For 10 years, the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (ASAP) worked to evaluate the impacts of local food systems on farm profitability and viability, production practices, distribution networks and the health of local communities. Their belief is that when the distance between consumer and producer decreases, transparency increases and drives changes in the way food is produced. Their decades-long work, however, led to unanswered questions, such as how are consumer values and behaviors impacting the characteristics of the local food system? What are the unintended consequences of localizing food production and consumption?

To find answers, ASAP has received three SARE grants since 2011 to examine the impacts of food system localization on local economies, farm profitability, production practices and health. In their first project they analyzed data and developed a working theoretical framework to understand how and why local food systems can be a means of creating positive food system change. Their two additional projects are 1) studying the impact of farmers’ market experiences on participants and their role in building a base of local food and farm supporters, and 2) quantifying the larger economic impact of farmers’ markets and looking more closely at their relationship to larger local food system dynamics.

For more information on these projects, see www.sare.org/projects, and search for project numbers LS11-239, LS14-260 and LS17-285.
SARE Grants in North Carolina

SARE has awarded a total of **213 grants** in North Carolina since 1988.

- 55 Farmer/Rancher Grants
- 63 Research & Education Grants
- 12 On-Farm Research Grants
- 38 Graduate Student Grants
- 17 Community Innovation Grants
- 28 Professional Development Grants
- 17 Community Innovation 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.southernsare.org/northcarolina](http://www.southernsare.org/northcarolina) to learn more.

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**USDA SARE**

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For detailed information on SARE projects, go to [www.SARE.org](http://www.SARE.org).