Red clover seed is produced commercially in western Oregon and Washington, and one of its major pests is the clover root borer. The clover root borer develops underground in the roots of red clover and controlling it has proven to be very difficult. Growers once used toxic organochlorine insecticides to battle the borer, but they have been banned from use. Since then, growers have seen a return of the root borer and typically manage it by rotating fields every two years.

With SARE funding, Oregon State University graduate student Anis Lestari studied whether insect pathogens, in particular naturally occurring fungi, have potential as biocontrol agents for controlling the root borer. Lestari collected clover root borers from four local Willamette Valley farms and isolated and identified pathogens associated with adults and larvae. She compared their virulence against the pest with commercially available microbial products and found that entomopathogenic fungi (a fungus that can act as a parasite) have the potential for use as a biological control of the clover root borer in western Oregon red clover fields.

More research and validation are needed before official recommendations can be made, but Lestari’s promising results show that a sustainable method for controlling the clover root borer is possible.

For more information on this project, see www.sare.org/projects, and search for project number GW15-018.
SARE Grants in Oregon

SARE has awarded a total of 163 grants in Oregon since 1988.

- 63 Farmer/Rancher Grants
- 44 Research & Education Grants
- 24 Professional Development Grants
- 13 Graduate Student Grants
- 18 On-Farm Research Grants
- 1 Research to Grass Roots 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/oregon to learn more.

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