

April 26, 2022

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Agriculture,
Rural Development, FDA, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable John Hoeven
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Agriculture,
Rural Development, FDA, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable Sanford Bishop Jr.
Chairman
Subcommittee on Agriculture,
Rural Development, FDA, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Andy Harris
Acting Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development,
FDA, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Baldwin, Chairman Bishop, Ranking Member Hoeven, and Acting Ranking Member Harris:

The undersigned food, farm, conservation, and rural organizations appreciate your commitment to continued investment in the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program. As you work to develop agriculture appropriations legislation for fiscal year (FY) 2023, we write to highlight the importance of continued investment in agriculture research and to urge your support for increasing SARE funding to \$60 million.

Administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), SARE has been a leader in addressing key sustainability challenges facing agriculture for over 30 years and remains USDA's only farmer-driven research program. It has helped create more innovative organic and conservation farm practices that are adopted by farmers on the ground than any other competitive agricultural research program.

All SARE projects address sustainability and focus on improving farmer profitability, stewardship, and quality of life. The program is one of the first in the country to address management practices that help sequester carbon and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in agriculture using a holistic approach rather than undergoing one practice change at a time. SARE projects also include improvements to local and regional food systems, including farmer access to markets, increasing food sovereignty in Tribal communities, integrated livestock, agroforestry, perennial cropping systems, and renewable energy, to name a few. The program's continued

emphasis on practical, in-field research, farmer-to-farmer knowledge sharing, and farmer-researcher collaboration ensures that its research priorities are constantly evolving and responding to the challenges that farmers and ranchers face every day. SARE also provides grants, training, and resources to agriculture professionals to build their knowledge and skills through its Professional Development Program (PDP). This includes professionals from the Cooperative Extension Service and USDA. For years SARE has supported graduate students which helps establish the pipeline of future agricultural scientists who are needed to make the next breakthroughs in agriculture.

In addition, the program is expanding its outreach to historically underserved farmers and ranchers by providing sponsorship funds to support education and training activities and has also devoted resources to addressing inequities in funding and personnel support for 1994 and 1890 Land Grant Institutions. Over its 30-year history, SARE has awarded over \$354 million to over 8,000 initiatives focusing on farmer-led research and education in every state across the country. Yet despite SARE's long-standing record of helping farmers and ranchers develop and adopt innovative practices and systems, the program has yet to reach its full authorized amount of \$60 million. Without increased investments, farmers will not be able to meet future productivity challenges and remain competitive, and they will lack the easily accessible and regionally appropriate research that they need to develop sustainable and climate resilient farming systems. In light of this, ***we support full funding for SARE at its authorized level of \$60 million for FY 2023.*** We believe this funding will boost research in soil health and climate resilience, expand investments in research to support farmers, especially farmers of color, and help rural communities thrive.

We thank you for your strong support of SARE and efforts to increase SARE funding in previous years, as well as your continued support for our nation's farmers.

Sincerely,

Agrarian Trust
Alabama State Association of Cooperatives
Alabama Sustainable Agriculture Network
ALBA
American Indian Mothers INC
American Seed Trade Association
Appalachian Sustainable Development
Barney Creek Livestock
Bird Conservancy of the Rockies
California Climate & Agriculture Network (CalCAN)

Cambridge Corner Farm
Carbon180
Carolina Farm Stewardship Association
Catskill Mountainkeeper
CCOF
Center for Rural Affairs
Certified Naturally Grown
Charles A. Francis
Chester Agricultural Center Inc.
CISA (Community involved in Sustaining Agriculture)
Colorado Farm and Food Alliance
Community Alliance with Family Farmers
Delta Land & Community
Dirigo Food Safety
Earthjustice
Ecotrust
Environmental Working Group
Fair Farms Campaign (Waterkeepers Chesapeake)
Farm Action Fund
Farm Aid
Farm Journal Foundation
Farms to Grow, Inc.
Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT)
Foodshed Alliance
Friends of the Mississippi River
Grow Food Northampton
Healthy Gulf
Hempstead Project Heart
Illinois Stewardship Alliance
Institute of Food Technologists
Izaak Walton League of America
Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future
Kansas Rural Center
Lake Erie Waterkeeper
Lake Pepin Legacy Alliance
Land Core
Land Stewardship Project
League of Conservation Voters
League of Women Voters of Iowa
Local Food Hub

Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association
Mandaamin Institute, Inc.
Michael Fields Agricultural Institute
Michigan Food and Farming Systems
Midwest Cover Crops Council
Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture
Missouri Coalition for the Environment
MOSES - Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service
National Association of State Conservation Agencies
National Center for Appropriate Technology
National Organic Coalition
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition
National Wildlife Federation
National Young Farmers Coalition
Nebraska Wildlife Federation
New Entry Sustainable Farming Project
No More Empty Pots
Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance
Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York
Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont (NOFA-VT)
Northeast Organic Farming Association-Interstate Council
Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Working Group
Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides
NRDC
Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association
Oregon Climate and Agriculture Network
Oregon Tilth
Organic Farmers Association
Organic Farming Research Foundation
Organic Growers School
Organic Seed Alliance
Pasa Sustainable Agriculture
Pinelands Preservation Alliance
Practical Farmers of Iowa
Renewing the Countryside
Rocky Mountain Seed Alliance
Rural Action
Rural Coalition
Savanna Institute
Sequoia Riverlands Trust

Sharing Our Roots - Climate Land Leaders
SnoValley Tilt
SoAR Foundation
Soil and Water Conservation Society
Sun Valley Institute for Resilience
Surfrider Foundation
The Utopian Seed Project
Union of Concerned Scientists
Virginia Association for Biological Farming
Vital Communities
West Virginia Food and Farm Coalition
Western Montana Growers Cooperative
Wild Farm Alliance
Women, Food and Agriculture Network (WFAN)