survey can be accessed using this [link](#).

Reminders/Updates:

- The Planning Committee for the [2021 Experiment Station Section Meeting](#) in Olympic Valley, CA on September 27-30, 2021 will be offering a hybrid option. We don't have details on that yet, stay tuned.
- How are you and your institution responding to the "pandemic of the unvaccinated?" We're interested to hear your thinking and strategies as we move closer to the fall.

Informational items:

- *Heads up:* NERA is slated to meet during the ESS meeting on Tuesday, September 28 from 9:00-11:30 AM PDT.
- The University of Maryland College of Agriculture and Natural Resources is seeking applicants for two positions: Research and Education Center Coordinator, and Fiscal Operations Manager. Job descriptions for both positions are posted on the NERA website: <https://www.nerasaes.org/employment>.



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Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors (NERA)

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