



Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors

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We hope that you had an enjoyable, safe and restorative Thanksgiving. In the spirit of Turkey Day, this newsletter has a number leftovers that we bring to your attention. Last, from our perspective, it appears that most NERA institutions have moved back to on-line learning from now until the semester ends. Best wishes in the coming weeks as you close out the fall semester. None of us will forget this one.

“...I want to stay as close to the edge as I can without going over. Out on the edge you see all kinds of things you can't see from the center. ...Big, undreamed-of things...” - Kurt Vonnegut, 1952, *Player Piano*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, NY.

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### Action items:

- Mark your calendars: the quarterly NERA teleconference will be held on December 15 from 8:30-10:30 AM ET. As we indicated in our November 18 “mid-newsletter”, we'll be engaging in a work session dedicated to Northeast Strategic Communications. This fits well with the national launch of a strategic roadmap by the Communications and Marketing Committee.
- Long-time NERA director and colleague, Sabine O'Hara, is the guest editor for a special issue of *Sustainability* dedicated to the role of urban agriculture in advancing urban sustainability from a wide range of perspectives including technological, economic, social, cultural, environmental, ecological and governance related consideration. Sabine is seeking contributions of manuscripts. Questions about the opportunity should be addressed to [sabine.ohara@udc.edu](mailto:sabine.ohara@udc.edu) or (202) 368-9504.
- West Virginia University (Matt Wilson) and Cornell University (Margaret Smith) have agreed to support a “request to write” a social-science focused, multistate project dedicated to evaluating the “Motivations for Growing Industrial Hemp: Farmers, Producers, Policymakers, Retailers, Consumers, and Communities (Stakeholders)”. We've posted a [prospective description](#) of the project on the NERA website. If you have faculty who are interested in assisting in the development of this concept as a multistate research project, they should contact WVU researchers Debanjan Das ([debanjan.das@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:debanjan.das@mail.wvu.edu)) and Sunidhi Mehta ([sunidhi.mehta@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:sunidhi.mehta@mail.wvu.edu)).

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### Reminders/Updates:

- We're updating the NERA files and note that the mail delivery services at many institutions is limited. As such, we are seeking your home address in the event that we need to forward something to you. Your address will not be posted nor will we share the address with any organization.

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### Informational items:

- We reported two weeks ago that NIFA had released its [RFA](#) for the Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI.) While the RFA for SCRI pre-applications does not mention the waiver of match that was offered by the current Continuing Resolution (which ends on December 11, 2020), Cornerstone expects that the next Continuing Resolution will extend the waiver for SCRI. We will continue to monitor the situation and share updates with you.
- You might be interested to read to American Farmlands Trust's research on [Combatting Climate Change on US Cropland](#). As reported in Politico this morning, the adoption of just two regenerative practices, cover crops and no-till, on 70% of America's cropland would have an equivalent impact of removing 53 million cars from the road for a year.
- The USDA is hosting 97th Annual Agricultural Outlook Forum as a virtual event on February 18-21, 2021. The theme is "Building on Innovation: A Pathway to Resilience," and builds on the current administration's [Agriculture Innovation Agenda](#), launched earlier this year to align USDA's resources, programs, and research toward the goal of increasing U.S. agricultural production by 40% while cutting the environmental footprint of U.S. agriculture in half by 2050. While the event is free, [registration](#) is required.



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