Farmer Clarissa Mathews struggled, along with many other West Virginia farmers, with the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug (BMSB). This highly invasive pest causes significant crop losses, and all vegetable and fruit crops are vulnerable. To manage the pest, frequent applications of broad-spectrum insecticides, toxic to beneficial organisms, are commonly used.

Two SARE-funded projects sought out alternative solutions. In one, Mathews investigated a non-chemical approach combining a highly attractive trap crop buffer with commercially available pheromone-baited traps. On a subsequent project, USDA researcher Tracy Lesky partnered with Mathews to manage BMSB in apples using the same tools.

Mathews found that stink bugs were highly attracted to a sunflower trap crop. However, reduced stink bug densities in cash crops did not mean significantly lower crop damage or higher yields. Thus, she concluded that while effective for organic farmers unable to use synthetic insecticides, the pheromone lure needed to be incorporated within the trap crop, not on the sides. Lesky’s follow-up project is looking at the same approach, except farmers who are not organic will apply the insecticides near the attract and kill sites. Lesky is already finding success with the approach and interest from farmers.

For more information on these projects, see www.sare.org/projects, and search for project numbers LNE14-334 and FNE12-759.
SARE Grants in West Virginia

SARE has awarded a total of 89 grants in West Virginia since 1988.

- 42 Farmer/Rancher Grants
- 13 Research & Education Grants
- 15 On-Farm Research Grants
- 5 Community Innovation Grants
- 1 Research Only Grant
- 6 Graduate Student Grants
- 7 Professional Development Grants
- 6 Graduate Student Grants

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/west-virginia to learn more.

Doolarie Singh-Knights
West Virginia State University
(304) 293-7606
dosingh-knights@mail.wvu.edu

Barbara Liedl
West Virginia State University
(304) 932-0834
liedlbe@wvstateu.edu

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

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