

**North Central Region SARE Professional Development Program
State Sustainable Agriculture Plan of Work Guidelines
Calendar Year 2006**

Background

State sustainable agriculture professional development programs have undergone significant change since the early years of the North Central SARE PDP. Originally funded at a relatively low level, state programs and state coordinators were expected to provide basic assistance and coordination to meet the professional development needs of extension educators in their states. This limited level of support made it difficult for state programs to provide truly comprehensive activities linked with all aspects of the SARE Program – including Research, Education, and Producer Grants. As the SARE Program has evolved and become more integrated on a regional level, there is a recognition that state coordinators can play a critical role in promoting and working with a wide audience on issues related to SARE, in addition to their responsibilities for professional development.

In recognition of these changes, the Administrative Council recently launched a pilot program within the North Central Region to support an expansion of state sustainable agriculture programs with respect to expectations for programs and coordinators and respective funding levels. These expanded expectations and guidelines for states applying to participate in this pilot program include:

- 1) Each state must identify an individual or team of individuals to act as the state sustainable agriculture coordinator or team. This individual or team of individuals will be referred to as the “State Sustainable Agriculture Coordinator” as opposed to the “PDP Coordinator”.
- 2) The State Sustainable Agriculture Coordinator is charged with actively promoting, educating, facilitating and networking with SARE grant recipients, audiences interested in receiving SARE grants and key stakeholders wanting to learn more about sustainable agriculture and the SARE Program. The State Sustainable Agriculture Coordinator is also expected to advance the visibility and importance of sustainable agriculture within their own land grant institution.
- 3) The State Sustainable Coordinator is not eligible, because of the promotional and assistance nature of the position, to apply for or receive SARE funds and are covered by the same Conflict of Interest policy under which the Administrative Council operates;
- 4) The State Sustainable Agriculture Coordinator is expected to work closely with stakeholders, including farmers, ranchers, extension educators, non-profit organizations, state and federal agencies to identify specific, clear and measurable outcomes for sustainable agriculture education and professional development within their state and include a proposal for achieving (and measuring progress toward) outcomes as part of a Plan of Work;
- 5) Each state must submit this Plan of Work proposing activities and outcomes appropriate for achieving SARE educational and professional development outcomes within a state, and that the Plan of Work be rigorously reviewed by the Professional Development Program Committee of the Administrative Council; and

- 6) Each state is eligible to apply for base funding up to \$50,000 with a maximum of \$25,000 available for salary support for the state coordinator. In cases where SARE funds are used to support coordinator(s) salaries, the coordinator must have a 0.25 EFT appointment assigned to SARE coordination activities.

Plan of Work Background and Review

Because the educational and agricultural environment within each state is different, state plans are expected to be diverse and include state-specific outcomes, goals and activities. Although the Plan of Work is not expected to provide specific details on all activities, it should include background information on previous professional development and relevant sustainable agriculture activities and accomplishments, and should provide a logical link between past activities, current needs as identified by critical stakeholders, and proposed activities and outcomes. Plans of Work also must include information on how progress toward achieving outcomes will be monitored and evaluated.

The Professional Development Program Committee of the SARE Administrative Council and the PDP Regional Coordinator will rigorously review each state Plan of Work. The PDP Review Committee will use the following questions to evaluate the Plan of Work:

- 1) Do expected outcomes address the expanded role of the state sustainable agriculture programs/coordinators as outlined above? Do they include outcomes associated with Research and Education Grants, Producer Grants, Graduate Student Grants and Professional Development Program Grants?
- 2) Are the expected outcomes clear, logical, measurable, and meaningful for the state?
- 3) Is there evidence of stakeholder input and involvement in the identification of appropriate outcomes, and in the implementation of activities associated with the Plan of Work?
- 4) Are activities appropriate for achieving outcomes and/or is there a clearly outlined process for identifying and implementing activities?
- 5) Does the Plan include an evaluation process that will monitor progress toward outcomes and provide ongoing information for program improvement?
- 6) Does past performance toward outcomes identified in last year's Plan of Work (as based on a review of the annual report) merit further investment in the state?

Plan of Work Format Guidelines

The Plan of Work should be submitted with a completed USDA Application Form including the **proposal cover page** (CSREES-2002), **project summary page** (CSREES-2003); **budget page** (CSREES-2004); **current and pending support** (CSREES-2005). These forms can be downloaded from the USDA web site at http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/forms_standard.html. These forms should be signed by the authorized organizational representative from your institution. If you need a copy of this application kit or have any questions regarding these forms, please feel free to call or email Paula Ford or DeLynn Hay.

The Plan of Work should include the following sections:

- 1) **Background** – Basic information on current and past sustainable agriculture professional development and SARE activities and a description of the current situation with respect to SARE participation and professional development within the state.
- 2) **Program Logic Model** – One page graphic depiction of inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes. Should follow the same format as shown in Figure 1 attachment to POW guidelines. Logic model graphic not included in the page limit.
- 3) **Stakeholder Involvement** – Brief description of procedures used to obtain stakeholder input and participation in identifying future needs and expected outcomes, and involvement in implementing and evaluating activities. Participation in developing and delivering SARE programs, including professional development programs, should be formalized in an advisory committee (or similarly structured committee), which should meet on a regular basis. Attachment 1 includes two tables for information on advisory group membership and tentative schedule of meetings, and is not included in the page limit.
- 4) **Expected Outcomes** – Outcomes are the end results of programs and reflect the identified needs of a state with respect to the SARE Program and sustainable agriculture professional development. Outcomes should include short-term (changes in knowledge, awareness, and attitude), intermediate (changes in behavior) and long-term (changes in policies and practices) that have been identified, with stakeholders, as critical for the state. Outcomes should be meaningful, clear and measurable.
- 5) **Approach, Method and Activities** – List of general approach and methods used to achieve outcomes, as well as a listing of specific activities that may be used to achieve outcomes. Activities should have a clear and logical link with expected outcomes.
- 6) **Evaluation** - Information and methods used to measure progress toward outcomes should be listed. Baseline information to be collected should be identified, and evaluation approaches should include both quantitative and qualitative methods.
- 7) **Budget** – The budget form included in USDA application kit should be completed. Information for developing your budget is attached in USDA Budgetary Guidance form. Additional budget information should be included in Attachment 2.
- 8) **Budget Justification** – Provide budget justification consistent with explanation in budgetary guidance documentation form USDA.

Additional Information

- 1) The Plan of Work should not exceed five pages in length, excluding forms, tables, figures and attachments.
- 2) The original (signed by authorized contracting individual at your institution) of the Plan of Work must be received by DeLynn Hay at the University of Nebraska. A disk copy of the Plan of Work text and table (no need to include forms) should be attached to the hard copy. A hard copy and disk copy should also be sent to Paula Ford (address below) and received no later than December 12, 2005.
- 3) If your Plan of Work and report is not received by December 12, 2005 it will not be considered for funding in the 2006 funding cycle.**
- 4) The PDP Review Committee will review all plans in February, 2006 and make recommendations on funding to the Administrative Council at the March, 2006 meeting,. Funding for approved Plans of Work is actually being taken from the 2005 federal fiscal year SARE allocation.

Questions regarding these guidelines or the Plan of Work review process can be directed to Paula Ford.

Send Original Plan of Work and disk copy to:

North Central SARE Program
ATTN: DeLynn Hay
University of Nebraska Lincoln
13A Activities Building
1734 N. 34th Street
Lincoln, NE 68583-0848
Phone – 402.472.7081

Send paper and disk copy of the Plan of Work to:

Paula B. Ford
North Central SARE PDP
4A Edwards Hall
Kansas State University
Manhattan, KS 66502
Phone – 785.532.5328

Attachment 2. Budget Breakdown

Funding Category	\$ Requested
Personnel	
State Coordinator Time (___ EFT)	
Other Staff Time	
Benefits	
Travel Scholarships (___ approx. number to be awarded)	
Min-grants (___ approx. number to be awarded)	
Subcontracts for activities (list organizations and activities)	
Travel for State Coordinator	
Workshops Costs (List workshop focus and approx. direct costs)	
Tours (List tour focus and approx. direct costs)	
Conferences/Meetings (List conference/meeting focus and approx. direct cost.)	
Office Supplies	
Misc. (please list)	
Total Funds Requested	