

agInnovation Northeast Meeting November 20, 2025

In attendance: Jason Hubbard, Josh Kohut, Vagner Benedito, Bill Miller, Anton Bekkerman, Toni DiTommaso, Beth Gugino, Chris Smart, Diane Rowland, Eric von Wettberg, Gretta Tritch Roman, Jason White, Lee Hecker, Lisa Townson, Ock Chun, Puneet Srivastava, Troy Ott, Marikis Alvarez, Tyler Messerschmidt, Rick Rhodes, David Leibovitz

Welcome and Chair's reflections (Jason Hubbard)

- There is still interest in drafting a white paper on computational research, as a region. This initiative has not yet started but should get going in advance of the agInnovation Northeast Spring Meeting.
- The Northeast agenda is undergoing a refresh, keeping in line with the initial commitment to regular revisions of the document.
- The Directors discussed strategies for distributing Hatch multistate project information to their personnel.
 - An opportunity for building a professional network
 - Target associate level faculty for these opportunities
 - Extension faculty are also eligible to serve on Multistate projects
 - There is interest in some sort of bulk "advertisement" of multistate projects to the region. Some correspondence regarding the turnover in the portfolio, new project opportunities, expiring project opportunities.
- What does collaboration between Ag Experiment Stations look like? What activity can we take on together, to make real national or regional impact?

Government opening and ag appropriations bill (Rick Rhodes, [click to view attachment](#))

- NIFA colleagues have returned to the office. agInnovation Northeast can help Directors with contacting NIFA. **All are welcome to send questions for NIFA to Rick and David.**
- Capacity funding is set to be level, AFRI is set for a \$10M cut

APLU Annual Meeting update (Rick Rhodes)

- APLU BAA BAC/BLC FY2027 AFRI request: \$500M (agInnovation advocated for a \$700M ask).
- The Land-grant "Pillar/Roadmap" project is underway. Lisa Townson represents the Northeast on the committee. **Please send feedback on the roadmap to Lisa Townson (ltownson@uri.edu).**
- APLU BAA is setting up a new effort to advocate for increases in capacity funding in FY2027.
- The Northeast Administrative Heads met at the APLU annual meeting. This group will continue to meet throughout the year and intend to hold a session track during the Northeast Joint Summer Session in Burlington, VT in June 2026.

- There have not been any updates from USDA regarding the delivery of Research Facilities Act funding.
- Diane Rowland suggested tightening the connection between the Board on Health and Human Services and the Board on Agricultural Assembly within APLU.
- Scott Hutchins (USDA Under Secretary, Research, Education, and Economics (REE)) suggested that Land-grant universities focus their messaging on the problems that they will solve.
- Lisa Townson shared that Cooperative Extension is examining how Land-grant Institutions contribute to rural health and could contribute to health in a bigger way, in the absence of SNAP.

Northeast Food Tech Corridor - NSF Engine Update (Gretta Tritch Roman)

- A Teams channel has been established for the group to stay connected and share project materials. The first meeting recording has been uploaded. **Contact Gretta Tritch Roman (gst118@psu.edu) to be added to the Teams group.**
- Next meetings:
 - Wednesday, December 3, 2:00 – 3:30 pm ET (virtual)
 - Monday, January 12, 12:00 – 1:30 pm ET (virtual)
 - In-person in Philadelphia, February 5-6, 2026 (with a virtual option via Owl)
- Upcoming action steps:
 - Survey (landscape analysis and strategic alignment)
 - Submission for agInnovation support (in-person meeting)

Planning ahead: December mid-winter virtual meeting, solicitation for agenda items (All Director's items: What's on your mind?)

- All are encouraged to share experiences, challenges, opportunities at home institutions, along with issues that might be of regional importance, prior to our December meeting.
- Potential changes to F&A requirements are a topic of heightened interest among the Directors.

The meeting adjourned at 8:58 am ET.