

**RE: FY 2010 Appropriations for SARE**

May 1, 2009

The Honorable David Obey  
Chair, Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerry Lewis  
Ranking Member, Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Chair, Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA, and Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jack Kingston  
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA, and Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairs and Ranking Members:

**The undersigned organizations respectfully request a FY10 appropriation for SARE of \$30 million, with \$25 million allocated to research and education and \$5 million to extension and professional development.**

The Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program (SARE) program is an exceptionally successful competitive grants program that funds farmer-driven research, education, and extension initiatives. SARE projects have a long and distinguished track record of furthering farm profitability, on-farm economic innovation and environmentally and socially sound farming practices. Its unique regional approach to grant making has achieved an overall and unparalleled level of national equity in the delivery of its services.

SARE builds economic prosperity, innovation and opportunity. Its research and education grants help first-time farmers get started and succeed. Its research portfolio is a treasure trove of information to help farmers find ways to be more profitable, to conserve resources and to contribute to their communities. The research and education support that SARE has provided to farmers has literally transformed lifestyles, livelihoods and communities, not just production and marketing systems.

Despite SARE's many successes the program has never been adequately funded. Demand for SARE funds is big and growing but in most years it has been able to fund less than 10% of the meritorious research and education proposals submitted.

SARE is authorized to be funded at \$40 million for its research and education program and \$20 million for its extension education and professional development program. Actual combined funding for both programs, however, has never topped \$19 million.

In addition to enhancing the existing program components, including farmer grants, the increase would also enable SARE to launch two new and important program initiatives. At this level, research and education funding would finally be sufficient to allow SARE to initiate its state matching grants program. This authorized but never before funded program would allow SARE to use its authority to fund state and local programs to further sustainable food and agriculture programs and research projects. These partnerships would leverage private, state and local monies in support of sustainable agriculture and build state and local capacity for research and education.

SARE is also ready to commence a new set of agricultural systems projects to help investigate and develop climate-friendly farming system innovations. This critical new funding area also requires a funding increase to get started.

Increased funding will allow SARE to reach significantly more farmers, support projects designed to spur economic growth in rural communities, enhance farmer-to-consumer marketing opportunities, and help bridge the gap in training and research for sustainable and organic farming systems. We respectfully urge you to include \$30 million for SARE in the FY 2010 agricultural appropriations bill.

Sincerely,

Abundance Cooperative Market (*Rochester, NY*)

Accokeek Foundation (*MD*)

Ag PALS (*San Diego, CA*)

Agriculture & Land-Based Training Association (*Salinas, CA*)

Alabama Sustainable Agriculture Network

Alberts Organics (*Bridgeport, NJ*)

Alternative Energy Resources Organization (*Helena, MT*)

American Corn Growers Association

American Farmland Trust

American Grassfed Association

American Livestock Breeds Conservancy

American Society of Agronomy

Anselma Farmers and Artisans Market Association (*Atglen, PA*)

Asland Food Coop (*Ashland, OR*)

Association for the Tree of Life (*Moab, Utah*)

Beardsley Community Farm (*Knoxville, TN*)

Berkshire Co-op Market

Berkshire Grown (*Great Barrington, MA*)

Bountiful Cities Project (*Asheville, NC*)

Bronx Greens

California FarmLink

California Institute for Rural Studies  
Carolina Farm Stewardship Association  
Casa del Llano (*Hereford, TX*)  
Catholic Charities of Kansas City - St Joseph  
Catholic Charities, Rural Life Department, Diocese of Sioux City, IA  
Cedar Grove Cheese (*Plain Grove, WI*)  
Center for Energy and Environmental Education, University of Northern Iowa  
Center for Environmental Farming Systems (*Raleigh, NC*)  
Center for Rural Affairs (*Lyons, NE*)  
Center for Science in the Public Interest  
Center for Sustainable Living, Genesee-Finger Lakes Region, NY  
Cherokee Small Farm Project (*Tablequah OK*)  
Chesapeake Bay Foundation  
Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage  
Chicago Honey Co-op, Sustainable Urban Agriculture  
City Seed (*New Haven, CT*)  
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Cornell University  
Community Food Security Coalition  
Community Alliance with Family Farmers (*Davis CA*)  
Community CROPS (*Lincoln, NE*)  
Community Food Connections (*Phoenix, AZ*)  
Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture (*South Deerfield, MA*)  
Community Pharmacy Cooperative (*WI*)  
Concerned Citizens of Central Ohio  
Cornucopia Institute (*Cornucopia, WI*)  
Crawford Stewardship Project (*Steuben, WI*)  
Crop Science Society of America  
CROPP/Organic Valley  
Dakota Rural Action (*Brookings, SD*)  
Dane County Food Council (*WI*)  
Delta Land and Community (*Almyra, AR*)  
Earth Dance (*St. Louis, MO*)  
East Central Ohio Beekeepers Association  
East End Community Organic Farm (*East Hampton, NY*)  
East End Long Island Chapter of Slow Food  
East New York Farms Project (*Brooklyn, NY*)  
Ecolaw Institute (*Broken Arrow, OK*)  
Ecological Farming Association (*CA*)  
Emporia Farmers' Market (*Emporia, KS*)  
Environmental Action Committee of West Marin (*Point Reyes Station, CA*)  
Equity Trust, Inc.

Estella B. Leopold, Professor Emeritus, University of Washington-Seattle  
Everybody Eats! (*Boulder, CO*)  
Farm Aid  
Farm Fresh Rhode Island  
Farm to Table (*Santa Fe, NM*)  
FarmHands (*Whitefish MT*)  
Farming and the Environment (*WA*)  
Federation of Southern Cooperatives' Rural Training and Research Center (*Epes, AL*)  
Flats Mentor Farm (*MA*)  
Florida Certified Organic Growers & Consumers, Inc.  
Food Democracy Now!  
Food Systems Integrity (*Arlington, MA*)  
Georgia Organics  
Glades Crop Care, Inc. (*Jupiter, FL*)  
Glenmary Commission on Justice (*Washburn, TN*)  
Graduate Program in Sustainable Agriculture, Student Association, Iowa State University  
Graduate Program in Sustainable Agriculture, Iowa State University  
Grant Family Farms (*Wellington, CO*)  
Grassroots International (*Jamaica Plain, MA*)  
Green Earth Institute (*Naperville, IL*)  
Green Fork (*Palo Alto, CA*)  
Green Tomato Concepts Inc. (*Savannah, GA*)  
Greene Bean Project, Alternative Crops Enterprises (*Cooper, LA*)  
Growing Home, Inc. (*Chicago, IL*)  
Hawaii Tropical Fruit Growers  
Historic Lewes Farmers Market (*Nassau, DE*)  
Home Grown Food (*Fort Collins, CO*)  
Indiana Certified Organic, LLC  
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy  
Institute for Rural America (*Holden, MO*)  
Institute for Science and Interdisciplinary Studies (*Amherst, MA*)  
Iowa Farmers Union  
Iowa State University Student Organic Farm Club  
IPM and Sustainable Agriculture Programs, Clemson University  
Izaak Walton League of America  
Just Food  
Just Harvest (*Pittsburgh, PA*)  
Justice and Witness Ministries, United Church of Christ  
Kansas City Center for Urban Agriculture  
Kansas Rural Center  
Kauai Agricultural Initiative (*HI*)

Kickapoo Initiative (*Steuben, WI*)  
Land For Good (*Keene, NH*)  
Land Stewardship Project (*MN*)  
Leopold Group, S.E. Iowa chapter of the Iowa Sierra Club  
Madison Area Community Supported Agriculture Coalition (*WI*)  
Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association  
Maine Sustainable Agriculture Society  
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns  
Massachusetts Avenue Project (*Buffalo, NY*)  
Michael Fields Agricultural Institute (*WI*)  
Michigan Alliance of Cooperatives  
Michigan Food & Farming Systems  
Michigan Land Use Institute  
Michigan Organic Food and Farm Alliance  
Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service  
Midwest Organic Services Association  
Minnesota Food Association  
National Catholic Rural Life Conference  
National Center for Appropriate Technology  
National Farmers Organization  
National Immigrant Farming Initiative  
National Latino Farmers and Ranchers Trade Association  
National Organic Coalition  
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition  
Nebraska Sustainable Agriculture Society  
Nebraska Wildlife Federation  
New England Farmers Union  
New England Small Farm Institute  
New Entry Sustainable Farming Project  
New Jersey Conservation Foundation  
New York Small Scale Food Processors' Association  
New York Sustainable Agriculture Working Group  
Niche Meat Processor Assistance Network Oregon State University  
New Mexico Food and Agriculture Policy Council  
Northeast Organic Farming Association – Connecticut  
Northeast Organic Farming Association Interstate Council  
Northeast Organic Farming Association - Massachusetts  
Northeast Organic Farming Association – New Hampshire  
Northeast Organic Farming Association – New Jersey  
Northeast Organic Farming Association – New York  
Northeast Organic Farming Association - Vermont

North Carolina Contract Poultry Growers Association  
Northeast Organic Dairy Producers' Alliance  
Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society  
Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides  
Office of Peace, Justice, and the Integrity of Creation, Diocese of Gary, Indiana  
Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association  
Ohio State Beekeepers Association  
Oklahoma Composting Council  
Oregon Tilth  
Organic Consumers Association  
Organic Crop Improvement Association  
Organic Farming Research Foundation  
Organic Seed Alliance  
Organic Seed Growers Trade Association  
Otsego County Conservation Association (*Cooperstown, NY*)  
Partners for Family Farms (*KY*)  
Pasture Program, University of Vermont Center for Sustainable Agriculture  
PCC Natural Markets (*Seattle, WA*)  
Peconic Land Trust (*Southampton, NY*)  
Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture  
Pennsylvania Farmers Union  
Pennypack Farm Education Center (*Horsham, PA*)  
Pesticide Action Network North America.  
Phillies Bridge Farm Project (*New Paltz, NY*)  
PLBA Housing Development Corporation (*Gainesville, AL*)  
Practical Farmers of Iowa  
Rural Advancement Foundation International (RAFI-USA)  
Rainbow Natural Grocery Cooperative (*Jackson, MS*)  
Research, Education, Action and Policy on Food Group (*Madison, WI*)  
Rocky Mountain Farmers Union  
Rural Life Committee, North Dakota Conference of Churches  
Seacoast Eat Local (*Rye, NH*)  
SEED Wayne, Wayne State University (*Detroit, MI*)  
Slow Food First Coast  
Slow Food Glades to Coast (*Wellington, FL*)  
Small Farm Today magazine  
Small Holders Alliance of Massachusetts  
Small Planet Foods Division of General Mills, Inc.  
Soil Science Society of America  
South Central Farmers' Action Fund (*Los Angeles, CA*)  
South Central Farmers' Cooperative (*Los Angeles, CA*)

Southeastern Massachusetts Agricultural Partnership  
Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group  
Southside Community Land Trust (*Providence, RI*)  
Southwest Florida Small Farmers Network  
Southwest Institute for ReLocalization  
Southwest Marketing Network (*Hesperus, CO*)  
Spokane Farmers' Market Association  
Straus Family Creamery (*CA*)  
Sustainable Agriculture Education Association  
Sustainable Agriculture Resource Consortium, California Polytechnic State University  
Sustainable Food Center (*Austin, TX*)  
Sustainable Living Systems (*Victor, MT*)  
The Farm School at Snipes (*Morrisville, PA*)  
The Food Project, Inc. (*Lynn, MA*)  
The Greenhorns (*Brooklyn, NY*)  
The Rodale Institute  
Tierra Lucero New Mexico  
Tilth Producers of Washington  
Union of Concerned Scientists  
United Farmers USA  
University of Vermont, Center for Sustainable Agriculture  
Vermont Association of Conservation Districts  
Vermont Pasture Network  
Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund  
Vermont Vegetable and Berry Growers Association  
Virginia Association for Biological Farming  
Vital Communities (*White River Junction, VT*)  
Wallace Center, Winrock International  
Washington State University Extension in San Juan County  
Washington Sustainable Food & Farming Network  
WeCare4Farm (*Gambrills, MD*)  
West Tennessee Locally Grown Food Community  
Western Sustainable Agriculture Working Group  
Willamette Farm and Food Coalition (*Eugene, OR*)  
Willimantic Food Coop (*Willimantic, CT*)  
Wisconsin Farmers Union  
Women, Food and Agriculture Network  
Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation