

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

Maine

Project Highlight: *Interpersonal Relationships Improve Farm Viability*

Small-scale and beginning farmers are vital to Maine's agriculture. According to the Maine Farm Bureau, 61 percent of the state's producers farm one to 99 acres. Additionally, the number of beginning farmers, those who have been in the business 10 years or fewer, has grown. However, the total number of farms in Maine is decreasing. An increase in farm retention is needed—and is possible by targeting education to small-scale and beginning farmers and the professionals who support them. The University of Maine Cooperative Extension is leading a SARE-funded project to meet this need.

The project sought to expand farm educators' training materials with information on interpersonal communication and relationships. It initially aimed

to train 45 service providers, many of whom participate in the Beginning Farmer Resource Network of Maine. Instead, 53 people took part. The program included farmer focus groups, working groups, one and a half days of training and a webinar. A toolkit, one-on-one consultation checklist and a decision-making tool were also developed.

The 53 trained service providers will apply their newly developed skills in one-on-one consultations with 90 farmers, who manage a combined 10,755 acres, with an aim to improve farm retention and farmer lifestyle satisfaction.

For more information on this research, see www.sare.org/projects, and search for project number ENE16-142.

SARE in Maine

www.nesare.org/maine

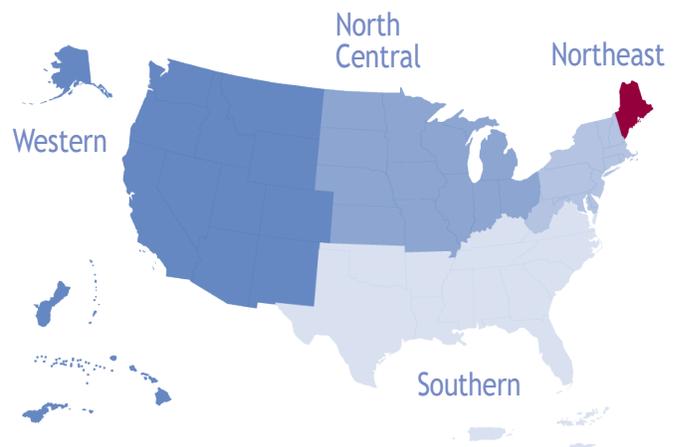
\$5.7 million in total funding

203 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.

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 over \$273 million to more than 6,800 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.

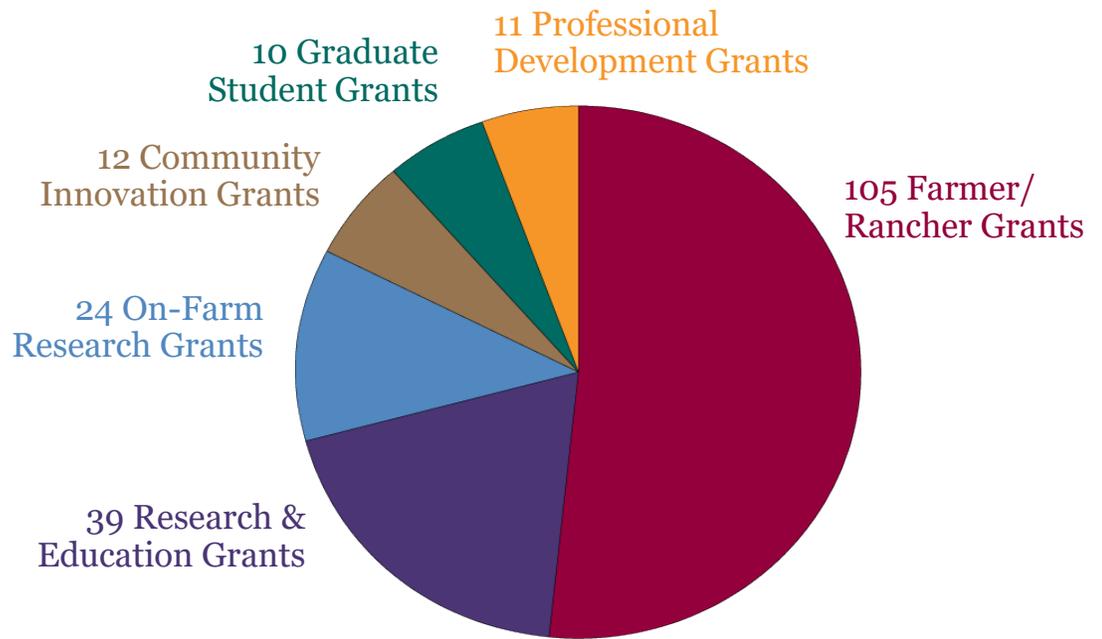


Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education

www.sare.org

SARE Grants in Maine

SARE has
awarded a
total of
203 grants
in Maine
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.nesare.org/maine to learn more.

Ellen Mallory
Univ. of Maine Cooperative Extension
(207) 581-2942
ellen.mallory@maine.edu

Tom Molloy
University of Maine
(207) 581-3213
thomas.molloy@maine.edu



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