# ***NCRALogo.JPGNorth Central Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors*** 228th Meeting The SpyGlass Inn, Pismo Beach, CA – Coastal Bluffs Room March 25-27, 2024 (Note that all times listed are PT)

## AGENDA ([Click here for meeting notes](#_Meeting_Notes))

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date/Time | Agenda Item | Topic | Presenter | Process or Action Needed |
| Monday, March 25 | | | |  |
| 2:00-5:00 pm | Multistate Research Committee (MRC) Meeting (for MRC members only, although others are welcome to attend if interested).   * New/renewal multistate proposals * Midterm reviews * NC Multistate Research Award * NC Agricultural Research Innovation Award of Excellence * Nominations for new FFY25 MRC Member | | Shibu Jose, MRC Chair 2024 | Group Discussion, then MRC makes and passes seconded motions as recommendations for NCRA approval vote on 3/26/2024. |
| 5:30 pm | *Dinner on your own.* | | | |
| Tuesday, March 26 | | | | |
| 7:30 am | *Plated Breakfast Served in Meeting Room, Coastal Bluffs – The SpyGlass Inn* | | | |
| 8:00 am | 1.0 | Call to Order and Introductions | Gary Pierzynski, NCRA Chair 2024 |  |
| 8:10 am | 2.0 | Approval of Fall 2023 Minutes from Grand Rapids: (<https://www.ncra-saes.org/agendas-minutes>) |  | Approval of fall 2023 NCRA business meeting minutes by consensus. |
|  | 3.0 | Adoption of the Agenda |  | Approval of today’s agenda by consensus. |
|  | 4.0 | Interim Actions of the Chair 4.1 [NCRA FY2025 Office Budget](#budget)  4.2 [NCRA Updated Rules of Operation](#Rules_of_operation)  4.2 Other Items, as needed | Gary Pierzynski, Jeanette Thurston, Chris Hamilton | NCRA FY25 office budget: Discussion and vote to approve EC seconded motion.  NCRA Rules of Operation; Discussion of changes and vote to approve. |
| 8:35 am | 5.0 | NCRCRD Update/Q&A/Discussion | Maria Marshall, NCRCRD Director | For information and discussion |
| 9:00 am | 6.0 | [ARS Update/Q&A/Discussion](#ARS) | Larry Chandler and Rosalind James, USDA-ARS (Zoom) | For information and discussion |
| 9:55 am | 7.0 | agInnovation Standing Committee reports for information only, except NRSP-RC. Written reports from 3/14/2024 agInnovation call are provided below.  [BLC Update](#BLC)  [STC Update](#STC)  [Finance Committee](#Finance)  [DCC Update](#DCC)  [NRSP-RC](#NRSP_RC) | NRSP-RC: Carolyn Lawrence-Dill  All others provided as FYI written reports only. | For information and discussion; request for comments on NRSP\_temp3 for Carolyn to share with NRSP-RC. |
| 10:05 am | 8.0 | NC 2024 Summer Mini LGU Update | George Smith | For information |
| 10:15 am | *Break* | | | |
| 10:30 am | 9.0 | USDA-NIFA Update/Q&A/Discussion | Venu (Kal) Kalavacharla, USDA-NIFA (Zoom) | For information and discussion |
| 10:55 am | 10.0 | [Regional NRCS Conservationists Discussion and Collaboration Ideas](#NRCS) | Curtis Elke and Kasey Taylor, NRCS Central and NE Acting Regional Conservationists (Zoom) | For information and discussion |
| 11:45 am | 11.0 | MRC Report and Recommendations Approval Votes   * New/renewal multistate proposals * Midterm reviews * NC Multistate Research Award * NC Agricultural Research Innovation Award of Excellence * Solicitation of New MRC Member for FFY25 | Shibu Jose, Chris Hamilton | Consensus approval of all recommendations as presented by the MRC.  Nominations open for new MRC member for FFY25 and/or consensus approval of MRC nominee seconded motion – name TBD |
| 12:00 pm | *Plated Lunch Served in Meeting Room, Coastal Bluffs – The SpyGlass Inn*  12:30: NDSU FARMS NSF Engine Award – Frank Casey | | | |
| 1:00 pm | 12.0 | NCRA Future Spring Meeting Planning | Chris Hamilton, Jeanette Thurston | Discussion, Group activity to determine next 3 years of locations. |
| 2:15 pm | 13.0 | [Wildcard Discussion Topic](#wildcard) – Defensible and strategic application of capacity funding | Gary Pierzynski, All | For information and discussion |
| *3:00 pm Business meeting adjourns; depart promptly for* [*Robert Hall Regenerative Viticulture Group Tour*](https://pasorobleswineries.net/winery/robert-hall-winery/) *and then 7:15 pm dinner at* [*Thomas Hill Organics*](https://www.thomashillorganics.com/)*.* | | | | |
| Wednesday, March 27 | | | | |
| 6:30 am | *Plated Breakfast Served in Meeting Room, Coastal Bluffs – The SpyGlass Inn* | | | |
| 7:30 am | Depart for Tours – Citrus and strawberry production facilities, locations TBA. | | | |
| 1:00 pm | Tour ends, return to hotel/airport, as needed | | | |

**Future Meetings:**

* [National Extension and Research Officers Conference](https://sites.google.com/udel.edu/2024-neraoc/home), April 7-10, 2024, Wilmington, DE.
* Joint COPs, July 16-18, 2024, Providence, RI
* [NC Mini LGU Meeting](https://www.canr.msu.edu/research/legislative-report/2024-North-Central-Region-Mini-Land-Grant-Conference/index), Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center, East Lansing, MI, August 4-6, 2024
* Fall agInnovation Meeting, Raleigh, NC, September 22-25, 2024
* APLU Annual Meeting, Orlando, FL, November 10-12, 2024

## Meeting Notes

Fathom AI recording, transcript, and summary: <https://fathom.video/share/xptxCB9EU-ueraeysrXymsoho7R8SP63>

**In-Person Attendees: Gary Pierzynski (NCRA Chair/The Ohio State University), George Smith (Michigan State University), Tala Awada (University of Nebraska – Lincoln), Maria Marshall (NCRCRD), Jane Schuh (Kansas State University), John Blanton (South Dakota State University), Derek McLean (University of Nebraska – Lincoln), Joleen Hadrich (University of Minnesota), Carolyn Lawrence-Dill (Iowa State University), Hector Santiago (University of Nebraska – Lincoln), Shibu Jose (University of Missouri), Lingying Zhao (The Ohio State University), Frank Casey (North Dakota State University), Troy Runge (UW-Madison), Dana Infante (Michigan State University), James Averill (Michigan State University), Jeanette Thurston, (NCRA/Kansas State), Christina Hamilton (NCRA/UW Madison – Recorder)**

**Zoom Attendees: Alex Winter-Nelson, (University of Illinois), Rosalind James (USDA ARS), Larry Chandler (USDA ARS), Susan Moser (USDA-NIFA), Curtis Elke (NRCS), Kasey Taylor (NRCS)**

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| Agenda Item | Topic | Notes | Action Taken/Needed |
| 1.0 | Call to Order and Introductions | Chair Pierzynski welcomed everyone, led introductions around the room, and then called the meeting to order. | None, for information only. |
| 2.0 | Approval of Fall 2023 Minutes from Grand Rapids: (<https://www.ncra-saes.org/agendas-minutes>) |  | Approval of fall 2023 NCRA business meeting minutes by consensus: Approved as distributed. |
| 3.0 | Adoption of the Agenda |  | Approval of today’s agenda by consensus with one change: NIFA representative, Susan Moser, will fill in for Venu (Kal) Kalavacharla for item 9.0. |
| 4.0 | Interim Actions of the Chair 4.1 [NCRA FY2025 Office Budget](#budget)  4.2 [NCRA Updated Rules of Operation](#Rules_of_operation)  4.2 Other Items, as needed | NCRA Office Budget: Jeanette presented the budget as distributed below. Discussion ensued around merit increases not included in the proposed budget and fees imposed by both UW and K-State. Directors indicated support for both COLA and merit increases. Next year we may need to discuss increasing the budget. Troy Runge indicated he would look into UW options to reduce the fee load currently being charged to Chris Hamilton’s UW NCRA account.  Updated Rules of Operation: Jeanette reviewed the Rules as distributed.  George mentioned perhaps considering a change to the NCRA name, as it’s not well known outside our group. Something that may better describe who we are and what we represent externally. WAAESD is now agInnovation - West, so perhaps something like that to showcase our work innovating in agricultural research. Let’s table this discussion for another time.  Jeanette then presented the proposed new Nominations and Awards committee, as described below. Carolyn Lawrence-Dill would be the chair, Lingying Zhao volunteered as well. Gary suggested including more information on how the duties are linked to those of the EC. James Averill also volunteered to serve on this committee. | NCRA FY25 office budget: Discussion and vote to approve EC seconded motion. FY25 budget approved as distributed below. Chris will send assessment amounts to Kansas State, which will then invoice each state for their respective amount.  NCRA Rules of Operation; Discussion of changes and vote to approve. Committee was approved as distributed, with minor edits to the Rules, as provided by Chair Pierzynski via email on 4/1/2024:  *Duties of the officers and executive committee, Section V, subsection 3 only mentions some of the duties of the chair. If you only read that part, you would not know that the chair is responsible for coordinating the annual reviews of the ED and AD, which is spelled out under NCRA Committee Descriptions for the Executive Committee. I think this is easy to fix. Under Section V.3, revise the final sentence of the first paragraph as such: The chair is the chief executive officer of the NCRA and is responsible for ensuring the duties of the Executive Committee are carried out as outlined in the Appendix for NCRA Committee Descriptions.* Done and new Rules uploaded to NCRA website and Teams by Chris Hamilton on 4/1/2024. |
| 5.0 | NCRCRD Update/Q&A/Discussion | Maria presented her slides to the group and provided copies of their annual report as hard copies to the group in-person. | For information and discussion |
| 6.0 | [ARS Update/Q&A/Discussion](#ARS) | Discussion Topics (from agenda brief below):   1. Best approaches to co-advising/mentoring between ARS and LGU scientists of graduate students and post-doctoral scientists: ARS encourages involvement of graduated students with ARS projects/PIs. They don’t require an advisor to be an adjunct but can if that’s what LGUs need. ARS PIs can advise, but universities the rules on all things related to implementing the degree. ARS scientists can serve and be voting members of student graduate committees and conduct assessments – these are considered recommendations, for which the universities make the final decision. ARS meets with their ethics advisors to make sure they are following what’s appropriate to do. ARS is also happy to have individual meetings with LGUs about specific questions and issues to fit needs as they arise. 2. Developing MOUs between LGU and ARS in the Midwest region –comments from Carolyn Lawrence-Dill and Rosalind:    1. ARS is moving away from the older MOUs and moving towards more general, blanket NFCAs (Non-Funded Cooperative Agreements). Looking for statements on a desire to do collaborative work together and with whom, what the general research focus, facilities/land access, safety rules and training, intellectual property, vehicle use, space use, student mentoring/training, employee misconduct policies. More specific, separate agreements might be developed for IBC, IACUC for animal work policies (might use the university rules for these). Some items can be changed or removed, so please just work with ARS on customizing these blanket agreements, if needed. Funded items like leases would be different from these NFCAs.    2. IA State perspective on these blanket agreements, helps everyone all get on the same page, “renewing our vows,” so to speak. As an FYI, it’s interesting to see what university agreements and contracts folks see that we do not, and this can sometimes cause unexpected delays. 3. Guidance for Onboarding new USDA-ARS and Land-grant University Leadership—updated and ready to share? | For information and discussion |
| 7.0 | agInnovation Standing Committee reports for information only, except NRSP-RC. Written reports from 3/14/2024 agInnovation call are provided below.  [BLC Update](#BLC)  [STC Update](#STC)  [Finance Committee](#Finance)  [DCC Update](#DCC)  [NRSP-RC](#NRSP_RC) | Carolyn reviewed the purpose of the NRSP-RC and how they review the different types of national OTT-funded support projects, capacity/core (like NRSP1 and can be renewed repeatedly) and emerging issues (renewed only once). NRSP\_temp3 was fully reviewed in 2023, so all of that is available in NIMSS for directors to review. See links below in the agenda brief. Please review this material and provide any feedback to [chamilton@wisc.edu](mailto:chamilton@wisc.edu) by the end of April. | For information and discussion, request for comments by 4/20/2024 on NRSP\_temp3 for Carolyn to share with NRSP-RC. Send comments to [chamilton@wisc.edu](mailto:chamilton@wisc.edu). |
| 8.0 | NC 2024 Summer Mini LGU Update | George Smith provided an update on the plans for the 2024 Mini LGU Meeting this summer, hosted by and at Michigan State University, August 4-6, 2024. “Food Security is National Security:  The Role of the Land-Grant Universities in Creating and Sustaining our Future,” will be the theme. Program plan is still in the works; stay tuned for more information. Will be a great opportunity to showcase to CARET how MSU uses capacity funds, as well as competitive, Research Facilities Act (keeping infrastructure on everyone’s mind), and other funding sources. Hoping to also get an inside perspective from government affairs staff on what messages are most effective. Some tours around the campus area will be provided as well. Open to additional ideas, so please share with George. | For information |
| 9.0 | USDA-NIFA Update/Q&A/Discussion | Dr. Susan Moser in lieu of Dr. Venu (Kal) Kalavacharla joined and gave a USDA-NIFA update to the group. Slides were shared via email with NCRA directors on 3/26/2024.    George: An explanation at some point in time for the reasoning behind the NIFA funding line recission would be useful to have. Also, how can we help NIFA share the important work of the LGU system? Susan: We can have someone from the budget office talk about the recission. Josh Stull is stakeholder relations, so it would be good to invite him to discuss better sharing LGU work. Susan will take these comments back to Kal. | For information and discussion |
| 10.0 | [Regional NRCS Conservationists Discussion and Collaboration Ideas](#NRCS) | Who are the NRCS main NCRA LGU contacts and how can NCRA help?   * Need to hire many more staff and better diversify NRCS workforce. They could use LGUs to help with this process and technical training for students to fill these roles. * Also, assistance is needed with urban agriculture systems, climate change activities, and ensuring LGU curriculum matches with NRCS career opportunity needs. NRCS is re-doing their career pathways/student ambassador program to be able to bring on well-trained staff non-competitively, as well. * Main contacts are state conservationists and local university contacts. FYI that many may still be new, or hiring is still underway. * Agreements and shared position assistance is another opportunity. NRCS can engage in teaching activities (farm tours, community outreach, etc.), but would have to look at curriculum to approve formal classroom activities. Each state is different though, so reach out to your state/regional conservationists on this. * Research and feedback on additional conservation practices. * Let’s stay engaged and keep these conversations going! Please reach out with any questions or if you need additional clarification, conversations. Can bring in additional NRCS staff to expand on what’s being done. | For information and discussion |
| 11.0 | [MRC Report](#MRC_report) and Recommendation Approval Votes Needed:   * New/renewal multistate proposals * Midterm reviews * NC Multistate Research Award * NC Agricultural Research Innovation Award of Excellence * Solicitation of New MRC Member for FFY25 | Shibu Jose, 2024 MRC Chair, and Chris Hamilton, provided the seconded recommendations made during the 3/25 MRC meeting for final NCRA approval. | All MRC recommendations for new/renewal proposals, midterm reviews, and NCERA101 as the NC Excellence in Multistate Research Award were approved as presented in the MRC tables below with the following changes:   * NCERA\_temp215 now approved with revision, instead of approved as-is, with the following suggestion: *This proposal could be strengthened with additional information regarding how the information will be shared and distributed in additional to the planned activities.* * NC\_temp1180 is now approved pending revision: Add a few statements on the cooperative efforts among the participants in addressing the objectives and tell them to please be sure to focus on showcasing integration in your annual reports for the next 5-year. * NC1212 has been very responsive to its midterm review and has changed reporting strategy and is addressing the below MRC concerns.   New MRC Member for FFY25: Jane Schuh agreed to serve as the new MRC member, effective 10/1/2025. Derek, Tala presented a seconded motion of approval, which was fully approved by the NCRA by consensus. |
| 12.0 | NCRA Future Spring Meeting Planning | Group dot choice activity results:  NCRA discussed and decided by consensus that they are not interested in meeting during NERAOC in 2025.  Priority joint groups identified:   1. ARD 2. NCCEA (can do this in a summer Mini LGU as an extra half day) 3. FFAR   Location decisions moving forward (except for 2025, the order location is subject to change based on availability):   1. Puerto Rico, 2025, Hector will arrange this. Dates TBD, based on availability of lodging and tour location. Will Invite NCCEA. 2. Athens, GA 3. Tucson, AZ 4. Florida (location TBD, but perhaps near Archibald Research Station or similar) 5. Tie between UC Davis area, IA State’s Montana camp, and New Mexico State University area. | NCRA is not interested in meeting during NERAOC in 2025.  Priority joint groups:   1. ARD 2. NCCEA (can likely do this in a summer Mini LGU as an extra half day) 3. FFAR   Location decisions moving forward (except for 2025, the order location is subject to change based on availability):   1. Puerto Rico, 2025, Hector will arrange this. Dates TBD, based on availability of lodging and tour location. Will Invite NCCEA. 2. Athens, GA 3. Tucson, AZ 4. Florida (location TBD, but perhaps near Archibald Research Station or similar) 5. Tie between UC Davis area, IA State’s Montana camp, and New Mexico State University area. |
| 13.0 | [Wildcard Discussion Topic](#wildcard) – Defensible and strategic application of capacity funding | Gary Pierzynski led this group discussion, beginning with his slides. Slides not available for direct sharing, but Gary’s presentation can be viewed in the recording. | For information and discussion |

## Item 4.1: NCRA Office FY2025 Proposed Budget/Assessment Presenters: Gary Pierzynski, Jeanette Thurston, Chris Hamilton Action Requested: For review, discussion, and approval.

**Notes:**

* No change to overall assessment ($483,849). Office assessment has been the same since FY2020. Depending upon actual carryover amounts for FY24, we may need to consider an assessment increase for FY26. Budgeted carryover is $20,211 for FY25 into FY26.
* State individual assessment invoices will vary slightly from FY24 due to changes in the 3-year rolling average of Hatch Multistate Funding received.
* When the budget is approved, assessment invoices will be sent from KSU again this year.
* ED/AD salary increases for FY25 include only a 2% COLA currently.
* Training line for Jeanette for the Indigenous Engagement Institute Workshop. In addition, Jeanette’s budget has not included any funds for training, so we would like to keep this line in for future budgets.







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Item 4.2: NCRA Updated Rules of Operation  
Presenter: Jeanette Thurston, Gary Pierzynski  
Action Requested: Approval of Updated Rules as Distributed

**THE NORTH CENTRAL REGIONAL ASSOCIATION OF   
STATE AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION DIRECTORS  
  
RULES OF OPERATION**

July 1977, July 1980, July 1982, March 1986, March 1991, July 1992, March 1993, November 1994, July 1998, September 2000, September 2001, December 2013, June 2023, March 2024

**EXPERIMENT STATION SECTION (ESS)/agInnovation  
BOARD ON AGRICULTURE ASSEMBLY**

**Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities**

**ARTICLE I - NAME**

The name of this organization, the North Central Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors, hereinafter called the North Central Regional Association (NCRA), was established in conformity with the constitution of the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU).

**ARTICLE II - PURPOSE**

The NCRA is one of five regional associations that represent the administrators of the State Agricultural Experiment Stations (SAESs) in the North Central Region (NCR). On matters to be ratified by, reported to, or recommended to APLU, the consensus of the NCRA will be conveyed to the agInnovation chair by the NCRA chair. The NCRA will conduct its affairs in conformance with the stated objectives and procedures of the agInnovation Rules of Operation.   
  
The NCRA and the other four regional associations are an integral part of agInnovation. Through NCRA’s business meetings, NCRA views are determined formally and transmitted agInnovation. These views include new matters or those referred to NCRA by agInnovation.

The NCRA provides a forum for the exchange of information and for discussion and debate among members and guests on matters of common concern or opportunity that may or may not require formal action. NCRA takes actions limited to the North Central Region.

The other functions of the NCRA include:  
  
1. Arranges for and conducts its own affairs, elects members to agInnovation, makes recommendations to agInnovation, reacts to proposals of agInnovation, and participates in the handling of [interim] business of agInnovation;  
  
2. Actively participates on agInnovation Committees and with the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) and other regional associations in the programming and conduct of cooperative regional multistate research and integrated research and extension activities as authorized by the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (AREERA);  
  
3. Facilitates cooperation among its member SAESs, with federal and state agencies, with industry, nonprofit organizations, and with other stakeholders and partners in planning, programming, financing, implementing, and performing agricultural research;  
  
4. Employs and pays the salaries and/or benefits of the NCRA Executive Director (ED) and other NCRA Office staff, such as an Assistant Director (AD), and others as needed and approved by NCRA membership;

5. Led by the NCRA Chair and EC, conducts performance reviews and provides a performance rating for NCRA ED and AD and other NCRA staff annually. Annual accomplishments report developed by NCRA ED and AD to be presented to NCRA directors at least 2 weeks prior to performance review meeting. The performance review meeting is to be held in January each year on a date that allows the majority of NCRA members to participate. Following this meeting, the NCRA Chair drafts annual performance review and rating with input from full NCRA membership and provides the report to the ED, AD, and their university supervisors by mid-February;

6. Annual cost of living or across the board salary adjustments will be assessed per the guidance of the host institutions for the Executive Director and Assistant Director and merit increases will be at the discretion of the NCRA directors and within the range or limits set forth by the host institutions; and  
  
7. Collects and disburses dues and enters into contracts with cooperators and/or granting agencies to cover the costs of the programs agreed upon and approved by NCRA membership;

**ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP**

1. The voting members of the NCRA will consist of the directors (or duly authorized representatives) of its twelve (12) member SAESs eligible for funding under the Hatch Act, as amended in 1955 (69 Stat. 671): Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.
2. Associate and assistant directors of the member SAESs who attend one or more meetings per year of the NCRA will also be members. However, the voting privilege will be limited to one vote for each SAES.
3. Nonvoting, ex-officio members of the NCRA will consist of: the NCRA ED; the administrator or other representatives of USDA-NIFA; Northern Plains and Midwest Area Directors for USDA-ARS; comparable area representatives from other USDA agencies such as, USDA-ERS, USDA-NRCS, and USDA-FS; the director of the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development; the director of the North Central Regional Aquaculture Center, the director of the North Central Regional Integrated Pest Management Center; Lincoln University and Central State University research directors; and designees of North Central (NC) 1994 institutions or their designated representatives.

**ARTICLE IV - MEETINGS**

1. Three (3) regular in-person meetings will be scheduled each year. These include:

* Spring meeting - usually in March, and locations will be solicited and approved by membership vote at the previous year’s spring or summer meeting, noting that the final meeting hotel/facility will depend upon available venues willing to contract with and agree to the policies of the host institution of either the NCRA ED or AD;
* Summer meeting - usually in July and in conjunction with the NC Mini Land-grant Meeting; and
* Fall meeting - usually in September and in conjunction with the agInnovation annual fall meeting.

2. Monthly virtual meetings are scheduled each year to discuss ongoing NCRA business, provide ED updates for regional and national level activities and news, share member institution updates, meet with key partners (e.g., ARS and NC centers), and have critical discussions on topics agreed upon by members.

3. Other meetings may be scheduled with approval of the Executive Committee.  
  
4. In-person meeting locations will be agreed upon by the membership.

5. At their discretion, NCRA directors may invite members of their team to attend NCRA meetings. However, the voting privilege will be limited to one vote for each SAES.

6. Agenda briefs and any other meeting materials should be sent electronically to the NCRA office no later than two weeks prior to the meeting in question.

7. With the assistance and approval of the NCRA Executive Committee, the NCRA office will prepare the meeting agenda, compile the agenda briefs, and send the final agenda packet to the membership electronically no later than one week prior to the meeting. Any NCRA business requiring a vote, including electronic ballots, must follow Article VIII – Quorum, below.

**ARTICLE V - OFFICERS**

1. Officers. The officers of the NCRA will be the chair and chair-elect, each for a one-year term. The chair-elect succeeds the chair. The ED serves as executive vice-chair, and the AD provides administrative services.

The NCRA Chair is appointed after a NCRA leadership progression, beginning with serving as a member and chair of the MRC. This leadership progression allows NCRA directors to learn about the NCRA multistate research program and overall association business functions and activities, prior to the opportunity to serve as NCRA chair.

During this leadership progression, if an NCRA member is unable to serve in a leadership role (e.g., MRC Chair or NCRA Chair), the Executive Committee may request nominations from NCRA membership to fill the open Executive Committee positions. The Executive Committee also has the option of allowing the current Chair to remain in the role for another year. A simple majority vote of a quorum of NCRA members (7 of the 12 NCRA institutions) is needed to approve the appointment of new leadership.   
  
2. Elections. The officers and members of standing committees are elected in person or electronically, as needed. New officers assume responsibility at the conclusion of the agInnovation fall meeting.  
  
Officers and committee members may succeed themselves, but the general practice has been to rotate officers and committee members to share the workload and to provide the directors opportunity to participate and provide leadership to different facets of the organization.   
  
3. Duties. The chair will preside over NCRA business meetings, at meetings of their Executive Committee, and on all other occasions where the head of the organization is to be recognized. The chair is the chief executive officer of the NCRA.  
  
The chair-elect will undertake duties the chair prescribes, will become chair for the remainder of the term should the chair resign or otherwise be unable to serve, and will preside in the absence of the chair.  
  
The ED and the AD, under the guidance of the chair, provide leadership and support for activities of the Association, maintains permanent Association files, maintains liaison with other associations and government agencies, and maintains the NCRA website.   
  
New officers will be provided direction and resources necessary in their new role by the NCRA ED and AD.

**ARTICLE VI - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The Executive Committee (EC) will be comprised of the chair, chair-elect, past chair; chair of the Multistate Research Committee (MRC), an NCRA member who has been in their SAES role for at least 1 year and is not serving in an interim role at their institution, and the ED. All EC position terms are for one year and follow the federal fiscal year for a start date of 10/1. EC voting will be by simple majority of all EC members.   
 The EC, through the chair, executes the programs of the NCRA and guides the activities of the ED, AD, and other NCRA Office staff. The EC is also empowered to handle the immediate affairs of the NCRA between business meetings.

**ARTICLE VII - COMMITTEES AND DESIGNEES**

NCRA committee descriptions, membership, and roles are provided in the Appendix. Nominations for NCRA committee members are approved by a simple majority of an NCRA quorum (7 of the 12 NCRA member institutions). Member terms and term limits are provided in the Appendix.

Committees can be established, and multistate project administrative advisors (AA) and other designees named by the NCRA Directors, with the agreement of the designee. The AA volunteer pool can include anyone from the region’s SAES membership who has an administrative leadership role or others (i.e., experienced department head, senior professor), as approved by their SAES director. For NCACs, it is preferred that AAs are above department head level. Multistate committee members may include those who are willing to serve and approved by their SAES Director. A list of committees and designees for the coming year is prepared by the NCRA AD and circulated to the membership as a part of the minutes of the NCRA summer meeting.

Continuing (permanent) committees and committee assignments include the agInnovation Experiment Station Committee on Organization and Policy (ESCOP) Committee: The NCRA has three representatives on the agInnovation ESCOP Committee. They are the NCRA chair-elect, chair, and immediate past chair. The NCRA’s immediate past chair also represents NCRA on the agInnovation ESCOP Executive Committee. The NCRA ED serves as a permanent alternate. agInnovation has several standing, technical, and ad hoc subcommittees to which members of NCRA are nominated. For details, consult the current agInnovation membership and committee list at: <http://escop.info/committees/>

**ARTICLE VIII - QUORUM**

For purposes of doing NCRA business, a quorum will consist of a minimum of seven (7) NCRA SAES voting members present and voting at any duly called meeting where written notice and agenda are sent out at least one week in advance of the meeting. A simple majority resolves all issues except amendment of the Rules of Operation which will require a two-thirds majority. For electronic voting, at least seven (7) voting members must respond.

**ARTICLE IX - PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

The emphasis in all meetings will be on orderly, agreed upon, collegial process to achieve an objective decision by those present and voting. Should there be a parliamentary challenge, however, it will be answered by reference to Robert's Rules of Order.

**ARTICLE X - AMENDMENT OF RULES OF OPERATION**

These Rules of Operation may be amended at any business meeting of the NCRA or voted on by electronic ballot provided the proposed amendment has been mailed to all members three weeks in advance of that meeting and is passed by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present at the meeting.

**APPENDIX**

**NCRA Committ****ee Descriptions**

**Executive Committee (EC):**

Membership: The EC is comprised of the chair, chair-elect, past chair; chair of the Multistate Research Committee (MRC), NCRA member who has been in their SAES role for at least 1 year and is not serving in an interim role at their institution, and the Executive Director (ED).

Role of the EC: The EC, through the Chair, executes the programs of the NCRA and provides managerial direction to the Association's ED and Assistant Director (AD). The EC is empowered to handle the immediate affairs of the NCRA between business meetings. A review of the annual performance of the ED and AD is led by the EC, following the evaluation of documentation provided by the ED and AD, and based on input from the Association's members. This performance review meeting is to be held in January each year on a date that allows the majority of NCRA members to participate. Following this meeting, the NCRA Chair drafts annual performance review and rating with input from full NCRA membership and provides the report to the ED, AD, and their university supervisors by mid-February.

**Multistate Research Committee (MRC):**

Membership: The MRC consists of five members, each serving a three-year term. At least one member is elected each year to succeed the member whose term expires. The members elect their own chair for a one-year term. The ED serves as an ex-officio nonvoting member.

Role of the MRC: The MRC is responsible for recommending to the membership the proper disposition of Multistate Activity Project proposals and Multistate Coordinating Committees in accordance with national and regional priorities. This is done through the commissioning of external reviews, the evaluation of projects and committees, the monitoring of research progress and, as appropriate, establishing multistate priorities via broad-based issues identification and strategic planning. The MRC is also responsible for reviewing annual regional nominations to the ESS’ Excellence in Multistate Research Award and making recommendations to the NCRA membership on the winner. Finally, the MRC serves as the review panel for proposals received in response to any NCRA funding opportunities.

**Nominations and Awards Committee (NAC):**

Membership: The NAC consists of 3 members, each serving a three-year term. To ensure continuity as well as committee turn-over, in the first year of this committee’s operation, the three members draw straws for 1, 2, and 3-year terms. The committee selects their chair who remains in this role for at least 2 years to provide continuity. The NCRA ED and AD serve *ex-officio* as Executive Vice-chair and Assistant Vice-chair, respectively (making full committee membership 5), and assist with facilitation of the committee’s work, including the AA and award selection processes. If a conflict of interest arises, the committee will replace the conflicted committee member with external ad hoc reviewer, such as a previous award winner or another objective individual associated with the NCRA.

Role of NAC: The NAC works with the NCRA ED/AD to solicit and identify AAs to NC multistate projects. This committee also identifies regional and national level award opportunities, solicits nominations for and recommends the agInnovation NC winner of the agInnovation Excellence in Leadership Award, the agInnovation Agricultural Research Innovation Award of Excellence, and other regional or national award programs of interest to the NCRA.

**Resolutions Committee (RC):**

Membership: At least one NCRA member is selected for a three-year term that is renewable.

Role of RC: The RC works with the NCRA ED/AD and NCRA directors to collect information and create formal written Resolutions of Appreciations for NCRA directors leaving the organization. The RC may create additional Resolutions to celebrate exceptional service to the NCRA or other applicable activities as identified by NCRA members. Resolutions are read at an NCRA meeting, provided to the director receiving the resolution, and noted in the official meeting minutes.

**Roles and Expectations of NCRA Members Serving on Other NCR Committees and Boards**

[**North Central Regional Center for Rural Development**](https://ncrcrd.ag.purdue.edu/)  **(NCRCRD) Board:**

Membership: One NCRA member serves as a voting member of the NCRCRD Board for a four-year term that is renewable.

Role of NCRCRD Board: The Board reviews and approves the Center’s budget, provides guidance and recommendations on Center activities, and provides final approval on grant awards. The Board meets twice a year (May and December), and the Center provides email updates for the other two quarters.

[**North Central Regional Aquaculture Center**](https://www.ncrac.org/) **(NCRAC) Board:**

Membership: The NCRA ED and the NCRA Director who hosts the NCRAC serve as voting members on the NCRAC Board. Board members serve a 4-year term that is renewable.

Role of NCRAC Board: The NCRAC Board isresponsible for overall administration and management of the regional center program; establishes overall regional aquacultural research, development, and extension goals, and allocates fiscal resources to ensure that the center develops strong programs both in research and in extension; and establishes priorities for regional aquacultural research and extension education activities based on inputs from the Industry Advisory Council and Technical Committee and guidance from the National Aquaculture Development Plan. Board members attend one in-person annual meeting each year (typically February) and participate in virtual meetings as needed.

[**North Central Integrated Pest Management Center**](https://www.ncipmc.org/) **(NCIPMC) Steering Committee:**

Membership: The NCRA ED serves continuously and one NCRA Director serves for a 3-year term that is renewable (up to 2 terms).

Role of NCIPMC Steering Committee:  The NCIPMC Steering Committee provides the general direction of center activities, advises center staff on timely and effective Center management and use of funds, goals, priorities, strategic planning, and partnerships, and contributes to the overall Center vision for IPM in the north central region. Steering committee members attend quarterly virtual meetings and in-person meetings as needed.

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## Item 6.0: ARS Update/Q&A/Discussion with Larry Chandler and Rosalind James (via Zoom) Action Requested: None; for information and discussion.

Discussion Topics: Based on last year’s discussions (during our NCRA spring and fall meetings), discussion topics that rose to the top for this year’s Spring Meeting include:

* Best approaches to co-advising/mentoring between ARS and LGU scientists of graduate students and post-doctoral scientists. (on our list for our 2023 Spring meeting but we ran out of time)
* Developing MOUs between LGU and ARS in the Midwest region –comments from Carolyn Lawrence-Dill and Rosalind.
* Guidance for Onboarding new USDA-ARS and Land-grant University Leadership—updated and ready to share? (if time, or to be discussed during June NCRA monthly meeting)

**Guidance for Onboarding new USDA-ARS and Land-grant University (LGU) Leadership**

March 2024

**Background**: This onboarding guidance, targeting USDA-ARS and LGU leadership, provides a framework for developing and strengthening the long-standing and critical partnership within our states, regions, and nationally. Like USDA-ARS, each LGU has their own processes, protocols, rules, and state practices. These differences can create challenges in working together on shared priorities. With dialogue that results in understanding each organization’s policies and practices, workable solutions are always possible. Based on the input from USDA-ARS and Agricultural Experiment Station leaders, the following guidance is meant to establish a collaborative atmosphere between ARS and LGU leadership:

* Begin by having a meeting between the new Dean and/or the new Agricultural Experiment Station Director (Note: this person may or may not be the same leader), as well as other college or university leaders including Center Directors, Department Chairs, VP for Research, Provost, Univ. Admin. Leader, etc., and new USDA ARS Research Leaders, Laboratory Directors, Center Directors, or Administrative Officer housed at a LGU or ARS facility on a campus, research station, worksite, etc., preferably within the first 2 months of appointment.
* Schedule follow-up meetings as needed to address the following recommended topics for understanding the respective organizations and identifying opportunities for collaboration:
  + General introductions, background, vision, and goals for the unit/organization
  + Share organizational charts with key contacts coupled with roles and responsibilities (leaders, scientists/faculty, HR/finance/budget professionals, safety, and facility engineers, etc.)
  + Share leader contact information and best method for communication and scheduling meetings (i.e., share administrative assistant information).
  + Discuss any existing or past agreements, review and update as needed.
  + Share unique institutional and federal guidelines, rules, policies, required trainings, and procedures applicable to partners, for example:
    - Documentation to help avoid conflicts of interest, such as the USDA ARS document on *Avoiding Misuse of Position for Scientists with Official Duties at Universities* (USDA Ethics) and *University Codes of Conduct*.
    - LGU and ARS information should be shared that addresses relevant workplace policies, such as: safety, emergencies, fire alarms, laboratory and greenhouse use, general laboratory safety, the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC), animal care and use, the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), COVID, and so on. Notably, this may apply to all employee levels dependent upon the exact nature of their work responsibilities.
  + Discuss whether LGU and ARS share any fee-for-service, space charges, maintenance, and renovation practices, and share information related to office, lab, greenhouse, and field facilities.
  + Tour applicable facilities across location(s) and discuss shared equipment, operations and support personnel, maintenance requests, etc.
  + Explore opportunities for enhanced or new collaborations and partnerships:
    - Unique facilities, equipment, scientific expertise
    - Identify relevant academic units and explore courtesy or otherwise appointments and build relationships between academic units and ARS personnel and vice versa.
    - Discuss organizational initiatives and priorities where collaboration would be valuable.
  + Share current and future personnel and facilities changes.
  + Discuss budget management for flow-through funds and personnel management for university staff working on these funds.
  + Discuss training protocols and opportunities:
    - LGUs and USDA ARS should provide mechanisms for access to training opportunities for co-located employees across all classifications. For example, electronic access to LGU online training likely requires some official status and unique identifier (NETID) to access training. Similarly, University student and employee access to ARS computer systems and data requires background checks and training.
  + Address new and reoccurring challenges and solutions with the partnership as soon as possible (don’t let issues fester).
  + Develop onboarding procedures for new ARS scientists working within university facilities and university scientists, students and post-docs access and training for working within ARS locations.
  + Identify ARS scientists to mentor new ARS scientists at university sites if the new scientist does not have a research leader at that site.
  + Develop protocols for addressing problems/issues/irregularities, etc. between organizations.
  + Create a document specific to conversations with USDA ARS scientists and LGU unit heads/faculty.

**USDA ARS Policies to Review:**

* Full Ethics Issues List at: [09-1 Ethics Issues Related to USDA Scientists | USDA](https://www.usda.gov/oe/rules-road/ethics-issuances/09-1-ethics-issues-related) and in particular review the following:
* Specific Duties and Activities Involving the University
* Guidance Related to Co-located scientists
* Guidance on ARS Scientists Serving on Graduate Student Committees
* Participation in Grants on Behalf of Universities and Other non-Federal Entities
* Adjunct professor

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Item 7.1: AgInnovation Budget and Legislative Committee (BLC) Written Report  
BLC Chair: Anton Bekkerman  
Action: For Information only

**Budget and Legislative Committee (BLC,** <http://escop.info/committee/blc/>**)**

BLC meetings occur on the fourth Tuesday of every month from 4:00-5:00 ET. The committee alternates its meetings: one month the meeting is for voting members only to foster open discussion, and the alternating month includes more structured discussion and liaison reports. One of the outcomes of this revised structure is more time for in-depth discussions by the voting members that is valuable in reflecting on broader questions that the BLC needs to address, while still receiving timely input from the liaisons. Lewis-Burke Associates (LBA) regularly participates in our meetings with Dr. Elizabeth Stulberg serving as the liaison.

The BLC chair is a multifaceted leadership position given the multiple committee assignments (BAA-Budget and Advocacy Committee [BAC] voting member, BAA-Committee on Legislation and Policy [CLP] voting member, ECOP BLC liaison). Due to the BLC chair’s involvement in many other parts of the BAA where liaisons provide updates, the chair can bring back information to the BLC in a timely manner even with liaisons joining the BLC meetings less frequently.

The predominant focus of the BLC is to create, adapt, monitor, and change agInnovation’s input into the BAC, CLP, and infrastructure budget and legislative activities. Modification to existing processes, advancing new deadlines, and creation of new steps and requests make this an iterative process. The BAA Unified FY 2025 Appropriations Request was approved by the BAC and the BAA Policy Board of Directors and is summarized here ([FY25 Approps](https://www.aplu.org/wp-content/uploads/APLU-NIFA-Funding-Exec-Summary-2025.pdf)). The BAA Farm Bill Request is summarized here ([BAA Farm Bill](https://www.aplu.org/wp-content/uploads/APLU-Farm-Bill.pdf)). The BLC also presented information to CARET representatives for Hatch, AFRI, and RFA during the “All About the Request” webinar (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2SahCRJlVGA>) on January 31, 2024.

The BAC and CLP are jointly developing a “Decadal Visioning and Advocacy Strategy” to guide both advocacy and authorization activities over the next five-year period. Two fly-in meetings were convened with BLC and agInnovation leadership participating in Washington, DC for initial discussions. On September 11, a meeting was held to discuss a shared future vision and path forward for Agricultural, Natural Resources, and Forestry research. This was followed by a joint BAC/CLP session and FANR/LBA Advocacy Leadership Forum on November 1-3 to collaboratively frame the decadal plan. Discussions at both fly-in meetings informed proposed high-level topics to serve as pillars for the decadal plan. Below is the content provided by the BLC on January 12, 2024. This content was shared during the January 10 agInnovation Chairs Advisory Committee virtual meeting and revised.

1. **National Security and Resiliency**

Overcoming climate change and land access challenges, the United States produces 95% of its food domestically while reducing water, land, and energy inputs by 50%, capturing 75% more carbon and reducing agricultural greenhouse gas emissions by 60% through advanced food and biobased technologies—all helping ensure food price inflation is under 2%.

[Recent data indicate that the U.S. already consumes about 87% of food that was domestically produced, so I don’t think 95% is a stretch. The bigger moonshots would be the input reductions and carbon sequestration. Median food price inflation since 1973 has been 3.4%, so reducing that by about 1.5 percentage points could be a reasonable goal as well…and 2% sounds nice too!]

1. **Global Competitiveness and Leadership**

America will be the global leader by tripling its annual agricultural and food science innovations and high impact patents, underpinned by an increase of at least $2.0 billion annual federal investment in capacity and competitive programs that support agricultural research and extension.

[The $2.0 billion represents $1 b annual increase in competitive funds, raising the AFRI funding to $1.5 billion annually (approximately a doubling of the current $700m authorization) plus a $500 m increase in capacity funding and $500 m in ag infrastructure.]

1. **Food and Diet-Related Diseases**

Food insecurity in America will be less than 5% and development of more nutritious food and safer food production and consumption will cut in half the number of Americans with diet and other food-related diseases, reducing national healthcare costs by 25%.

[Currently, U.S. spends about $4.5 trillion in healthcare costs annually, so any double-digit percentage reduction will be significant. For example, 25% reduction is $1.13 trillion = ~5% of U.S. GDP. Food insecurity in 2022 was 12.8% ([ERS](https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-u-s/key-statistics-graphics/#:~:text=12.8%20percent%20(17.0%20million)%20of,(13.5%20million)%20in%202021.)), reducing down below 5% seems like a lofty/bold goal.]

1. **Rural Prosperity**

America’s rural communities are revitalized through new biobased industries, diverse farming opportunities, and a high quality of life that reduces rural poverty by 50% and incomes grow by 30%.

[According to US Bureau of Economic Analysis income data, over the past 10 and 20 years, urban (metropolitan) income grew by about 30% more than the growth in rural (nonmetropolitan) incomes. So, 30% growth could be a nice figure to shoot for—equitable distribution of income opportunities across U.S. communities.]

On February 15, the BAC/CLP decadal visioning committee met to discuss the initial draft of a high-level overview, based on information received from different committee members. The document included three themes:

* The United States maintains a safe, abundant, and secure domestic food supply for the benefit of food safety and national security.
* Rural communities are economically and environmentally healthy places to live.
* Americans have better, more satisfying diets and longer, healthier lives.

The BAC/CLP chairs facilitated a discussion and set a goal to have a high-level overview document finalized, printed, and distributed in the materials provided at the 2024 CARET-BAA meetings.

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Item 7.1: STC (agInnovation Science & Technology Committee) Update  
Chair: Nathon Slaton  
Action Requested: None, for information only.

**ESCOP Science & Technology:** <http://escop.info/committee/scitech/>

**Committee Members:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Chair:** Nathan Slaton (SAAESD)  **Past Chair:** Bernie Engel (NCRA)  **Delegates:**  Alton Thompson (ARD)  John Yang (ARD)  Frank Casey (NCRA)  Shibu Jose (NCRA)  George Criner (NERA)  Jason Hubbart (NERA)  Nathan McKinney (SAAESD)  David Monk (SAAESD)  Gene Kelly (WAAESD)  Greg Cuomo (WAAESD)  **Executive Vice Chair:**  Bret Hess (WAAESD ED)  Jennifer Horton (WAAESD Recording Secretary) | **Liaisons:**  Tara McHugh (ARS)  Kevin Kephart (NIFA)  Roger Magarey (NIPMCC)  Tim Killian (SSCC) |

**Meetings:** Virtual meetings are scheduled 1-2 pm PT/2-3 pm MT/3-4 pm CT/4-5 pm ET the first Monday of the month. Zoom connection information is: <https://unr.zoom.us/j/81036274718?pwd=OHlHYXhkWlEyekI3NjcwREZ1dDJpZz09>   
Meeting ID: 810 3627 4718 Passcode: STC

**Activities Since the** [**Report**](http://escop.info/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/agInnovation-Exec-Comm-agenda-v4-and-materials-2023-07-19.pdf) **to the agInnovation on December 12, 2023**

Feedback received during the agInnovation membership meeting on December 12 and additional input from STC members was incorporated into the final draft of the call for nominations for the Agricultural Research Innovation Award of Excellence. The call for nominations was announced by agInnovation Chair Smith following the Finance Committee’s approval so spend up to $5,000 to support the new award. The deadline for nominations was extended to February 29. Guidelines for submitting nominations for respective agInnovation awards are available at <http://escop.info/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/STC_INNOVATION_EXCELLENCE_AWARD_2024_CALL.pdf>; <http://escop.info/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/STC_RESEARCH_AWARD_CALL_2024.pdf>; and

<http://escop.info/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/STC_LEADERSHIP_AWARD_CALL_2024.pdf>

The success stories templates for each of the agInnovation Roadmap Grand Challenge have been reformatted in Canva (available at https://escop.info/grand-challenge-templates/), which is a more user-friendly format than InDesign. The goal is to update annually with regional and local success stories and begin sharing updated success stories on the new agInnovation website.

The committee was pleased to receive an overview of the [National Climate Change Roadmap](https://doi.org/10.25675/10217/237190) as the final step in providing guidance throughout its development.

Plans to begin working on development of guidelines to recognize use of capacity funds in publications and making data publicly available via Data Commons have been put on hold in lieu of crafting a response to NSF’s [Catalyzing Across Sectors to Advance the Bioeconomy](https://www.casa-bio.net/) (CASA-Bio) initiative. CASA-Bio is a collaborative, facilitated activity involving stakeholders from federal funding agencies, industries, non-profits, and the public sector research community. The overall goal is to give life to the vision of the White House’s Bioeconomy Executive Order by seeking synergy through collaboration in areas of mutual interest. A draft of community input was developed from survey responses received from the research strategy framework working group and text from the [agInnovation Science Roadmap](https://escop.info/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Updated-Science-Roadmap-Report_FINAL20181220_optimized.pdf). The main thrust in March will be to finalize the draft and submit responses through the [Community Input Portal](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScxTXoSzl7ji158tZfp6fQlxKPqgn4dNQMsRoVbLlIlssKObA/viewform).

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Item 7.2: Finance Committee Update  
Chair: Matt Wilson  
Action Requested: None, for information only.

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**Agenda Brief:** agInnovationFinance Committee

**Date:** March 14, 2024

**Chair:** Matt Wilson(West Virginia University)

1. **Committee Membership**: see agInnovation Finance Committee webpage – <https://escop.info/committee/finance-committee/>.
2. **Meetings** (since July 2023): The Finance Committee met for the first time on July 14, 2023, and thereafter on August 30, 2023, and February 9, 2024. The minutes/notes from past Finance Committee meetings are available on the [Finance Committee’s webpage](https://escop.info/committee/finance-committee/) (see Past Events).
3. **Accomplishments / Upcoming Plans**:
   * Per the Rules of Operation of the Section (approved March 8, 2023), the Finance Committee is now a standing committee of agInnovation. As a standing committee, the Finance Committee is tasked with the following designated roles:
     1. Draft and present a budget and budget narrative.
     2. Advise and give counsel regarding financial matters affecting agInnovation.
     3. Coordinate payments/reimbursements from agInnovation operating funds.
     4. Provide the agInnovation Executive Committee with information on income and expenses.
     5. Review the investment plan annually.
   * The cash position of agInnovation is currently strong. Credit to the account includes the annual assessment (currently $100,000) plus carryover from the previous calendar year, CY 2023 ($125,340, unaudited). The approved expense budget for CY2024 is $183,000.
   * The Finance Committee met on February 9, 2024, and discussed the investment strategies of the TD Wealth account with the Matthew Kappa, agInnovation’s TD Wealth advisor. The total market value of the account on January 31, 2024, was $624,105. Our current investment allocation, chosen in the heat of the pandemic (circa 2020) is a mix is 35% stocks, 65% bonds (a moderately conservative approach). The Finance Committee discussed managing the TD Wealth account as an “endowment,” from which regular disbursements would be taken to support the agInnovation budget. Mr. Kappa shared a number of potential investment strategies that agInnovation might deploy in support of employing the TD Wealth account as an endowment.
   * The Finance Committee drafted an agInnovation budget strategy and a TD Wealth investment strategy for consideration by the Section (attached). The attached draft serves as a recommendation to agInnovation.
4. **Action Requested:** Consideration for adoption.
5. **Attachments:** 
   * Finance Committee Proposal (March 14, 2024).

**Finance Committee Proposal (March 14, 2024)**

**agInnovation Budget Strategy**

To further define budget strategies and build financial processes, the Finance Committee of agInnovation is proposing the adoption of a budget strategy that has grown out of discussions surrounding best use, and therefore investment of agInnovation’s account with TD Wealth.

The Finance Committee recommends that agInnovation adopt a practice of requesting that incoming chairs forward to the Finance Committee a proposed budget based on historical expenditures and proposed initiatives of the chair in the coming budget year. This would serve as the expenditure budget from which the Finance Committee could recommend the revenue to meet expenditures. The Finance Committee envisions four potential revenue streams to meet the budget need. First, an assessment to the Section based on expected expenditures less funds coming from the three other sources listed below. Second, a withdrawal of earnings from agInnovation’s investment account, currently with TD Wealth with a principal balance of ~$600,000. An annual withdrawal of 4 to 5% would provide $24,000 to $30,000 to meet the agInnovation budget. Third, any identified or expected carry forward from the previous calendar year would support the following year’s expenditure budget. Finally, and fourth, revenues from the agInnovation 501(c)3 non-profit (currently in the establishment phase) could be deployed to support the expenditure budget. As a general practice, the section should budget for a residual equal to one fourth of the annual budget to serve as a contingency.

**agInnovation Investment Strategy**

The Finance Committee is proposing the adoption of an investment strategy by agInnovation to make best use of agInnovation’s account with TD Wealth.

The Finance Committee recommends that agInnovation adopt a practice of a withdrawal of earnings from agInnovation’s investment account (currently with TD Wealth with a principal balance of ~$600,000) of 4.5% annually to support the section. This would equate to approximately $27,000.

For such an approach to work in the foreseeable future, the Finance Committee suggests moving from a moderately conservative investment approach (30% stock:70% bond) to a moderate (50% stock:50% bond) investment strategy to meet the expectation for a 4.5% annual withdrawal from the investment account and 2.5% for reinvestment to continue to grow the principal of the investment account. At any time agInnovation could either reduce that annual withdrawal, forego taking withdrawals from the investment account, withdraw from the principal balance, or reinvest the funds elsewhere.

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## Item 7.3: agInnovation DCC (Diversity Catalyst Committee) Update

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**Agenda Brief:**

**Date:**

**Chair:**

ag Innovation Diversity Catalyst Committee (DCC)

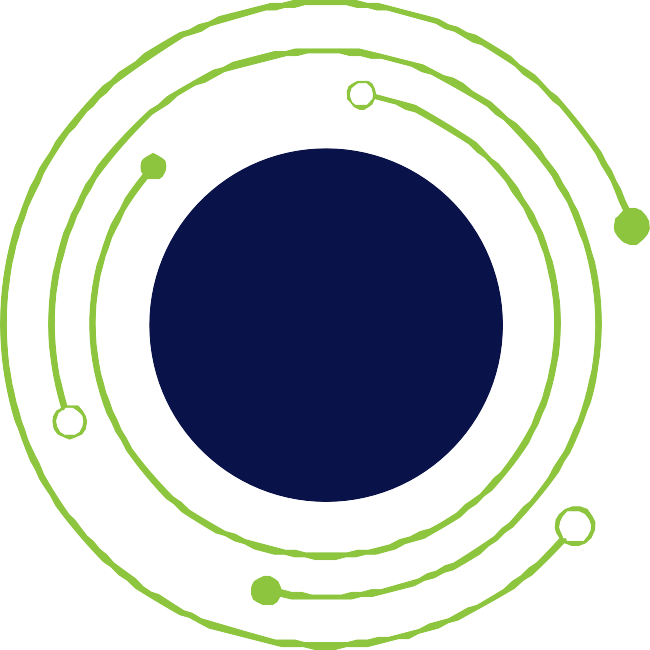
March 14, 2024

Brian Raison (Ohio State)

1. **Committee Membership** (as of March 14, 2024): see ESCOP Diversity Catalyst Committee (DCC) webpage – <http://escop.info/committee/dcc/>
2. **Meetings** (since December 2023): The DCC held the following meetings via Zoom. Minutes/notes from those meetings are available on the [DCC’s page on the ESCOP](http://escop.info/committee/dcc/) [website](http://escop.info/committee/dcc/) (see Past Events).
   * December 14, 2023
   * January 24, 2024
   * February 22, 2024 (webinar)
   * Upcoming Meetings:
     + March 28, 2024
3. **Accomplishments / Upcoming Plans**:
   * In January 2024, the Diversity Catalyst Committee held a discussion at its monthly meeting with agInnovation Chair George Smith, to discuss the DCC’s working relationship with agInnovation leadership and the role the DCC plays in implementation of the Chair’s priorities in 2024.
   * In February 2024, the call for nominations was released for the 2024 National agInnovation Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Awards. agInnovation intends to recognize an individual and a team for their creation and implementation of inclusive efforts at the local, state, regional, or national levels. The call for nominations is [posted on the ESCOP website](https://escop.info/about/) and the [electronic portal to](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DCC-award-2024) [submit nominations](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DCC-award-2024) (SurveyMonkey) is open.
   * On February 22, 2024, the Diversity Catalyst Committee hosted an agInnovation Lived Experience Webinar entitled "Fulfilling the Land-grant Mission through Cultural Competency.” The webinar was presented by Dr. Jacquelyn Wiersma-Mosley, Assistant Dean of Bumpers College, University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture. A recording of the webinar is [available for viewing on YouTube.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0p5ggP9b7Ww)
   * Further webinars arranged by the Diversity Catalyst Committee are anticipated to be held in 2024.
4. **Attachments**:
   * Flyer advertising the webinar on February 22.

A person with curly hair wearing a blue shirt and black jacket

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agInnovation "Lived Experience" Webinar February 22, 2024, 4:00 PM ET

**Fulfilling the Land-grant Mission through Cultural Competency -** Dr. Jacquelyn Wiersma-Mosley, Assistant Dean of Bumpers College, University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture

Hosted by the Diversity Catalyst Committee

**FOR MORE INFO & TO REGISTER VISIT**

[AGINNOVATION WEBINAR REGISTRATION](https://www.aginnovation.info/event-details/aginnovation-webinar-fulfilling-the-land-grant-mission-through-cultural-competency)

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Item 7.5: NRSP-RC ReportPresenter: Carolyn Lawrence-Dill  
Action Requested: Please provide any feedback on NRSP\_temp3 proposal for Carolyn to share with NRSP-RC

**Proposal to Renew NRSP3:**

* NRSP\_temp3: The National Atmospheric Deposition Program (NADP) (homepage link: [https://nimss.org/projects/19113](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https:/nimss.org/projects/19113__;!!Mak6IKo!IkZp57fddUwBp48jMaCfF2BxKioiuxTfT-KgbXqwI_aReJUTXiAR3A0o_jH8HtSQlU0DECr16H4TSc8GDolykvU$)).
* Reviews [https://nimss.org/review?project\_number=NRSP\_temp3](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https:/nimss.org/review?project_number=NRSP_temp3__;!!Mak6IKo!IkZp57fddUwBp48jMaCfF2BxKioiuxTfT-KgbXqwI_aReJUTXiAR3A0o_jH8HtSQlU0DECr16H4TSc8GE0YDL80$)
* Post-review Version: [https://nimss.org/storage/10958/NRSP-3-Proposal-Application-(Version-2-post-review).pdf](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https:/nimss.org/storage/10958/NRSP-3-Proposal-Application-(Version-2-post-review).pdf__;!!Mak6IKo!IkZp57fddUwBp48jMaCfF2BxKioiuxTfT-KgbXqwI_aReJUTXiAR3A0o_jH8HtSQlU0DECr16H4TSc8GlAMaD4k$)
* Budget: [https://nimss.org/projects/nrsp\_budget/view/19113](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https:/nimss.org/projects/nrsp_budget/view/19113__;!!Mak6IKo!IkZp57fddUwBp48jMaCfF2BxKioiuxTfT-KgbXqwI_aReJUTXiAR3A0o_jH8HtSQlU0DECr16H4TSc8GKm5bmk0$)

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Item 10.0: Regional NRCS Conservationists Discussion and Collaboration Ideas   
Curtis Elke, Kasey Taylor (Zoom), NRCS Central and NE Acting Regional Conservationists  
Action Requested: For information and discussion.

**Discussion Topics:**

* Getting to know each other:
  + Curtis Elke and Kasey Taylor will share: their role and responsibilities as regional conservationists; NRCS organizational structure at the state level; NRCS priority areas and programs important in our region where ag research can help (e.g., IRA funding)?
  + NCRA Chair, Gary Pierzynski, will share an overview of Land-grant university agricultural experiment stations (AES)
  + NCRA directors will introduce themselves and share an example of how their institution works with NRCS and those areas of work that are aligned with NRCS priorities.

*IF THERE IS TIME*:

* What are areas/opportunities where LGUs are uniquely qualified to address NRCS priorities?
* Any future areas LGUs should be aware of/prepare for?

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NCRA MRC Meeting

# Monday, March 25, 2024, 2 pm to 5 pm PT The SpyGlass Inn, Pismo Beach - Coastal Bluffs Room

## MRC FY24 Members:

Shibu Jose, MRC Chair 2024

Derek McLean

Carolyn Lawrence-Dill

Joleen Hadrich

Troy Runge

Ex-Officio (NCRA ED) Jeanette Thurston

# Meeting Agenda:

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| Item | Topic | Presenter | Action Requested |
| 1.0 | [New/Renewal Projects](#new_proposals) | All | Briefly discuss each review and MRC seconded motion to approve all review recommendations as presented. |
| 2.0 | [Midterm Reviews](#midterm_reviews) | Chris | Discussion, MRC seconded motion to approve all review recommendations. |
| 3.0 | [agInnovation Multistate Research Award 2024 Winner Selection](#multistate_award) | Shibu | Discuss/rank all five nominations, MRC seconded motion to approve the selected winner. |
| 4.0 | [MRC Next Steps](#items4_5) | Shibu, Chris | For information |
| 5.0 | [New MRC Member Nominations for FFY25](#items4_5) | Shibu, Carolyn | For discussion, MRC seconded motion to approve nominee. |
| 6.0 | Other Business, as needed | TBD | TBD |

# MRC Meeting Notes

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| Item | Topic | Notes | Action Taken |
| 1.0 | [New/Renewal Projects](#new_proposals) |  | Seconded motion (Carolyn/Troy) to approve all MRC reviewer recommendations below, with the following changes:   * NCERA\_temp215 now approved with revision requested, see NCERA\_temp215 notes/recommendation in table below. * NC\_temp1180 now approve with revision and add a few statements on the cooperative efforts among the participants in addressing the objectives and also tell them to please be sure to focus on showcasing integration in your annual reports for the next 5-year. |
| 2.0 | [Midterm Reviews](#midterm_reviews) |  | Discussion, MRC seconded motion (Derek/Carolyn) to approve all review recommendations with the following changes:   * NC1212 has been very responsive to its midterm review and has changed reporting strategy and is addressing the below MRC concerns. |
| 3.0 | [agInnovation Multistate Research Award 2024 Winner Selection](#multistate_award) |  | Discuss/rank all five nominations, MRC seconded motion to approve the selected winner. NCERA101 was selected as the NC nominee for the national agInnovation award. Joleen and Troy passed the seconded motion for this. |
| 4.0 | [MRC Next Steps](#items4_5) |  | For information |
| 5.0 | [New MRC Member Nominations for FFY25](#items4_5) |  | For discussion, MRC seconded motion to approve nominee. |
| 6.0 | Other Business, as needed |  | TBD |

# Item 1.0: New/Renewal Proposals:

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| **Proj #** | **Title** | **Project/Proposal Homepage** | **NCRA AA** | **MRC Lead Reviewer** | **MRC Recommendations** |
| NCERA57 (NCERA\_temp57) | Swine Reproductive Physiology | https://www.nimss.org/projects/19089 | J. Ross, IA (22) | Shibu | Recommendation: Approve  I. Statement of Issue(s) and Justification U.S. pork industry contributes more than $175 billion annually to global economic activity. The NCERA57 group was established more than six decades ago to improve production efficiencies and global competitiveness of the U.S. swine industry. This committee has provided and will continue to develop improved technology and scientific knowledge of reproductive processes in swine production through impactful research. The research identified and targeted by this committee includes developing a comprehensive understanding of the key reproductive processes for both males and females throughout their lifetimes and the influence of external factors (i.e., seasonal heat stress, disease, management, diet, etc.) on these reproductive processes. II. Related Current and Previous Work This section is missing. You need to include a brief section summarizing the advancements so far. (N/A for ERAs) III. Objectives The objectives are clear and appropriate. They are: 1. Develop and evaluate methods to improve boar performance relevant to current swine industry needs to maximize production efficiencies. 2. Develop and evaluate methods to improve sow and gilt performance relevant to current swine industry needs to maximize production efficiencies. 3. Utilize applied research approaches of either sex at any stage of their lifetime to identify technology or methods to maximize production efficiencies for the swine industry. 4. Utilize basic scientific approaches, including rapidly advancing technologies (i.e., -omics and gene modification), of either sex at any stage of their lifetime to develop a more comprehensive understanding of biological processes that regulate reproduction that can be targeted for maximizing production efficiencies for the swine industry. 5. Maximize multistate collaboration for these research objectives and pursue extramural funding to support these collaborations, particularly through USDA-NIFA research grant programs, national, state, and local commodity group opportunities, and industry partnerships. 6. Develop innovative teaching methods and extension outreach to provide unique mechanisms of scientific exchange and dialogue to students and swine industry representatives for improving production efficiencies for the swine industry. 7. Continuation of the biennial symposia to engage key swine industry members and other members of the scientific community to exchange information about current technology, methods, and research to improve reproductive efficiency for the swine industry. IV. Methods (Procedures) Methods seem to be sound and adequate to address the proposed objectives. V. Measurement of Progress and Results The outputs and outcomes are clearly explained in the proposal. VI. Participation (Resources) Report Yes VII. Outreach Plan Only one conference? Perhaps consider additional educational/outreach efforts going forward/ VIII. Organization The project follows a standard leadership structure. |
| NCERA3 (NCERA\_temp3) | Soil and Landscape Assessment, Function and Interpretation | https://www.nimss.org/projects/19122 | S. Jose, MO (21) | Jeanette | Recommendation: Approve pending revision  Soil and Landscape Assessment, Function, and Interpretation Committee (NCERA3) is a unique and essential regional multistate committee of great benefit to the NCR. NCERA3 is an essential partner of the National Cooperative Soil Survey (NCSS) and is responsible for coordinating NCSS activities in NCR. This committee is the only multistate regional committee focused on pedology, is a critical NRCS partner and helps to review policies and provide recommendations to improve soil survey program procedures, and some of its activities and impacts extend beyond the region (e.g., Soil Explorer Project).  Based on this reviewer’s review and the other reviews submitted, recommendations include: 1) while the NCERA3 summary in NIMSS describes a large and diverse membership, including NRCS, pedologists from every NCR AES, and other universities, the membership list in NIMSS does not reflect this. Please correct the membership listing if members were inadvertently left off or actively seek to expand membership to reflect this description and the membership needs of the committee; 2) the NIMSS narrative includes comment on the need for pedologists developing multidisciplinary linkages but the objectives and associated procedures and activities lacks details on how the committee plans on establishing these linkages. Please address this in your revision; 3) provide information in your revision on the collaborative nature of the work conducted by the committee. In particular, provide a description of how does this committee work together to deliver outcomes that are not achievable by individual members?; and 4) reach out to and work with Sara Delheimer, Program Coordinator for Multistate Research Fund Impacts in the next year or two, to develop an updated impact statement for this project (last one covered 2009-2014) as the work by the committee, including the Soil Explorer Project, is national in scope, very impactful, and should be shared and celebrated with a broad audience. |
| NCERA217 (NCERA\_temp217) | Drainage design and management practices to improve water quality | https://www.nimss.org/projects/19088 | R. Kanwar, IA (04) | Troy | Recommendation: Approve  The project renewal seeks to address the pressing issue of nitrogen and phosphorus pollution in surface water from nonpoint sources, particularly exacerbated by artificial drainage systems in the Midwest. With approximately 57 million acres of highly productive agricultural land artificially drained, there is a critical need to develop improved drainage designs and management strategies that balance crop production benefits with reducing nutrient loss to water bodies.  This is a well-written project proposal that will further investigate the relationship between drainage management practices and contaminant loading reduction. Key objectives include evaluating management strategies to reduce nutrient loss, assessing drainage's role in emerging areas like soil health, understanding climate-smart agricultural practices' effects on water quality and quantity, and fostering Extension collaboration to facilitate communication among various interest groups. By exchanging data, materials, and recommendations, the project aims to support sustainable drainage practices, advancing both crop production and water quality goals across the region.  The NCERA217 initiative stands out as distinct and complementary to other regional efforts. It has collective, collaborative activity conveying information on research, extension, and outreach. The project has met annually and documented outcomes and consistent collaboration. |
| NCERA215 (NCERA\_temp215) | Contribution of 4-H Participation to the Development of Social Capital Within Communities | https://www.nimss.org/projects/19087 | K. Lodl, NE (17) | Joleen | Recommendation: Approve  NCERA – integrates research and education where multi-state coordination is needed, membership is scientists appointed by AES, one voting member per SAES. Main goal is to share and distribute info while NC is research focused  NCERA\_temp215 objectives describe the plan to support, develop, and measure the impact of youth programming. Planned activities focused on special issues of journals, presenting at professional meetings, social network analysis, case studies, and ripple effect mapping to determine if 4-H experiences contribute to the development of youth’s social capital. Increased programming as well as interdisciplinary were the main outcomes suggested. This proposal could be strengthened with additional information regarding how the information will be shared and distributed in additional to the planned activities. |
| NCERA137 (NCERA\_temp137) | Soybean Diseases | https://www.nimss.org/projects/19054 | L. Giesler, NE (23) | Carolyn | Recommndation: Approve The Soybean Diseases project, under the umbrella of NCERA-137, has demonstrated excellent progress in achieving its objectives since its last renewal in 2019. With all five meetings held, the committee has effectively reported on accomplishments for each of its five stated objectives. Moreover, the project exhibits excellent coordination and linkages, as evidenced by its alignment with other relevant groups interested in soybean health and productivity, close association with state and regional soybean commodity organizations, and collaborative efforts resulting in numerous regional research projects and grant proposals. Information exchange efforts have been highly successful through annual meetings, publications, and interactions with commodity groups, contributing to the project's strong attendance and participation rates. Overall, the committee's performance is commendable in delivering outreach and achieving its goals. Note well: meeting minutes from the most recent meeting are not yet recorded in the system, so this review is missing some likely useful information. |
| NCCC42 (NCCC\_temp42) | Committee on Swine Nutrition | https://www.nimss.org/projects/19091 | J. Schuh, KS (23) | Jeanette | Recommendation: Approve  The Committee on Swine Nutrition (NCCC42) conducts multistate and “integrated and collaborative research that is aimed at reducing feed costs and enhancing sustainability investigating ways to reduce feed costs, improve energy utilization, increase usage of co-products from by-products including the fuel ethanol industry.” This project has a deep and impressive history (since 1960s!) and consists of members across 10 states. The committee has an excellent record of engaging with relevant partners including, USDA, pork industry/commodity/feed boards, and other multistate projects to identify mutual areas of research priority and identify collaborative multistate research project opportunities (nine different projects conducted during the past 5 years). Through these and other mechanisms, this group does a great job of addressing swine nutrition research needs. One minor recommendation: Consider encouraging more participation and expanding membership (reach out to potential members at LGUs in other important swine production states, e.g., MN, IN, MO, OH, and SD?). As one reviewer noted, there was a low number of publications more recently. This is not a huge concern and may be due to the COVID-19 pandemic and/or reduced membership compared to previous years. |
| NC229 (NC\_temp229) | Swine Viral Diseases | https://www.nimss.org/projects/19058 | R. Rowland (21) | Derek | Recommendation: Approve NC229 (NC\_temp229) aims to advance understanding of viral biology, develop novel assays for disease detection, create phylodynamic models for virus evolution, and establish effective disease control strategies in swine. The research focus is high impact for a globally important animal protein production system. Pressure and threats from existing and emerging viruses and viral associated disease represent significant economic risk for producers and consumers and a vulnerability in world protein supply. NC229 membership includes representation from sixteen land-grant universities, three federal agencies (ARS-BARC, ARS-NADC, ARS-MARC), and institutions representing five foreign countries (China, Canada, Spain, Cuba, and Russia). NC229 members bring diverse scientific expertise and skills to the research field, including fundamental molecular virology to epidemiology and diagnostics. The project is productive, collaborative, and well-organized. The outcomes include accurate disease detection, enhanced swine health management techniques, and measurement of economic impacts for the swine industry. The milestones are set for a five-year duration with objectives focusing on etiology, epidemiological investigation, and immunology. Specific areas of research strength include etiology, pathogenesis (host-virus interaction, transmissibility) and genetic analysis of viruses, virus evolution, mechanisms of tropism and virulence, viral gene-protein structure and function, replication, and host mechanisms associated with resistance, resilience, and susceptibility. Epidemiological investigation of viral pathogens that affect swine in the USA is an emphasis with diagnostic and surveillance monitoring as a key feature of this area of research. Research to understand and improve outbreak investigations for disease prevention and control along with biocontainment is emphasized to provide a comprehensive research template for the project.  The future research and outreach directions of the NC229 research initiative are focused on identification of new insights into swine viral diseases, including PRRS and other endemic and emerging pathogens. The research project will continue to develop new diagnostic tests and sampling strategies to enhance the detection and management of swine viral diseases. The time sensitive, flexible, and responsive approach is critical to develop new assays for emerging strains. Several vaccine candidates, characterized by enhanced safety and efficacy, will be generated and tested, with the expectation to make a substantial contribution to the successful control of crucial swine viral diseases. Genetic factors associated with host resistance to viral diseases will be identified. The expectation of this research direction is to accelerate the use of gene-editing technologies in the development of a novel breed of pigs resistant to viruses.  The outreach plan involves scientific publications, conferences, graduate student training, and extension services to engage stakeholders. In addition, members host an annual symposium in Chicago to share the latest findings. The symposium is a platform for the NC229 members to present research results, strengthen collaborative opportunities, and attract new researchers to the field of swine virology research. The symposium attendance has expanded into a well-attended meeting designed to deliver foundational research and practical translational insights to field practitioners, decision-makers in animal health, and biologics companies. The project is expected to continue to generate high impact output for an important area of animal health. |
| NC1208 (NC\_temp1208) | Biology, Etiology, and Management of Dollar Spot in Turfgrasses | https://www.nimss.org/projects/19055 | R. Hammerschmidt, MI (19) | Carolyn | Recommendation: Approve The Biology, Etiology, and Management of Dollar Spot in Turfgrasses project has made notable progress, particularly evident in the collaborative efforts highlighted in the meeting minutes. Despite initial setbacks due to the COVID-19 pandemic (when no meeting occurred), the project team initiated multiple field trials across several states, demonstrating effective interdependence among participants. These trials, coupled with the sequencing of dollar spot isolates and evaluation of a LAMP assay for SDHI resistance, underscore the group's commitment to advancing research objectives. However, while the group has crafted plans for information and technology transfer, the actual implementation of these plans remains pending, suggesting a need for further action. Additionally, while the project has produced significant data, shared publications resulting from these collective efforts are yet to be seen, indicating a potential area for improvement in disseminating findings to wider audiences. Note well: meeting minutes from the most recent meeting are not yet recorded in the system, so this review is missing some likely useful information. |
| NC1182 (NC\_temp1182) | Nitrogen Cycling, Loading, and Use Efficiency in Forage-Based Livestock Production Systems | https://www.nimss.org/projects/19086 | G. Scaglia (22) | Jeanette | Recommendation: Approve pending revision  Management and Environmental Factors Affecting Nitrogen Cycling and Use Efficiency in Forage Based Livestock Production Systems (NC\_Temp1182) is seeking another 5 years to: 1) quantify biophysical effects of grassland-based management strategies and climate change on N-use efficiency by ruminant animals, N cycling in herbage and soils, aquatic N losses, and GHG and other pollutant emissions from grassland agro-ecosystems; 2) Determine the role of plant secondary metabolites in ensuring improved pasture sustainability, enhancing animal health and performance, and decreasing the animal environmental footprint; and 3) assess the efficacy of dietary factors on N-use efficiency in ruminant animals in forage-based livestock production systems and how these practices affect composition of feces and urine and rumen microbial efficiency.   This is an important topic area that has relevance across the north central and the other regions. This project was bolstered in previous years by a dedicated and geographically broad research team important to achieving their objectives. Previous years have demonstrated that this team is very productive in publishing and sharing their research with stakeholders. However, the participants list now only includes 4 individuals from 4 different states. Please update the participants list to better indicate the breadth of participation. If this list is correct, an explanation why members are no longer participating is needed and how this new team will build membership to tackle the stated objectives. Based on this and the other reviewers (NCAC1, NCAC6 and the AA) of this project renewal, a revision that additionally addresses the following is recommended:  In the non-technical summary and at other locations (e.g., outputs) in the proposal, extension and education efforts/outputs are mentioned but there are no objectives aligned to this effort. In the last 5-year plan, this project had a separate objective so perhaps this was inadvertently left out? A better approach, however, is to incorporate these extension and education efforts into your current objectives to better demonstrate the integration of research and extension. Two economists were a part of this project during the last project period (excellent addition to this team and project), are these individuals still involved? If so, incorporate their work into the project objectives, goals, outcomes, and impacts. The project description needs to better demonstrate the collaboration and coordination among members and how sub objectives are beneficial or contribute to needed knowledge/practices across the regions. For the latter part of the last comment, answer the question, “what does this multistate research project provide that the individual researchers/institutions cannot?” As one reviewer stated when commenting on the narratives describing the objectives, “…these come across as individual projects…”. Additionally, the AA recommended that the proposal includes which institutions are involved across the stated objectives to better demonstrate multistate and regional efforts. It appears that the milestones section may be partially complete and lumped together in what appears to be several milestones (e.g., subobjective 3.3). There are only three milestones across the three broad objectives. Please double check and make needed changes. Please also read through and address comments raised by NCAC1, NCAC6 and the AA in your revision. |
| NC1181 (NC\_temp1181) | Sustaining Forage-based Beef Cattle Production in a Bioenergy Environment | https://www.nimss.org/projects/19056 | S. Jose, MO (20) | Troy | Recommendation: Approve pending revision  This project renewal seeks to address a critical concern in beef production: the limited availability of forage resources in the North Central Region. With perennial pasture and hay production areas diminishing, efficient utilization of existing forage resources and the enhancement of those within cropping systems become imperative for the cow/calf and stocker industry's future.  Overall, this is a well-defined project proposal that should provide practical solutions for beef producers, fostering sustainable and profitable agricultural practices amidst evolving environmental and economic challenges. The project's has well-defined objectives that could be more explicit, particularly for the multi-state aspects. Additionally, more specificity is asked for in Objective 3 which is to address the gap in knowledge regarding optimal management practices within alternative beef production systems during the summer months (diet type, roughage inclusions, creep feed composition and feeding durations, as well as bedding strategies. Providing more details on which stations will conduct the research and the multi-state aspects of the work is requested.  The multi-state project has been meeting annually (virtually for the last few years), and has good participation by Kansas State University, University of Nebraska, and North Dakota State. Expansion and increased participation to a larger number of states is encouraged. |
| NC1180 (NC\_temp1180) | Control of Endemic, Emerging and Re-emerging Poultry Respiratory Diseases in the United States | https://www.nimss.org/projects/19061 | D. Reynolds, NE (22) | Derek | Recommendation: Approve  This project focuses on addressing the significant challenges posed by infectious diseases in the United States poultry industry. The detection, monitoring, prevention, and control of these diseases is critical for sustainable, safe, and economically affordable poultry products. NC1180 aims to address these challenges by focusing on the detection, monitoring, prevention, and control of infectious diseases in commercial and small flock poultry production. The research focus of the project is to safeguard the industry's profitability and sustainability using research techniques aimed at investigation of the mechanisms regulating pathogenicity, the animal response when challenged by a pathogen, and the efficacy of new products to reduce disease burden and improve health and productivity. The large number of broiler chickens and eggs produced annually (billions) means the economic impact of infectious diseases can be substantial. The project aims to tackle the most critical infectious diseases affecting poultry producers, focusing on disease detection, monitoring, prevention, and control methods and strategies. NC1180 prioritizes alternative strategies such as vaccines and natural products due to concerns about antimicrobial resistance. Stakeholder input highlights priorities such as developing broadly protective vaccines and improving disease detection and prevention methods.  The technical feasibility of the project is supported by the expertise of the participants, who represent various disciplines including poultry medicine, virology, immunology, and bioinformatics. The collaborative nature of the project, involving multiple institutions across different states, enhances efficiency and resource utilization, facilitating comprehensive research on poultry infectious diseases. Key priorities identified by stakeholders include the development of broadly protective vaccines, better understanding of disease pathology and epidemiology, detection and reduction of pathogens in poultry environments, and improvement of vaccination administration. The project aims to address these priorities while actively engaging with stakeholders to ensure its relevance and effectiveness. The objectives are: 1: Investigating the ecology, detection methods, pathogen characterization, and epidemiology of poultry diseases. 2: Developing new diagnostic tools for poultry diseases. 3: Elucidating host-pathogen interactions. 4: Developing control and prevention strategies.  The objectives will be achieved through collaborative efforts across multiple institutions and states, utilizing diverse methodologies such as sequencing, PCR, cell culture, and vaccination trials. NC1180 aims to improve disease detection, develop effective control measures, and enhance understanding of poultry disease ecology and host-pathogen interactions. Outputs and outcomes include improved diagnostic assays, enhanced disease surveillance, better understanding of wild bird reservoirs, identification of virulence factors, and development of novel vaccines. The project also emphasizes outreach activities to disseminate findings to stakeholders through publications, presentations, seminars, and graduate education. The governance structure ensures effective coordination and communication among project participants to achieve project goals. Ultimately, the project seeks to improve understanding of the ecology, pathobiology, diagnosis, and control of major poultry infectious diseases, benefiting both the poultry industry and national food security. Through advancements in diagnostics, vaccines, and disease management protocols, the project aims to enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of poultry production while safeguarding public health and consumer interests. |
| NC1178 (NC\_temp1178) | Land use and management practice impacts on soil carbon and associated agroecosystems services | https://www.nimss.org/projects/19080 | G. Pierzynski, OH (09) | Shibu | Recommendation: Approve pending revision.  I. Statement of Issue(s) and Justification The proposal addresses an important topic – the connection between land management practices and soil carbon. Soil organic carbon is closely associated with overall soil health and hence the sustainability of cropping systems and ultimately human wellbeing. The project helps better understand changes in soil health under intensive management and optimize decision making related to alternative climate-smart practices to enhance soil health and soil organic carbon stocks. II. Related Current and Previous Work As demonstrated in previous work, this group has a long history of accomplishments starting with the first five-year period beginning in 1983. The last phase (2019-2023) built on the seventh and previous phases by advancing our understanding of how management practices can be optimized to improve soil health and productivity. The resulting research data also demonstrated that the adoption of site-specific management recommendations and system-based conservation is necessary and critical to make agriculture a sound solution to climate change and other environmental issues. Eighth phase achievements include 57 refereed journal articles. III. Objectives The objectives are clear and appropriate. They are: 1. Evaluate the impact of soil management and land use decisions on soil carbon stocks, soil health, productivity, and other ecosystem services. 2. Understand and develop resilient soil-scapes for a changing climate and extreme climate events. IV. Methods (Procedures) Methods seem to be sound and adequate to address the proposed objectives. However, need an explanation for the following: For Objective 2, How will you use a rain-out shelter for a forest? Or how will you simulate drought in a forest? V. Measurement of Progress and Results The outputs, outcomes and milestones are clearly explained in the proposal. VI. Participation (Resources) Report Yes VII. Outreach Plan Yes; a reasonable outreach plan is laid out. VIII. Organization The project follows a standard leadership structure. IX. Scientific Quality The proposal is of good scientific quality. Previous reports indicate excellent quality of outcomes and outputs from the past which is again an indication of the future success of this multistate project. X. Format Yes |
| NC1177 (NC\_temp1177) | Agricultural and Rural Finance Markets in Transition | https://www.nimss.org/projects/19057 | A. Featherstone, KS (17) | Joleen | Recommendation: Approve  This long-standing committee has updated their objectives to consider the impact of current market conditions while leveraging work completed in previous years with the sub work that is completed under the objectives evolving each renewal. Examples of these changes include a new focus on how agricultural markets are affected by global issues (eg. Political violence in productive agricultural regions, retaliatory tariffs) as well as some of the highest interest rates faced by producers in more than 20 years. This is further emphasized by studying impact of new financial policies that have changed the lending market resulting in a number of mergers and acquisitions that have affected credit access to under-represented groups.  This group has prioritized engagement with other stakeholders by jointly hosting their annual meeting with the National Agricultural Credit. The members of this committee also have strong participation in the AFM section in AAEA, collaborators across Universities as well as with ERS. These collaborations have resulted in strong Extension output in addition to published papers.  The outputs, outcomes, and projected impacts are appropriate for this topic group with a clear timeline for milestones that help support the objectives of NC-1177. |
| NC1173 (NC\_temp1173) | Sustainable Solutions to Problems Affecting Bee Health | https://www.nimss.org/projects/19077 | B. McCormack, KS (21) | Carolyn | Recommendation: Approve The accomplishments of the NC1173 research group underscore their pivotal role in advancing our understanding of honey bee health and promoting sustainable practices for beekeeping and pollinator conservation. Through collaborative efforts and innovative research methodologies, the group has made significant strides in addressing the complex challenges facing honey bee populations, including genetic diversity loss, parasite and pathogen resistance, and pesticide exposure. Their work has resulted in the development of best management practices that have been widely adopted by beekeepers, growers, land managers, and homeowners, leading to tangible improvements in bee health and habitat conservation. By leveraging expertise from diverse stakeholders and fostering strong partnerships, the NC1173 research group has established itself as a leading force in pollinator research, with their findings contributing to the long-term sustainability of honey bee populations and the vital ecosystem services they provide. |
| NC1171 (NC\_temp1171) | Individual, family, and community factors associated with resilience in diverse, rural, low-income families | https://www.nimss.org/projects/19074 | S. Loveridge, MI (19) | Joleen | Recommendation: Approve  The committee focuses on strengthening and building economic, environmental, and social sustainable rural systems focused on the family system with equitable health and well-being across the U.S. This program has been part of the NC region since 1998 (NC223, NC1011, NC1171) with 17 states represented. Outputs from this group include webinar series to have broader reach, over $1M in grant funding secured across collaborators for this multi-state effort, and data sets for public use. The committee did due diligence by reviewing other multi-state projects that could have overlap and emphasized their unique contribution that differs from other projects is the focus on the family systems approach. In particular NC1171 proposes to emphasize family sustainability and resilience in the context of rural poverty. Emphasized outputs include datasets that may inform emergency preparedness plans. The committee demonstrated their plan for improved knowledge with detailed timeline, milestones, and outcomes for success. |
| NC\_temp1214 (was NCDC238) | Integrating Science Communication with Team Science | https://www.nimss.org/projects/19124 | J. Ellis, KS (23) | Shibu | Recommendation: Approve pending revision.  I. Statement of Issue(s) and Justification One of the reasons for Americans’ declining trust in higher education is ineffective science communication. The apparent decline in science literacy has made it challenging for members of the public to make informed decisions related to science that can impact personal health, community vitality, and local and national policies. Science communication, can help diminish the impact of science misinformation while strengthening trust between the public and scientists at universities. Science communication scholars help increase the overall success of the team science projects by developing specific messages for targeted audiences. They can also engage key stakeholders throughout the research process to ensure the final products or outcomes will be more easily adopted by the end user. II. Related Current and Previous Work Not a lot of work is done in this area; so, it’s somewhat novel. III. Objectives The objectives are clear and appropriate. They are: 1. Research best practices to prepare communication faculty members to work on team science projects and contribute to the body of literature around science communication and specifically the Decision-Making Model for ANR Science and Technology 2. Apply the Decision-Making Model for ANR Science and Technology to expand the success and adoption of scientific advances through effective communication. 3. Evaluate the impact of AFNR science communication research on team science projects 4. Evaluate the success of AFNR science communication faculty members IV. Methods (Procedures) Methods seem to be adequate to address the proposed objectives. However, need an explanation for the following: When you conduct quantitative surveys, do you have a minimum sample size you need? If so, what’s the expectation? Such details will be helpful. V. Measurement of Progress and Results The outputs, outcomes and milestones are clearly explained in the proposal. VI. Participation (Resources) Report Yes; the project will be of interest to others at LGUs and non-LGUs. Any effort to increase participation? VII. Outreach Plan Needs work; although a reasonable outreach plan is laid out, it can be expanded further. They only talk about conferences and meetings of the communication group. The objective of the project is to bring in communicators to work with scientists from team science projects. The findings will be important for the team science disciplines also. How would you ensure that the technical peers also hear or learn about your findings? VIII. Organization The project follows a standard leadership structure. IX. Scientific Quality The proposal is of good quality. X. Format Yes |

# Midterm Reviews:

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| **Proj #** | **Title** | **NCRA AA** | **Chris' Comments** | **MRC Recommendations** |
| NC1029 | Applied Animal Behavior and Welfare | D. McLean, NE (23) | AA review assigned 8/15/2023. Multiple reminders sent. | Good group, active. Recommend Continuation. Good NCAC2 review with suggestions for improvement, same for NCAC6. |
| NC1030 | Family Firms and Policy | M. Wilcox, IN (19) | Favorable midterm review info sent to project leadership on 2/16. | Good group, active. Recommend Continuation. |
| NC1034 | Impact Analyses and Decision Strategies for Agricultural Research | T. Awada, NE (23) | Favorable midterm review info sent to project leadership on 2/16. | Recommend continuation assuming future annual reports will be uploaded in a more timely manner. Good NCAC12 review |
| NC1100 | A Systems Perspective to Community Resilience: Rural healthcare at the intersection of households and businesses | J. Henderson, IN (21) | Favorable midterm review info sent to project leadership on 2/16. | Good NCAC12 review with some suggestions for improvement. Good AA review. |
| NC1190 | Catalysts for Water Resources Protection and Restoration: Applied Social Science Research | J. Peterson, MN (17) | Favorable midterm review info sent to project leadership on 2/16. | Good group, active. Recommend Continuation. Good NCAC24 review. |
| NC1192 | An integrated approach to control of bovine respiratory diseases | J. Averill, MI (23) | Midterm review request for improvement sent to project leads on 2/16/2024. | Good group, active. Good NCAC6 review, would like to see external funding leveraged, though. Good NCAC2 review also with suggestions for improving, similar to NCAC6. Recommend Continuation. |
| NC1193 | Promotion of Health and Nutrition in Diverse Communities of Emerging Adults | D. Savaiano, IN (98) | Favorable midterm review info sent to project leadership on 2/16. | Good group, active. Recommend Continuation. Excellent AA and NCAC22 review. |
| NC1194 | Nanotechnology and Biosensors | S. Lommel, NC (18) | Favorable midterm review info sent to project leadership on 2/16. | Good group, active. Recommend Continuation. |
| NC1195 | Enhancing nitrogen utilization in corn based cropping systems to increase yield, improve profitability and minimize environmental impacts | K. Lamkey, IA (18) | Favorable midterm review info sent to project leadership on 2/16. | Good group, active. Recommend Continuation. |
| NC1197 | Practical Management of Nematodes on Corn, Soybeans and Other Crops of Regional Importance | D. McLean, NE (23) | Midterm review request for improvement sent to project leads on 2/16/2024. | Very late getting 2023 report in - meeting was in July, but despite numerous reminders, the full report wasn't submitted until Feb 2024. Once it was submitted, the report looked good. Hoping this group can do better moving forward and into the next renewal. Recommend continuation with some reservation. |
| NC1203 | Lipids In Plants: Improving and Developing Sustainability of Crops ("LIPIDS of Crops") | C. Lawrence-Dill, IA (22) | Favorable midterm review info sent to project leadership on 2/16. | Excellent AA and NCAC1 reviews. Recommend Continuation. |
| NC1211 | Precision Management of Animals for Improved Care, Health, and Welfare  of Livestock and Poultry | H. Santiago, NE (22) | Favorable midterm review info sent to project leadership on 2/16. | Recommend continuation assuming future annual reports will be uploaded in a timelier manner. Excellent NCAC6 and 2 reviews. Good AA review. |
| NC1212 | Exploring the Plant Phenome in Controlled and Field Environments | C. Lawrence-Dill, IA (23) | Midterm review request for improvement sent to project leads on 2/16/2024. | This group needs to be sure they are meeting annually and submitting complete reports before the next renewal time. Recommend continuation with strong reservation and require a plan for being active, moving forward. AA feels that perhaps the group is duplicitous and has a solution for a problem that doesn't really exist. Since they are having trouble with reporting, they should not submit a renewal proposal next cycle. |
| NCCC170 | Research Advances in Agricultural Statistics | B. Craig, IN (15) | Favorable midterm review info sent to project leadership on 2/16. | Good group, active. Good AA review. Recommend Continuation. |
| NCCC212 | Small Fruit and Viticulture Research | V. Baird, MI (11) | Favorable midterm review info sent to project leadership on 2/16. | Good group, active. Recommend Continuation. |
| NCCC65 | Indicators of Social Change in the Marketplace: Producers, Retailers and Consumers | E. Bye, MN (15) | Favorable midterm review info sent to project leadership on 2/16. | Good group, active. Recommend Continuation. |
| NCERA101 | Controlled Environment Technology and Use | R. S. Kanwar, IA (97) | Favorable midterm review info sent to project leadership on 2/16. | Excellent AA review. Good NCAC4 and 16 reviews. Good group, active. Recommend Continuation. |
| NCERA13 | Soil Testing and Plant Analysis | F. Casey, ND (17) | Favorable midterm review info sent to project leadership on 2/16. | Good group, active. Recommend Continuation. |
| NCERA219 | Swine Production Management to Enhance Animal Welfare | D. McLean, NE (23) | Midterm review request for improvement sent to project leads on 2/16/2024. | Check back on this group…Good NCAC2 review. Poor NCAC6 review. OK to continue, but with the expectation that future reports will be submitted annually and meet the requirements listed under #7 https://www.ncra-saes.org/multistate-handbook. Currently, reports are still lists of station reports and not especially multistate/collaborative in focus. |
| NCERA221 | Turfgrass and the Environment | B. Horgan, MI (19) | Midterm review request for improvement sent to project leads on 2/16/2024. | AA review not very favorable. See https://www.nimss.org/appendix\_ks/20466. Good NCAC4 review. Recommend continuation with slight reservation, based on AA review. AA should share this feedback directly to the group at the next annual meeting. |
| NCERA222 | Integrated Pest Management | H. Burrack (22) | Favorable midterm review info sent to project leadership on 2/16. | Good group, active. Excellent AA review. Good NCAC reviews. Recommend Continuation. |
| NCERA59 | Soil Organic Matter: Formation, Function and Management | R. Turco, IN (11) | Favorable midterm review info sent to project leadership on 2/16. | Good AA review, he should share his feedback directly with the group. Good NCAC1 review. Recommend continuation. |

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# Item 3.0: agInnovation 2024 Excellence in Multistate Research Award – NC Winner Selection

(Double click on nomination objects below to open full document.)

[Link to 2024 STC Award Call](http://escop.info/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/STC_RESEARCH_AWARD_CALL_2024.pdf)

**NCERA101 Nomination:**

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**NC1181 Nomination:**



**NC1194 Nomination:**

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# Item 4.0: MRC Next Steps – Shibu, Chris

* + Action needed: None, for information only.
  + MRC Chair (Shibu) presents seconded motions to full NCRA on 3/26/2024.
  + Once the NCRA approves the MRC motions, Chris will send approvals/revisions to all renewing projects.
  + Projects have until 6/1/2024 to complete revisions, then revised proposals are sent back to MRC for review and approval.
  + Once approved, projects are marked as Approved in NIMSS. Approved renewals start 10/1/2024.
  + Shibu rotates off MRC 9/30/2024, then Derek takes over as MRC Chair on 10/1/2024.

# Item 5.0: New MRC Member Nominations:

* + New MRC member suggestions for FY25.
  + Frank Casey indicated last year that he’s willing to serve, perhaps he can be formally nominated tomorrow – who would like to do this?

Item 13: Group Wildcard Discussion Topic – Defensible and strategic application of capacity funding  
Presenter: Gary Pierzynski  
Action Requested: For information, discussion

**State Agricultural Experiment Stations and Agricultural Research Programs: Capacity Grants/Programs Resource Guide (DRAFT)**

**Background:**

“Capacity grants” is an encompassing term describing a type of federal assistance available through the National Institute for Food and Agriculture. Capacity grants, formerly known as formula funds, are available to the Land-grant University System, schools of forestry, and schools of veterinary medicine. An institution’s designated authority determines which projects will be supported by the allocation to the institution.

This resource focusses on the largest (in terms of funding and breadth) USDA NIFA capacity grant programs that support research at Land-grant universities. These programs include the Hatch Regular Research Fund (or Hatch Regular), Hatch Multistate Research Fund (or Hatch Multistate), and Agricultural Research at 1890 Land-grant institutions (also known as Evans-Allen Research Program). Other research capacity programs not covered in this document include, for example, [Animal Health and Disease Research Program](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/programs/capacity-grants/animal-health-disease-research-capacity-program) and the [McIntire-Stennis Capacity Grant Program](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/programs/capacity-grants/mcintire-stennis-capacity-grant).

This resource provides administrative guides and websites, examples of institutional policies and practices, and general guidance (with citations) for the commitment of the funds associated with capacity programs.

**List of administrative resources:**

* [Guidelines for Multistate Activities](https://escop.info/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/MRF-Guidelines-Revised-08-1-513.pdf) (these are being updated)
* [User Guide for the National Information Management Support System (NIMSS)](https://www.ncra-saes.org/_files/ugd/4081a5_69741fa5f7f840bfb1ef0e3bbf3e341a.pdf)

* [Northeastern Supplement to the Guidelines for Multistate Research Activities](https://www.nerasaes.org/_files/ugd/895599_c0d8f3d5aaae401a8e661580531a09fb.pdf)

* [National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) Federal Assistance Policy Guide](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-08/2021%20Policy%20Guide%20-%20April%2021%202021%20-%20Corr.%207.17.23_remediated.pdf)
* [[NIFA Capacity Grants Flowchart](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/grants-process/capacity-grants)/Life cycle](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/grants-process/capacity-grants)

* [The Hatch Act of 1887 (Regular Research Fund) FY 2024 RFA](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/FY24-Hatch-Reg-RFA-508-MOD1-P.pdf)
* [The Hatch Act of 1887 (Multistate Research Fund) FY 2024 RFA](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/FY24-Hatch-Multi-State-RFA-508-MOD1-P.pdf)

* [Agricultural Research at 1890 Land-grant Institutions – Section 1445](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/FY24-1445-RFA-508-MOD1-P.pdf)

**Informational websites:**

* [agInnovation](https://www.aginnovation.info/)
* [Multistate Research Fund Impacts](https://www.mrfimpacts.org/)
* [Land-Grant Impacts](https://landgrantimpacts.org/)
* [ESCOP](https://escop.info/)
* [Capacity Grants](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/programs/capacity-grants)
* [NIFA Reporting System](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/data/nifa-reporting-system)
* <https://wwwcp.umes.edu/ard/>

**Best practices:**

* [Competitive Allocation of Capacity Funds](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/895599_7c3a1e5304a3485f8e32266e5a40a091.pdf) (Strategies that institutions use to competitively allocate capacity funds).

**Institutional capacity fund policies and practices:**

**ADD NCR EXAMPLES**

**1862 Institutions: State Agricultural Experiment Stations**

**Pertinent legislation, code of federal regulations, or policy guide citations that:**

* Establish State Agricultural Experiment Stations ([Hatch Act of 1887 as currently amended](https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/COMPS-10292/uslm/COMPS-10292.xml)) and provides a definition of SAES as a “department which shall have been established, under direction of the college or university or agricultural departments of the college or university in each State in accordance with an Act approved July 2, 1862”. (The “Act” is the [First Morrill Act](https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/COMPS-10285/uslm/COMPS-10285.xml).)
* Provide the basis for federal funding of agricultural research at the State Agricultural Experiment Stations (The Hatch Act of 1887, [7 U.S. Code § 361a-i](https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=granuleid%3AUSC-prelim-title7-chapter14-subchapter1&saved=%7CZ3JhbnVsZWlkOlVTQy1wcmVsaW0tdGl0bGU3LXNlY3Rpb24zNjFh%7C%7C%7C0%7Cfalse%7Cprelim&edition=prelim)).
* Describe the legislative authority and basis for federal funding for agricultural research activities at State Agricultural Experiment Stations ([The Hatch Act of 1887 (Regular Research Fund) FY 2024 RFA](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/FY24-Hatch-Reg-RFA-508-MOD1-P.pdf) and [The Hatch Act of 1887 (Multistate Research Fund) FY 2024 RFA](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/FY24-Hatch-Multi-State-RFA-508-MOD1-P.pdf)).
* Define the scope of work related to research, investigations, and experiments undertaken by State Agricultural Experiment Stations ([7 U.S. Code § 361b - Congressional statement of policy; researches, investigations and experiments](https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=granuleid:USC-prelim-title7-section361b&num=0&edition=prelim)).
* Suggest areas of work eligible for support by Hatch funds (Hatch Regular and Match Multistate) are broad and include research on all aspects of agriculture. Research may be conducted on issues of local, state, regional, or national concern ([The Hatch Act of 1887 (Regular Research Fund) FY 2024 RFA](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/FY24-Hatch-Reg-RFA-508-MOD1-P.pdf) and [The Hatch Act of 1887 (Multistate Research Fund) FY 2024 RFA](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/FY24-Hatch-Multi-State-RFA-508-MOD1-P.pdf)).
* Identify that the Hatch Act, through the Hatch Regular Research Fund and Hatch Multistate Research Fund, supports agricultural research at the State Agricultural Experiment Stations ([National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) Federal Assistance Policy Guide](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-08/2021%20Policy%20Guide%20-%20April%2021%202021%20-%20Corr.%207.17.23_remediated.pdf), page 208).
* Identify the State Agricultural Experiment Stations by name/institution ([The Hatch Act of 1887 (Regular Research Fund) FY 2024 RFA](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/FY24-Hatch-Reg-RFA-508-MOD1-P.pdf) and [The Hatch Act of 1887 (Multistate Research Fund) FY 2024 RFA](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/FY24-Hatch-Multi-State-RFA-508-MOD1-P.pdf)).
* Identify the allocation of funds to a State Agricultural Experiment Station and the required match (See Appendix A in [The Hatch Act of 1887 (Regular Research Fund) FY 2024 RFA](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/FY24-Hatch-Reg-RFA-508-MOD1-P.pdf) and [The Hatch Act of 1887 (Multistate Research Fund) FY 2024 RFA](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/FY24-Hatch-Multi-State-RFA-508-MOD1-P.pdf)).
* Designate the authority over the capacity funds to the “chief administrative officer, who is the same as the Experiment Station Director”. ([National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) Federal Assistance Policy Guide](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-08/2021%20Policy%20Guide%20-%20April%2021%202021%20-%20Corr.%207.17.23_remediated.pdf), page 208 and [7 U.S. Code § 361e. Payment of allotments to State agricultural experiment stations; directors and treasurers or other officers; accounting; reports to Secretary; replacement by States of diminished, lost or misapplied allotments; subsequent allotments or payments contingent on such replacement](https://usc-cdn.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=granuleid:USC-prelim-title7-section361e&num=0&edition=prelim) ).
* Identify the requirements of deploying the capacity funds.
  + Submission of a Plan of Work ([7 U.S. Code § 361g. Duties of Secretary; ascertainment of entitlement of State to funds; plans of work](https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?path=/prelim%40title7/chapter14/subchapter1&edition=prelim)). The Plan of Work includes a summary of the planned projects or programs in the State using capacity funds, a description of how the 1:1 match requirement will be met, and a description of the merit (or peer) review process ([7 U.S. Code § 361c - Authorization of appropriations and allotments of grants](https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=(title:7%20section:361c%20edition:prelim))).
  + Guidelines for State Plans of Work: [July 99/Guidelines for State Plans of Work for the Agricultural Research and Extension Formula Funds; Notice (usda.gov)](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Guidelines%20for%20State%20Plans%20of%20Work.pdf)
  + Dedicating twenty-five percent of the total Hatch allocation to a station to multistate agricultural research ([7 U.S. Code § 361c - Authorization of appropriations and allotments of grants](https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=(title:7%20section:361c%20edition:prelim))). This is typically met through the full deployment of a State Agricultural Experiment Station’s Hatch Multistate Research Fund allocation.
  + Requirement of multistate cooperative extension activities-- [Public Law 105-185/105th Congress (usda.gov)](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Agricultural-Research-Extension-and-Education-Reform-Act-of-1998.pdf)
  + Hatch Regular Funds and Hatch Multistate Research funds may only be used on approved Hatch Regular and Hatch Multistate Research projects ([The Hatch Act of 1887 (Regular Research Fund) FY 2024 RFA](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/FY24-Hatch-Reg-RFA-508-MOD1-P.pdf) and [The Hatch Act of 1887 (Multistate Research Fund) FY 2024 RFA](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/FY24-Hatch-Multi-State-RFA-508-MOD1-P.pdf)).
  + Submission of reports that include a Plan of Work (POW) update, Annual Report of Accomplishments and Results (Annual Report), Program/Project Initiation in the NIFA Reporting System (NRS), Program/Project progress reports, Project Financial Report, OGFM Supplemental, and Federal Financial Report (SF-425) ([The Hatch Act of 1887 (Regular Research Fund) FY 2024 RFA](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/FY24-Hatch-Reg-RFA-508-MOD1-P.pdf) and [The Hatch Act of 1887 (Multistate Research Fund) FY 2024 RFA](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/FY24-Hatch-Multi-State-RFA-508-MOD1-P.pdf)).
* Explain the activities and timeline for submitting a multistate research project proposal ([Northeastern Supplement to the Guidelines for Multistate Research Activities](https://www.nerasaes.org/_files/ugd/895599_c0d8f3d5aaae401a8e661580531a09fb.pdf)).
* Provide the capacity grant reporting cycle ([NIFA Reporting System](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/data/nifa-reporting-system)).

**1890 Institutions: Agricultural research activities**

**Pertinent legislation, code of federal regulations, or policy guide citations that:**

* Provide the basis for federal funding for agricultural research at the 1890 Land-grant Institutions, including Tuskegee University, West Virginia State University, and Central State University ([7 U.S. Code § 3222 Agricultural research at 1890 land-grant colleges, including Tuskegee University](https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=(title:7%20section:3222%20edition:prelim)%20OR%20(granuleid:USC-prelim-title7-section3222)&f=treesort&edition=prelim&num=0&jumpTo=true)).
* Describe the legislative authority and basis for federal funding for agricultural research activities at State Agricultural Experiment Stations and in the Schools/Colleges of Agriculture at the 1890 LGUs ([Agricultural Research at 1890 Land-grant Institutions – Section 1445](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/FY24-1445-RFA-508-MOD1-P.pdf)).
* Describes the purpose of the funding which is to support agricultural research activities at 1890 Land-grant Institutions that is aligned with the [USDA Strategic Plan 2022-2026](https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/usda-fy-2022-2026-strategic-plan.pdf) ([Agricultural Research at 1890 Land-grant Institutions – Section 1445](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/FY24-1445-RFA-508-MOD1-P.pdf)).
* Identify the eligible universities by name ([Agricultural Research at 1890 Land-grant Institutions – Section 1445](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/FY24-1445-RFA-508-MOD1-P.pdf)).
* Identify the allocation of funds to a n 1890 Land-grant Institution and the required match (See Appendix A in [Agricultural Research at 1890 Land-grant Institutions – Section 1445](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/FY24-1445-RFA-508-MOD1-P.pdf)).
* Identify the requirements of deploying the capacity funds including-
  + Submission of a Plan of Work ([7 U.S. Code § 361g. Duties of Secretary; ascertainment of entitlement of State to funds; plans of work](https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?path=/prelim%40title7/chapter14/subchapter1&edition=prelim)). The Plan of Work includes a summary of the planned projects or programs in the State using capacity funds, a description of how the 1:1 match requirement will be met, and a description of the merit (or peer) review process ([7 U.S. Code § 361c - Authorization of appropriations and allotments of grants](https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=(title:7%20section:361c%20edition:prelim))).
  + Submission of reports that include a Plan of Work (POW) update, Annual Report of Accomplishments and Results (Annual Report), Program/Project Initiation in the NIFA Reporting System (NRS), Program/Project progress reports, Project Financial Report, OGFM Supplemental, and Federal Financial Report (SF-425) ([Agricultural Research at 1890 Land-grant Institutions – Section 1445](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/FY24-1445-RFA-508-MOD1-P.pdf)).
* Provide the capacity grant reporting cycle ([NIFA Reporting System](https://www.nifa.usda.gov/data/nifa-reporting-system)).

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