

SARE: Advancing the Frontier of Sustainable Agriculture in...

Michigan

What is SARE?

Since 1988, the Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education (SARE) program has been the go-to USDA grants and outreach program for farmers, ranchers, researchers and educators who want to develop innovations that improve farm profitability, protect water and land, and revitalize communities. To date, SARE has awarded \$245 million for more than 6,100 initiatives.

SARE is grassroots with far-reaching impact

Four regional councils of expert practitioners set priorities and make grants in every state and island protectorate.

SARE communicates results

SARE shares project results by requiring grantees to conduct outreach and grower engagement; and by maintaining the SARE Learning Center—a library of practical publications, grantee-produced information products and other educational materials.



Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education

www.sare.org

Project Highlight: *Bridging the gap between processors and inspectors*

Small-scale processors are often at odds with food safety regulations and thus inspectors because the regulations are based on large-scale production practices. So, Michigan State University PhD student Jenifer Buckley set out to find a way to make both processors and inspectors more satisfied with the system.

With a 2010 SARE grant, Buckley found that a strong relationship between the two parties is key to both a safe product and a successful business. To learn more about the inspection process from both perspectives, she interviewed 24 artisan processors, including cheese, bread and jam producers, and nine food safety inspectors.

Buckley found that producers appreciate receiving technical assistance and new ideas from inspectors, and in-

spectors gained useful knowledge about production styles from the producers. However, producers find it hard to meet standard food safety protocols due to costs or unsupported production methods, and the inspectors were frustrated by the time or emotional investment made in a small business that might fail.

Information gleaned from this research has been presented to over 230 people, including small-scale processors. Buckley also submitted her findings to the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, urging them to enhance the existing inspector education program to include training on small manufacturing plants, in addition to soft skills.

For more information on this project, see www.sare.org/projects, and search for project number GNC10-134.

SARE in Michigan

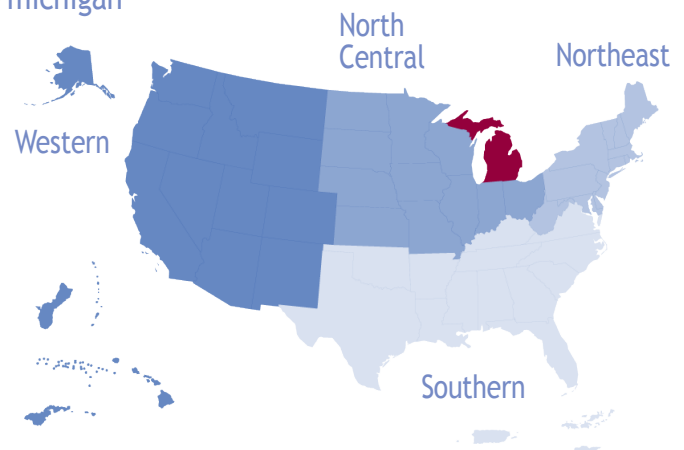
www.northcentralsare.org/michigan

\$5.7 million in total funding

226 grant projects

(since 1988)

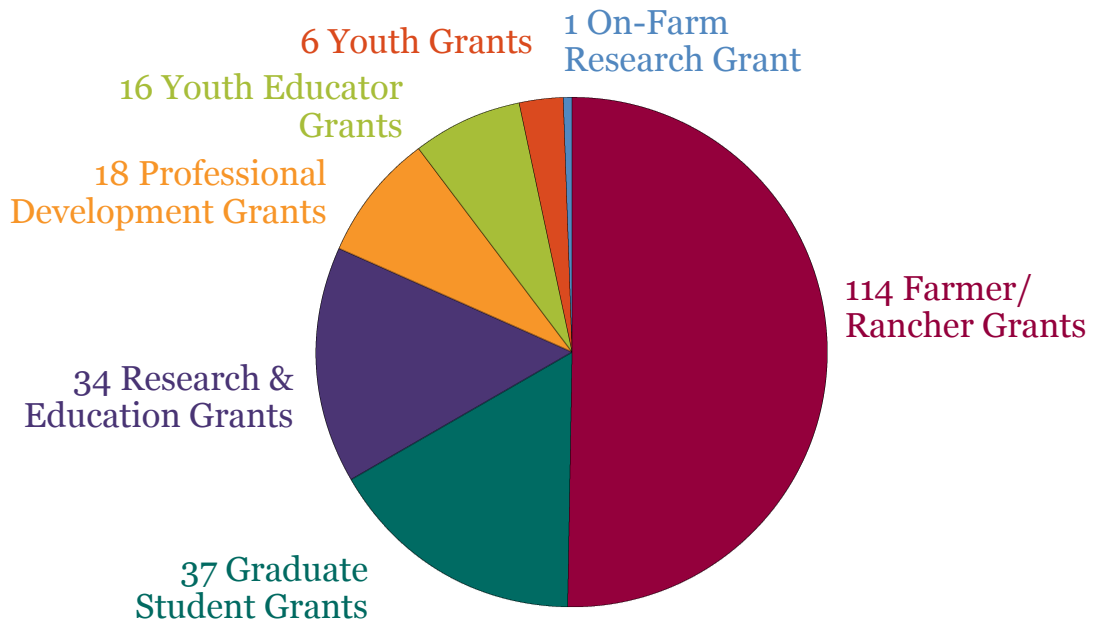
For a complete list of grant projects state by state, go to www.sare.org/state-summaries



SARE's four regional programs and outreach office work to advance sustainable innovations to the whole of American agriculture.

SARE Grants in Michigan

SARE has
awarded a
total of
226 grants
in Michigan
since 1988



SARE's Impact



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

79 percent of producers said they improved soil quality through their SARE project.

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

Contact Your SARE State Coordinator

SARE sustainable ag coordinators run state-level educational programs for Extension and other ag professionals, and many help grant applicants and recipients with planning and outreach. Visit www.northcentralsare.org/michigan to learn more.

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SARE is funded by the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA).

For detailed information on SARE projects, go to
www.SARE.org