

SARE: Since 1988...

...pioneering change innovation by innovation...



Cover cropping, diversification, no-till

SARE cutting-edge research on cover cropping, no-till, rotations and crop-livestock diversity now improves soil, water and habitat on millions of acres.

Systems research

SARE support for farming systems trials ground-truths information for producers.

Rotational grazing

SARE funding helped adapt this time-tested practice to modern farming; grazing now feeds a growing demand for grass-fed beef and milk.

Innovative marketing

As one example, SARE funded early Community Supported Agriculture models, now 2,500 plus boost farm profitability across America.



...making a difference result by result...

One small, but unique and highly successful, part of SARE is its farmer-led research grants:

79 percent

of surveyed producers said they saw improved soil quality through their SARE project.

64 percent

of surveyed producers said their SARE project helped them achieve higher sales.

53 percent

of surveyed producers report using a new production technique after reading a SARE publication.

...and improving lives farmer by farmer.

With the help of SARE research and SARE state coordinators, YaSin and Elaine Muhaimin (left) started a diversified farm after Hurricane Katrina.



Karl Kupers (far right) used a SARE grant to perfect his direct seeding system, which led to a successful marketing cooperative selling sustainably produced grain.



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Part of USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) is a national competitive grants and outreach program working to advance the economic, social and environmental sustainability of American agriculture.

SARE: 2010 and Beyond...

Today, the SARE grant making model—competitive, integrated, outcomes-driven, farmer-tested, regionally administered—is needed more than ever. Climate change, energy costs, rural outmigration, tough barriers for new farmers and changing consumer food demands are among just a few of the unprecedented challenges facing agriculture. And these challenges necessitate unprecedented research for effective solutions.

SARE's three-pronged plan:

1 Growing our grants

Each year SARE receives more high-quality proposals than it can fund. A significant funding increase will allow SARE to tackle a larger set of challenges facing agriculture by supporting promising but currently unfunded research.

2 Building needed capacity

SARE helps colleges and universities advance sustainable food and farming innovation—project by project. Today's challenges, however, call for a more systematic approach. With enhanced funding, SARE can provide state matching grants, thereby doubling resources for new initiatives and expanding programs to develop and teach cutting-edge farming and ranching systems.

3 Supporting systems research

To develop enduring solutions to today's challenges and capitalize on new opportunities, many researchers are moving from studying individual problems in isolation to systems research—the long-term, interdisciplinary study of all the components that influence food and farming outcomes. SARE has laid a foundation for this growing area and with a significant funding increase, we can move from pioneering pilot projects to game-changing innovations.

Example: Systems Research Can Help Resolve Food vs. Fuel Debate

Many of today's challenges and opportunities in agriculture can only be understood using a systems approach—climate change, water quality, improved nutrition, farm income and jobs. SARE brings to this burgeoning area of research a critical and unique component: its unwavering focus on farmers' triple-bottom line—profitable production, conservation of the soil and water, and quality of life for their communities.

Take the food vs. fuel debate: A growing movement is promoting an exciting vision—an intricate landscape where biomass for fuel is interwoven with food crop production and perennial buffers. Would this work? How will this approach affect farmer profits, local jobs and communities? Long-term, site-specific, collaborative systems research focused on farmers' triple-bottom line is critical for finding truly sustainable approaches to biofuels.



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