

Association of Northeast Extension Directors

Meeting Notes and Action Items

December 11, 2025
8:00-9:30 AM ET

Attendance: Andy Turner, Kayce Florio, Lisa Townson, Eric Ervin, Bill Miller, Hannah Carter, Amy Loader, Jinhee Kim, Jason Bolton, Brian Schilling, Amy Harder, Ali Mitchell Dunigan

Agenda item	Action taken/To take
<p><u>NEED Business</u></p> <p>Accept NEED November meeting summary and the NEED December agenda: No changes requested.</p> <p>NEED FY26 Q1 Financials: No significant variances reported. As of September, some assessments were outstanding, now all are paid in full. Q1 report does not include the \$7500 dedicated to the discretionary fund for the EDEN conference. The accurate number for the discretionary fund is \$84,500 for the discretionary fund.</p> <p>Project Updates and Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Launching the NEED Seed Grant Program. – The program will launch in the new year as we are working on a final language update for the NE agenda key priority 2. Of note is the communications requirement of the award – Awardees will be asked to work with the Northeast Communicators Network at the outset and the close of the project. - Possible training on UF’s ag loss assessment process. – If there is significant interest, Ali will begin planning with UF. The go/no-go number of interested people is 8 individuals. If interested, let Ali know by COB December 16th. - Dr. Hamby IPM letter. – NEED and AgInnovation Northeast’s letter to Dr. Hamby has been sent. As of 12/11/2025 we have not received any response from the Director’s 	<p>Motion to approve the NEED November meeting summary as presented – L.Townson/E.Ervin/Carried</p> <p>No edits to the December meeting agenda.</p> <p>Motion to accept the FY26 Q1 financials as presented – A.Loader/B.Miller/Carried</p> <p>Members who would be interested in sending staff to a training on agriculture loss assessment at UF must let Ali know by COB Tuesday December 16th.</p> <p>Ali will resend the Northeast IPM Center letter to Dr. Hamby to NEED.</p> <p>Motion to approve Dr. Jinhee Kim to serve as a NEED ECOP voting member replacing Dr. Roy Beckford and serving the remainder of his term. – J. Atilas/L. Townson/Carried</p> <p>Ali will offer Chris Callahan a NEED mentor match in the new year.</p>

office. Ali will keep NEED updated should anything change.

- **Addition: 4-H and Federal issues** – There was a successful meeting to talk through a new version of the 4-H youth development model (developed by national 4-H council, leaders within 4-H, and Cody Stone) with the Director of NIFA. The Director was prepared and interested in the strength of 4-H.

Committee Assignments: ECOP replacement for Roy Beckford. – Dr. Jinhee Kim (University of Maryland) has volunteered to serve in this role. Jorge Atilas/Lisa Townson/Carried

ECOP & regional committee issues and updates:

- **The ECOP Program Committee** has launched a new AI PAT which will work in context with the 4-H AI group and the Broadband PAT. The Broadband PAT likely will focus on teaching folks about AI while the AI PAT focuses on use of AI in Extension program, evaluation, and governance. If there are Extension professionals at your LGUs who you feel should be a part of this leadership body, please send their information to Ali.

NIFA Update: No update provided. No NIFA representation was present.

Addition - Supporting UVM's Dean in the search for a new Extension Director and Chris Callahan in the Interim Director role: NEED is interested in sending a letter from the Dean offering our support and consultation should she want it. UVM is important for NEED and to the region. Such a letter would to UVM from the Chairs after consultation with Chris. In the interim, NEED members should consider reaching out to Chris (who was not present – Chris, we support you!). Ali will offer Chris a mentor match in the new year.

Master Gardener Volunteer Organization Issue

Brian Schilling provided a short background on what is happening in New Jersey. Many members indicated interest in continuing the discussion.

Ali will schedule a special meeting for interested members to discuss this issue in January 2026.

Learning from the North Central Cooperative Extension Directors Association – Process & Priorities

NEED has prioritized meeting with leadership of our sister regional Extension associations so that we can learn how they work, what they are prioritizing, and how we might be able to work better with them.

NEED welcomed the following guests:

- Dr. Gregg Hadley - Assistant Vice President & Director for Extension, Kansas State University, K-State Research and Extension; North Central Regional Chair.
- Dr. Robin Shepard - Executive Directors, North Central Cooperative Extension Directors Association

Select highlights from this discussion include:

- The North Central region is focusing on nutrition and health, cross-state collaboration, and succession planning (this includes delivering an annual Administrative Bootcamp and NELD - North Central Extension Leadership Development conference).
 - o Importantly, it is agreed upon that regional priorities do not have to have 100% consensus to be a priority.
 - o Supporting a priority can look like money, people, inspiration, permission to work, and/or acknowledgement from leadership that what Extension professionals are doing already fits. We often go to money first, but it is not the only way to provide support.
- They are using the national 6-pillar discussion as a catalyst for regional collaboration. For example, looking at reporting systems for common impact indicators and evaluation criteria in 3 elevated areas as well as empaneling special working groups and talking with AgInnovation on how to roll out the priorities together.
- The North Central region has robust interaction with the program leaders. Each

Ali will follow up with Robin in 2026 to discuss opportunities for cross-regional collaboration of issues that are mutual priorities (ex. health).

program leader team has a director liaison and there is standard time on all agendas about what is happening with each program leadership group.

- They recently held an in-person meeting that included all program leadership groups. They hired the Hubert Humphrey institute to do much for the program for the cross-program leader group meeting.
- Each regional meeting includes time for directors to pick each other's brains on special projects they are working on and Robin actively networks directors together to move forward on issues.
- The region prioritizes having a strong connection to its regional centers (IPM, Aquaculture, Regional Rural Development)
- OPPORTUNITY: Cross regional collaboration! There may be items that bubble up for strong regional collaboration. Robin and Ali can meet to talk and have a bubble up conversation with the regional chairs.