

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

New York

Project Highlight: *To Improve the Soil, First Know the Soil*

The importance of soil health cannot be overstated. It supports vigorous plant growth by promoting the efficient use of nutrients and water, protecting against erosion and compaction, and aiding in disease and pest management. Soil health drives farm productivity and resilience against weather extremes. But the soil is an incredibly complex environment, and for farmers to improve their ground, they first need to learn about its condition.

That is why, with SARE funding, a multidisciplinary team from Cornell University created a new kind of soil assessment. Traditional soil tests, which are also important management tools, are typically limited to measuring nutrient levels and pH. They do not reveal anything about the physical structure

or microbial life present in the soil, yet such characteristics strongly influence crop yields as well as the efficiency of inputs such as water and fertilizer. In contrast, Cornell's soil health assessment reports typically include management recommendations to address specifically identified constraints and promote soil-building practices such as cover cropping, reduced tillage, the use of compost or manure, and diversified rotations that include perennial crops.

The Cornell lab handles about 2,000 samples a year and is expanding in use.

For more information, see www.sare.org/projects, and search for project numbers LNE03-175, LNE-6-235 and ENE09-110.

SARE in New York

www.nesare.org/new-york

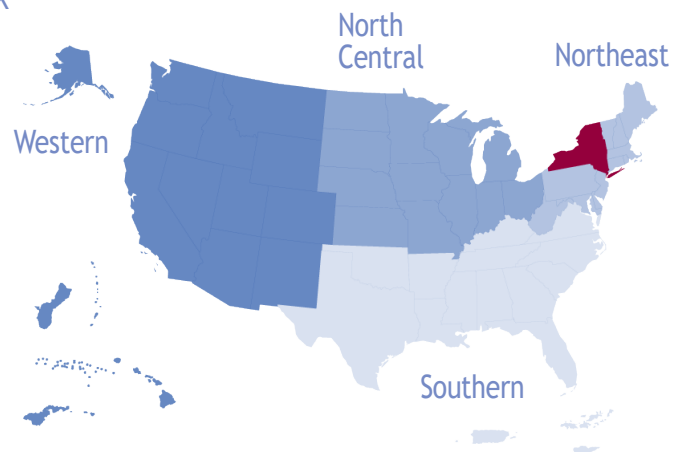
\$17.2 million in total funding

514 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

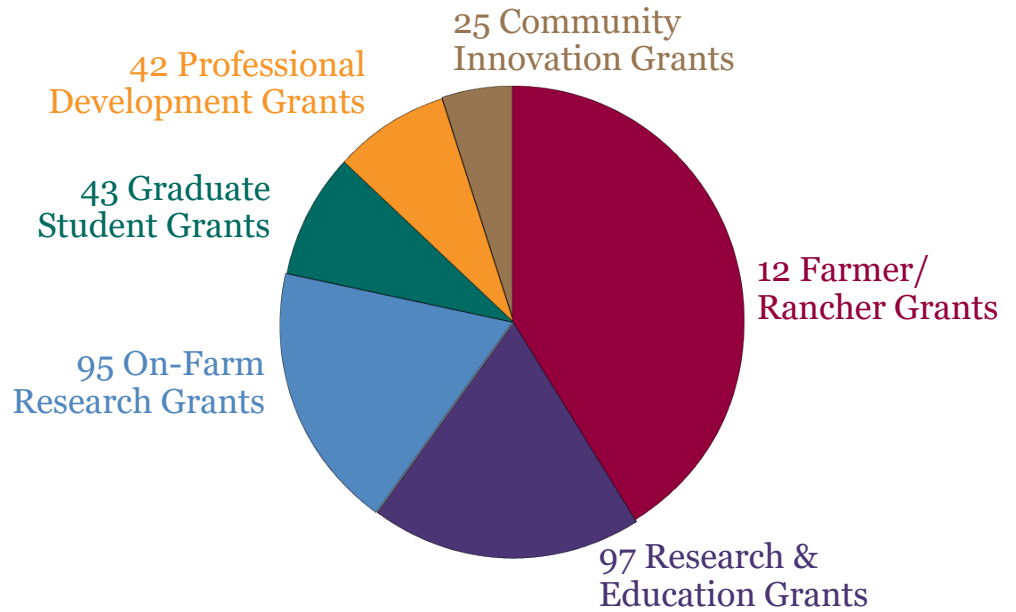
SARE shares project results by requiring grantees to conduct outreach and grower engagement; and by maintaining the SARE Learning Center—a library of practical publications, grantee-produced information products and other educational materials.



www.sare.org

SARE Grants in New York

SARE has awarded a total of **514 grants** in New York 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/new-york to learn more.

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For detailed information on SARE projects, go to

www.SARE.org