The people of the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands have skills and resources for aquaculture, agriculture and agroforestry, but the islands’ economic development lags far behind their potential. According to Simon Ellis, director of the Marine and Environmental Research Institute of Pohnpei, one of the most successful aquaculture enterprises to date has been the farming of marine ornamental invertebrates for home aquariums abroad.

So, Ellis used a SARE grant to expand the area’s ornamental fish farming industry by providing training to the Extension professionals who work with aquaculture operations. The project included a weeklong training and tours of operations, with the aim of improving knowledge and collaboration between Extension, producers and distributors. The training included 15 participants and addressed topics such as production, marketing, shipping, permitting and sustainability.

In an exit survey, all the participants indicated they had a better understanding of the marine ornamental industry, and the majority planned to use their new knowledge in their work. The project created new partnerships between producers and exporters that remained in place at the project’s completion. In 2013, two years into the project, ornamental fish exporters reported record sales, a feat that Ellis does not take complete credit for but one which he thinks the project contributed to.

For more information on this project, see www.sare.org/projects, and search for project number EW11-001.
SARE Grants in Micronesia

SARE has awarded a total of 18 grants in Micronesia since 1988.

- 8 Farmer/Rancher Grants
- 4 Research & Education Grants
- 5 Professional Development Grants
- 1 On-Farm Research Grant

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.westernsare.org/micronesia to learn more.

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

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