



Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors

As we wish good riddance to 2020, we believe: more fun in '21! Happy New Year!

“For last year's words belong to last year's language. And next year's words await another voice.” — T.S. Eliot, 1943, “The Little Giddings” *in* Four Quartets, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing, New York, NY.

Action items:

- The [notes](#) from the December 15 NERA teleconference are now posted; check them out! Would you also provide feedback to Anton on strategic communications. You can do that through his [Google doc](#).
- Take a look at the [letter](#) that was sent by the BAA (signatories included ESCOP chair, Moses Kairo) outlining “system” recommendations to President-Elect Biden and Vice President-Elect Harris.
- You are probably aware that the NSF has published a [RFI](#) on its 2022-2026 Strategic Plan and is inviting feedback on:
 - What are the interests, values and emergent science and policy issues that the Strategic Plan should recognize?
 - How can NSF help maintain US leadership in an evolving global research and education landscape?
 - How can the plan best underscore the importance to the Nation of fundamental research and its broader impacts?

Ali Mitchell and I have spoken and we're interested in providing the NSF with a regional, integrated view on behalf of NEED and NERA. If you have specific thoughts or suggestions on items that should be included in the NSF's new strategic plan, we'd value hearing them. The comment period ends on January 21. We're asking for input by January 14.

Reminders/Updates:

- Last night the President signed both the COVID-19 relief bill and the Omnibus which supports, among others, the USDA. The quick report on the Omnibus: Hatch and McIntire-Stennis were funded at FY2020 levels (\$259 million and \$36 million), while AFRI received a \$10 million increase above FY2020 (FY2021: \$435 million.) For a more exhaustive look at the NIFA's funding, check the [Cornerstone Report From Washington](#).
- In a surprising move, the [USDA announced on December 22](#) that President Trump had named Dr. Carrie Castille as the new, six-year term, director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture. She'll start her new role on Monday, January 4, 2021.
- Second time: The APLU is hosting a webinar on *Agricultural Research Infrastructure Advocacy* on

January 11, 2021 at 4:00 PM EST. The webinar will provide an opportunity for directors to learn about materials to support advocacy that advances the \$11.5 billion request for research infrastructure support. [Registration](#) is required.

Informational items:

- The BAA is partnering with the USDA-REE to offer a national webinar, ***U.S. Agriculture Innovation Strategic Pre-View***, on January 7, 2021 from 3:00-4:30 PM EST and will be repeated on January 12, 2021 from 12:00-1:30 PM EST. To join, please [register](#). (You'll also be able to register at the same time for the webinar in two bullets, ***NIFA Project Café Rollout Webinar***.)
- The BAA and NIFA are hosting the ***NIFA Project Café Rollout Webinar*** on January 13, 2021 from 4:00-5:00 PM EST. To join, please [register](#).
- The APLU is hosting a webinar on ***Selecting and Engaging CARET Delegates for Effective Strategic Outcomes***. The webinar will be held at 3:00-4:30 PM EST on Thursday, January 14, 2021. Directors and CARET delegates are encouraged to attend. [Registration](#) is required.
- The APLU is sponsoring a virtual conference dedicated to ***Broadband's Role in Rural Economic Development: Exploring the Intersection between Community and Agricultural Broadband Needs***. This event, scheduled for January 27, 2021, 2:00-5:00 PM EST is intended for researchers and extension professionals interested in contributing to a research and extension agenda in these areas. [RSVP to join](#).
- NIFA has released the [RFA](#) for the Higher Education Multicultural Scholars Program. Applications are due February 8, 2021.
- The USDA, ARS, Plant Genetics Research Unit (PGRU) in Columbia, Missouri is seeking a Research Molecular Biologist/Physiologist/Geneticist. For further information and complete application instructions, search for announcement **ARS-D21MWA-10986272-JML** at <https://www.usajobs.gov/>.
- The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) is searching for a Local and Regional Food Systems Senior Agricultural Marketing Specialist. See the [USAJOBS – Job Announcement](#).



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