



Happy New Year! We continue to deal with the outfall of the pandemic, and to that end, seek your intent to join the proposed NERA face-to-face meeting in Philadelphia in March. Check out the first (and only) **Action Item**.

"You know what the happiest animal on earth is? It's a goldfish. You know why? It's got a 10-second memory. Be a goldfish, Sam." - Ted Lasso (played by Jason Sudeikis) in *Ted Lasso*, "Biscuits with the Boss", Season 1, Episode 2, initially aired-August 14, 2020.

### Action items:

- With the unprecedented increase in COVID cases caused by the omicron variant and associated travel disruptions, David and I were interested in gauging your intent to travel to the face-to-face NERA meeting in Philadelphia on March 15-16. Would you please respond to a [short poll](#) (2 questions that will take less than a minute to answer) about whether you plan to join NERA's March meeting in person. We'll use the results of the poll to make decisions on the meeting delivery modality. We're seeking your input on the poll by the end of this week, January 14.

### Reminders/Updates:

- *Second time:* Colleague and former Executive Director, Mike Harrington, is working with the National Academies of Sciences on a Blue Ribbon Panel "[Enhancing Coordination Between Land-Grant Universities and Colleges](#)". Mike posed the following questions that I'll share with you: "What are your expectations for outcomes of funded research (by capacity or competitive funds) and what attributes (or metrics) do you employ to measure success of a research project?" We're not looking for tomes, we're seeking your pocket calculation and brief explanation. Please send those on to [Rick](#).

### Informational items:

- North Carolina A&T University is searching for a [Chair of Animal Sciences](#) in the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences. This search is being initially administered by the executive search team, ACES.
- The University of Arkansas invites applications and nominations for the position of [Vice President for Agriculture](#). The [position description](#) notes that the Vice President for Agriculture serves as the administrative head of agriculture for the University of Arkansas System (the Division of Agriculture) and reports directly to the President of the System. The Division of Agriculture is headquartered in the University of Arkansas System Offices in Little Rock, AR.
- With support from the Southern Region Land-grant universities and NIFA, Auburn University is hosting a joint, hybrid effort dedicated to "[Envisioning 2050 in the Southeast: AI-Driven Innovations in Agriculture](#)" on March 9-11, 2022 at the Hotel at Auburn University and Dixon Conference Center in Auburn, AL. The conference is open to all who have an interest in how Artificial Intelligence (AI)-enabled decision support systems, automation, and robotics will transform agriculture with a focus on the Southeast.



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