NECC 2103 Meeting

Location: Annual Conference of the American Society for Horticultural Science in New Orleans LA on 30 July 2025.

Attendees: Becky Sideman, University of New Hampshire; Timothy Ayankojo, Mississippi State University; Francesco DiGioia, Pennsylvania State University; Jianyu Li, University of Massachusetts; Harlene Hatterman-Valenti, North Dakota State University; Saeid Zehtab Salmasi, New Mexico State University; Samantha Willden, Cornell University.

**Agenda/Minutes:**

**Introductions.** Participants introduced one another; and we discussed activities and functions of the high tunnel (HT) coordinating committee thus far.

**Discuss Multi-State Research Project vs. Coordinating Committee.** Becky presented the implications of having a multi-state research project vs. coordinating committee, as discussed by NECC officers with our administrative lead, Anton Bekkerman on 25 July 2025. The proposal to renew our existing project is due this fall/winter for an Oct 1 2025 start date, so this is the time to decide whether we want to shift directions. Among the group, there was general support for the multi-state research project.

We brainstormed a list of research objectives as a starting point:

* Evaluate grower adoption and use of HT and HT technologies (which could include assessing the number and area covered by high tunnels in the U.S., an objective discussed at several past meetings)
* Explore pest and disease management strategies in HT
* Explore engineering, technology, and environmental control within HT
* Extension and outreach.

There is a need to clearly define HT; possibly using in-ground production as the defining characteristic, to be consistent with NRCS initiatives.

We will need to solicit input/feedback from all NECC 2103 participants on the list of proposed objectives for the research project.

**Next Steps.**

Francesco will set up a MS Teams folder for us to use to collaborate on writing the proposal

Becky will draft research objectives using the list above and distilled key themes from previous state reports, and will share with the rest of the group.