Whenever a new pest enters the scene, farmers must quickly learn how to deal with it if they are to remain profitable. Two SARE-funded projects are helping Connecticut farmers cope with this very situation in the case of a serious outbreak of Downy mildew of basil, a new disease to the eastern United States.

Typically, organic farmers depend on cultural practices to reduce disease problems, with control products complementing these practices. In the case of Downy mildew, Connecticut farmers could find no solutions due to the lack of published research on the efficacy of available control products. So Extension agent Joan Allen looked at disease-control products on two species of basil in one SARE-funded project, and then in a second project focused on the most promising contenders. Because of her work, basil growers now have access to possible solutions.

The results from Allen’s first project provided basil farmers information about two products, narrowed down from an original five. Farmers started using the better performers, MilStop and Oxidate. Allen also looked at the effect of nitrogen fertilization rate alone and in combination with the fungicides on the severity of the disease. Close to 500 farmers and gardeners learned of possible new practices through presentations.

For more information on these projects, see www.sare.org/projects, and search for project numbers ONE11-132 and ONE12-152.
SARE has awarded a total of 74 grants in Connecticut since 1988.

- 31 Farmer/Rancher Grants
- 18 Research & Education Grants
- 6 Community Innovation Grants
- 8 On-Farm Research Grants
- 8 Graduate Student Grants
- 3 Professional Development Grants
- 8 Graduate Student Grants

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

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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/connecticut to learn more.

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