

Administrative Council Handbook

- Process
- Roles
- Responsibilities

www.southernsare.org

Updated November 2020

Welcome

Welcome to the Southern Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Administrative Council. With your involvement in the SARE program, you are playing an important role in the process, goals, operations and implementation of SARE in furthering sustainable agriculture production and marketing efforts across the Southern region.

Your contributions to SARE have an impact on your agricultural community. Whether you are a farmer/rancher, researcher, extension agent, community leader, agribusiness, government entity or a nonprofit, your participation on the Administrative Council means that the most sustainable farming approaches put forth through SARE-funded research are focused on long-term profitability, environmental stewardship and quality of life for individuals and communities.

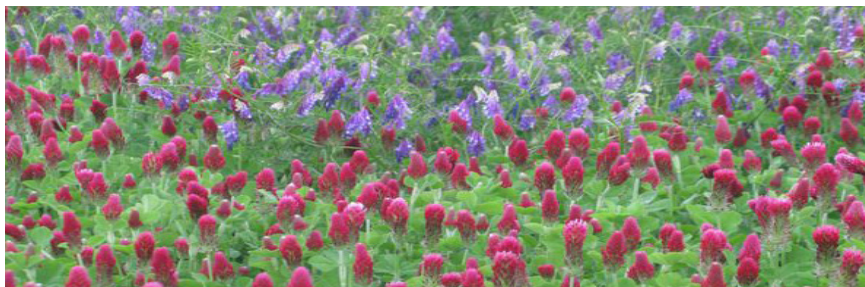
The most obvious reward for people who join the SARE leadership is the satisfaction of having a say in how our agricultural tax dollars are spent; it must be added, a little immodestly, that even though SARE is a small program, it has consistently had an impact out of proportion to its budget. This is because the emphasis is on applied agriculture research and education projects with measurable results that translate quickly into practical support for farmers and on projects that test new ideas.

Another reward comes from the program structure itself. The SARE mandate requires that people with many different skills and backgrounds: Farmers, conservationists, lenders, university faculty, extension, people from the nonprofit sector, and a surprising range of others converge around the SARE mission and have interesting, at times urgent, conversations about the funding opportunities on the table. These discussions tend to be productive because they are project-driven and specific, and a great deal of knowledge is exchanged.

One final aspect of SARE is its ability to place a high value on innovation, which translates into proposals and projects that are intrinsically interesting. This means that, even if a project does not turn out as planned, it still retains its value. Participating in the selection process and following up on the results often brings with it new insight into barriers and opportunities.

This handbook is designed to provide a snapshot of the SARE program: How it works, grant programs, leadership structure, and your role and expectations as an Administrative Council member.

SARE was formed in the style of a grass-roots operation; the success of the program leans on knowledge and contributions of a cross-section of agricultural stakeholders. No matter your station, you serve the interests of your institutions, businesses and communities. Through your involvement in SARE, you are ensuring continuing efforts of sustainable agriculture across the region. You have a voice.



What is SARE?

Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education (SARE) is a U.S. Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) grants and outreach program. The goal of SARE is to support farmers/ranchers, researchers, educators and community organizations as they explore and implement sustainable agriculture production and marketing practices. There is a national SARE office that coordinates overall direction, but program grants and services are delivered through four regional offices: South, West, North Central and Northeast.

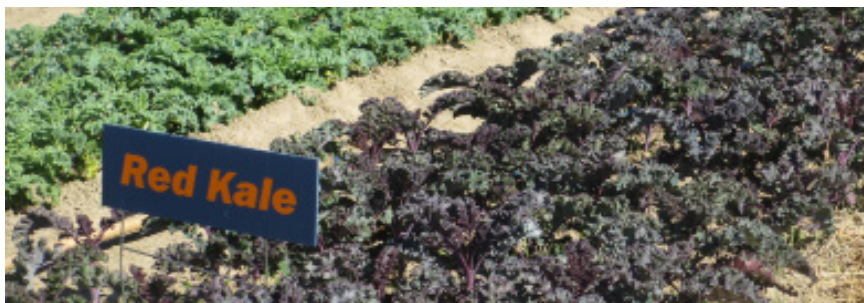
The overall objective of SARE is to position agricultural communities so the most sustainable approaches available permeate U.S. agriculture. The result is food, fiber and animal products are sustainably produced in healthy communities in an environment where farmers are respected, rewarded, and encouraged to innovate. We also seek partnerships with universities, NGOs, government agencies and other community organizations so sustainable agriculture becomes the focus of their message.

SARE was authorized as part of the 1985 Farm Bill and first funded in 1988 as the Low-Input Sustainable Agriculture (LISA) program. The name changed to SARE in the early 1990s to reflect the broader principles of sustainable agriculture and to express the dual mission of research and education.

Competitive research grants, offered annually, are the primary tools of the SARE program. SARE seeks out innovations in sustainable agriculture, and rewards grant applicants who offer interesting and potentially workable ideas. SARE also emphasizes outreach and the dissemination of project results so the grant programs will have the widest possible benefits. SARE funds are subject to Congressional approval. In 1988,

Southern SARE shared a very small portion of the \$3.9 million that Congress appropriated for the entire SARE program. Twelve grants were awarded in that inaugural year. Today, Southern SARE has allocated more than \$8 million to administer its grants programs from the \$37.5 million Congressional appropriations for the entire SARE program. In its 30 plus year history, the regional program has awarded 1,301 grants totaling over \$73 million.

The national SARE office has representation on the regional governing bodies, known as the Administrative Councils. In turn, the regional Administrative Councils send representatives to the national governing body, known as the Operations Committee. Each region also sends a representative to the annual SARE Outreach Steering Committee meeting to discuss publishing and outreach priorities.



SARE in the Southern Region

SARE is divided into four regions, with the Southern SARE program operating under the cooperative agreements of University of Georgia, Fort Valley State University (Georgia) and the Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture (Oklahoma). Southern SARE supports sustainable agriculture efforts in 13 states and two U.S. territories. The states include: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Grant Programs

Southern SARE funds several different competitive research grant programs, with each type benefiting a specific audience. These grants can be divided into two broad categories.

Southern SARE's flagship grant program, Research & Education, and its Professional Development Program Grant, make up what are known as the "big grants", because of the size of the funding available.

Research & Education Grants (R&E) focus on both research projects and education activities. Research Grants may be funded for up to three years and have budgets up to \$400,000 that accommodate system-scale projects. These grants are specifically targeted to university and government agency researchers, although nonprofits and agribusinesses are also invited to apply. Nonprofits are particularly encouraged to apply for Education Grants, since their focus is more on outreach activities rather than research. Education Grants have a maximum funding level of \$50,000 for up to a two-year project.

The **Professional Development Program Grant (PDP)**, known as the "train-the-trainer" grant program, also accommodates larger scale training activities. Funded projects generally fall within the \$80,000 range. PDP grants are open to researchers, nonprofits,

community organizations, agribusinesses and other professionals in the ag industry.

Both grant programs have a two-step application process that involves screening pre-proposals before submission of full proposals. The funding selection process is guided by specific, outcome-driven criteria.

Smaller grant programs are also available: Producer Grants, On-Farm Research Grants, and Graduate Student Grants.

Producer Grants are specifically targeted to farmers, ranchers and farmer groups who are interested in conducting research in sustainable agriculture on their farms. Producer Grants are funded for two years, with \$15,000 available for individual farmers and \$20,000 available for farmer groups.

On-Farm Research Grants are similar to Producer Grants in scope but they are intended for researchers, government agencies, and Extension educators who work directly with farmers on research projects. On-Farm Research Grants are funded for two years, with \$20,000 available in funding.

Graduate Student Grants are targeted to Master's and PhD students, with \$16,500 in funding available for two-year projects.

These smaller grants have no pre-proposal requirements, nor are applicants asked to demonstrate specific outcomes in an intensive way.

Proposals submitted for any grant project must be relevant to sustainable agriculture and align with Southern SARE's vision, mission, and program objectives.

Southern SARE's **vision** is an enduring American agriculture of the highest quality. This agriculture is profitable, protects the nation's land and water, and is a force for a rewarding way of life for farmers and ranchers whose quality products and operations sustain their communities and society.

Southern SARE's **mission** is to advance—to the whole of American agriculture—innovations that improve profitability, stewardship and quality of life by investing in groundbreaking research and education.

Program objectives include:

- Strengthen the family farm system, regardless of size, to position farmers and ranchers and their future generations for long-term profitability and stability.
- Promote effective stewardship of the nation's natural resources by providing site-specific, replicable, and profitable sustainable farming and ranching methods that strengthen agricultural competitiveness; satisfy human food and fiber needs; maintain and enhance the quality and productivity of the soil; conserve and protect wildlife habitats; and improve the quality of surface and groundwater.
- Improve quality of life through efforts that strengthen rural communities and further urban agricultural endeavors by fostering partnerships, long-term economic stability, new technological innovations and business enhancement and advancements.
- Protect the environment through conservation strategies that advocate resilient agriculture, as well as stimulate development of climate and weather-related risk management strategies through innovative, ecologically sound, mitigative, holistic, and sustainable methods for short-term and long-term farmer profitability.
- Address the needs and promote the successes of all farm audiences, including limited-resource, minority, young and beginning farmers, and women farmers while advancing agricultural sustainability.
- Promote long-term, whole systems approaches to farming strategies that support crop, livestock and enterprise diversification, and the well-being of animals.

Southern SARE Leadership Structure

Southern SARE has a leadership structure intended to encourage each member to contribute fully, while at the same time allow tasks to be distributed as appropriately as possible. Southern SARE's organization consists of the Administrative Council, Technical Reviewers, State Coordinators, and regional staff.

The Administrative Council

The Administrative Council, often referred to as the AC, is the regional governing body for SSARE. The AC drives the funding of grant projects, oversees the general budget, guides programming, and makes sure that the regional program stays on point with its mission, vision, and objectives related to sustainable agriculture production and marketing efforts. The AC meets twice a year: winter (February) and summer (August).

The Southern SARE AC is a cross-section of ag professionals across the region, composed of 23 members, appointed by partner agencies or selected through an open nomination process.

Members include:

- 1862/1890 research and extension land-grant institutions;
- State Departments of Agriculture;
- USDA Agricultural Research Service;
- USDA National Agroforestry Center/Forestry Service;
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service;
- Environmental Protection Agency;
- U.S. Geological Survey;
- Producers;
- Non-governmental organizations;
- Agribusiness;
- Quality of Life; and
- The National SARE office

Southern SARE pays travel, lodging, and meal expenses for AC members as they discharge their duties. Producer and NGO representatives are allowed **\$250 per day** plus expenses when attending AC meetings or participating in the program at a PDP workshop or other SARE meetings.

Introduction to Subcommittees

The Southern SARE AC conducts its business through a structure of committees. All AC agenda items originate with one of the six current standing committees: Operations/Nominating, Project Review, Producer Grant, Professional Development Program, Equity and Prosperity, and Communications.

Operations/Nominating Committee

The role of the Operations/Nominating Committee is to develop and recommend budgets and policies for the AC. The committee recommends a list of candidates to serve as officers of the AC. The committee also solicits and recommends new members of the AC as vacancies occur. Membership on this committee is on a volunteer basis.

Usual business to be conducted:

1. The committee considers each year's budget to be submitted as part of the USDA Cooperative Agreement.
2. The committee reviews and recommends revisions to the By-Laws of the AC, including changes in the Conflict of Interest Policy.
3. The committee monitors memberships and recommends to the AC committee chairs based upon the vote within each committee.
4. The committee reviews and recommends changes to the National SARE Operations Guidelines.
5. The committee solicits new members for the AC and for the Technical Review Committee.



Project Review Committee

The task of the Project Review Committee (PRC) is to establish goals and criteria for the evaluation of proposals and the funding of projects. The PRC is constituted to reflect the composition of the AC. As outlined in *How It Works*, the Project Review Committee has the following responsibilities:

Usual business to be conducted:

1. Review, change, and recommend to the AC the yearly Calls for Proposals for the Research and Education and Graduate Student Grants. If the Calls are revised after an AC meeting, the (PRC) makes its recommendation to the Executive Committee (EC).
2. The PRC first reviews all pre-proposals submitted under the R&E grants program. The members recommend approximately one-third of the pre-proposals to be submitted as full proposals.
3. The full proposals are then sent to the Technical Review Committee (TRC) for scientific review. After the outside TRC has provided the PRC with its review of the full proposals, the PRC recommends to the full AC those projects to be funded from the entire list of proposals.
4. The PRC is responsible for providing project investigators a constructive and explicit review of their proposal. The PRC is also responsible for the Graduate Student awards and recommends to the AC those to be funded based on input from the Graduate Student Grant Technical Advisory Committee.

In addition to the yearly selection of grants, the PRC also performs related jobs:

1. Review and recommend to the AC any new grant programs to be added to the Southern SARE portfolio.
2. Consider new methods to evaluate projects and report assessments.
3. Set the grant-cycle calendar each year.
4. Recommend changes and updates to *How It Works*.
5. Assist in solicitation of TRC members.

Producer Grant Committee

The Producer Grant Committee's (PGC) task is to establish goals and criteria for the evaluation of proposals and the review of Producer Grants. In addition, the PGC is also responsible for the On-Farm Grants program. Membership on the PGC includes the seven farmer members of the AC. As outlined in *How It Works*, the PGC has the following responsibilities:

Usual business to be conducted:

1. Review, change and recommend to the AC the yearly Call for Proposals for both the Producer and On-Farm Research grant programs.
2. The PGC conducts the technical reviews of the Producer Grant proposals. An outside TRC reviews the On-Farm Research Grant proposals. The PGC then meets in person to consider the grant proposals of both grant programs. The committee presents its slate of funding recommendations to the full AC.

In addition, the PGC is responsible for all activities, new grants programs, and issues related directly to farmer participation in the Southern SARE program.

Professional Development Program Committee

The work of the Professional Development Program (PDP) Committee is to establish goals and criteria for the evaluation of proposals, the review of PDP projects, and to make recommendations to the AC regarding grant funding. Membership on this committee includes two AC members, the Extension director, and Extension administrator on the AC.

In addition to having the responsibility of reviewing and recommending PDP grants for funding, the PDP Committee is also charged with the following:

1. Produce the yearly PDP Call for Proposals.
2. Oversee and strengthen the State Coordinators program, as well as review and approve the Model State Programs/State Plans of Work.
3. Advise PDP staff on where grant writing workshops are needed.
4. Develop any special Calls for Proposals as needed.

Equity and Prosperity Committee

The purpose of the Equity and Prosperity Committee (EPC) is to establish goals and programs to support historically underserved farmers/ranchers and the ag organizations that serve them. Membership is on a volunteer basis.

In pursuing its goals, EPC has conducted workshops addressing the needs of historically underserved farmers in the South and supported workshops and conferences organized by other groups through scholarships for minority farmers.

EPC has also discussed ways to increase participation by underserved

farmers/ranchers in the SARE Producer Grant program and in national conferences.

The committee also recommends to the AC ways to increase the participation of 1890 land-grant institutions in the Southern SARE program, as well as of the involvement of NGOs' work with historically underserved farmers and ranchers.

Communications Committee

This committee facilitates the communication of SARE projects and outreach success stories to promote sustainable agriculture and SARE in the Southern region. It is also a link to other regions and the national office to inform the dialogue about sustainable issues. Membership is on a volunteer basis.

Usual business to be conducted:

1. Represent AC on SARE Outreach Steering Committee. Each region appoints a representative to sit on the steering committee. The Southern SARE Outreach representative is to report to the Communications Committee on any issues related to SARE Outreach and other national communication issues. He/she also reports from SARE Outreach to the AC.
2. Prepare information and/or handbooks. The Communications Committee will consider types of resources or handbooks that need to be produced by Southern SARE. For example, consider when to update, reprint, or discontinue any materials.
3. Examine new communications techniques. The committee will evaluate new methods for communication and whether to change or discontinue current techniques.
4. Assist in issues related to the publication of annual reports and final reports.
5. Produce any new brochures and communication media, including web-based material.
6. Consider ways to best market and communicate issues relating to all annual Calls for Proposals.
7. Establish and conduct public workshops, as needed, for grant preparation.

Every AC member serves on one of the three review committees (Project Review, PDP, Producer Grant), as well as one of the other committees. Each committee elects its own chair.

At each AC meeting, the committees meet prior to the full AC convening to discuss their agendas. For each agenda item to be discussed, the committee chair is required to submit an “agenda brief” to be sent to the committee members before the AC meeting. The agenda brief provides information on the issues to be discussed. These can include an information-only item or a request for a motion to bring an item to the AC where a vote will be taken by the full AC. Any items passed by the AC are carried out accordingly.

In addition, the AC has authorized an **Executive Committee** made up of the AC Chair and Vice Chair, as well as the chairs of each committee. The Executive Committee, or EC, meets monthly by conference call to discuss on-going Southern SARE business. If AC decisions are required between the two meeting dates, the Executive Committee is authorized to make those decisions. The Executive Committee is primarily the place where new issues facing the AC are first discussed prior to the full AC meetings.

Technical Reviewers

Technical Reviewers are researchers, farmers, Cooperative Extension, NRCS personnel, nonprofit representatives, and a wide variety of other agricultural professionals. Technical Reviewers are recruited to review grant proposals based on their area of expertise. They offer skill and support to the grant reviewing process through the reviewing and scoring of grant proposals via the online SARE Grant Management System.

Becoming a grant reviewer is voluntary, but there are several reasons supporters of sustainable agriculture should consider investing in reviewing proposals.

- New to SARE? Being a grant reviewer affords those interested in the SARE program the opportunity to learn how the program is structured and how the grant process works. This experience helps new grant applicants more easily navigate through the grant application process.

- An old hat with SARE? Researchers, Extension specialists and other professionals in the ag industry who are veteran grant awardees of the SARE program are strongly encouraged to review SARE proposals. Past grant recipients, particularly those who have received numerous SARE grants, are knowledgeable about the SARE granting process and have the expertise and experience to give back to the program. No one understands the importance of SARE funding better than our own project investigators.
- Young researchers, fresh to the world of academia, are encouraged to review SARE grant proposals. The small size of the SARE program, coupled with the ease of our grant application process, easily introduces young, new researchers to the world of grants and the funding process, whether it'd be SARE grants or grants from another federal agency.
- Being a SARE grant reviewer introduces researchers, Extension specialists, and others in the ag industry to sustainable agriculture and expands their portfolio of knowledge through the myriad of projects that SARE supports. In turn, a range of disciplines from technical reviewers is important to providing strong, applicable feedback for those applying for SARE grants.

Once the proposal deadline of a particular SARE grant passes, outside technical reviewers are solicited, generally via e-mail, to review grant proposals. This is done on an annual basis. Depending on the type of grant being reviewed, technical reviewers rank the proposals as either high priority, fundable with revisions, marginal funding, or nonfundable, or via a weighted system with a maximum score of 100. The higher the score, the more fundable the project. They also write review summaries for each proposal.

Once the reviews are completed, they are handed down to the appropriate review committee on the Southern SARE Administrative Council, which reviews the rankings and comments and selects proposals to be recommended for funding. The Administrative Council ultimately votes on the slate of proposals put forward by the review committees and approves proposals to be funded. Although the Administrative Council makes the final funding decisions, its decisions are informed by the initial work of the technical reviewers.

AC members are expected to read, comment on, and score a portion of the grant applications each year, and to also attend the two yearly meetings to make grant award decisions and conduct other business. AC members receive \$250 at each AC meeting to cover time spent reviewing proposals during the year.

Grant review for the Research & Education Grants begins in June with pre-proposals. The AC assumes responsibility for screening these pre-proposals. The top submissions are invited to submit full proposals after the August AC meeting. Full proposals are due in November and are evaluated by both AC PRC members and Technical Review Committee members. Based on the reviewers' rankings and remarks, the AC Project Review Committee recommends a slate of Research and Education proposals to the full AC for funding.

The AC also screens pre-proposals for the Professional Development Program grant, which begins in August. The top submissions are invited to submit full proposals in October. Full proposals are due in November and are evaluated by both the AC PDP members and Technical Review Committee members. Based on the reviewers' rankings and remarks, the PDP Committee recommends a slate of proposals to the full AC for funding at the February AC meeting.

The smaller grant programs (Graduate Student Grants and On-Farm Research Grants), which do not have pre-proposals, are reviewed at staggered times throughout the year by outside Technical Reviewers. Producer Grants are not reviewed by outside technical reviewers; those are reviewed by the AC Producer Grant Committee members. The AC Producer Grant Committee reads and scores the Producer Grant proposals, then meets by conference call to discuss them. The results of the On-Farm Research Grant technical reviews are discussed

by the AC Producer Grant Committee at the AC meeting. Based on the reviewers' rankings and remarks, the Producer Grant Committee recommends a slate of proposals to the full AC for funding during either the February or August meetings.

State Coordinators

Within each state, agricultural educators work directly with farmers and ranchers to further sustainable agriculture production and marketing practices. Through a program called the Professional Development Program (PDP), SARE state coordinators provide support for sustainable agriculture education and outreach strategies. Begun in 1994, PDP supports Cooperative Extension, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) staff, mentor farmers, and other agricultural educators.

Each land grant institution in the region names a representative to serve as the State Sustainable Ag Coordinator: one from the 1862 land-grant institution and one from the 1890 land-grant institution. The role of the state coordinators is critical, since they are responsible for the integration of the concepts of sustainable agriculture into daily outreach and extension practices at the local level. SARE offers an annual appropriation to each land-grant for developing sustainable agriculture curricula for their extension staff. SARE state ag coordinators oversee the professional development plan within their state and the SARE money that is attached to it.

In working toward this broad goal, day-to-day activities would likely include these main areas:

- Training program development and delivery appropriate for both new and current personnel. SARE State Coordinators should make use of SARE grantees, particularly producer cooperators, and partner with NGOs and farmer organizations for activities such as farm tours and field days. Training topics are open to anything that will help farmers transition to a more sustainable agriculture. They can include technical assistance in

areas such as water quality, nutrient management, whole-farm systems, marketing or understanding farm policy.

- Promotion, networking and coordination of SARE grant opportunities, training activities, and educational materials. These could be provided by SARE Outreach, Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (AT-TRA), the Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group (SSAWG) and other NGOs. SARE State Coordinators will get input from field staff and other educators about their sustainable agriculture training needs and share program opportunities.
- Communication, reporting and evaluation. SARE PDP strives for a minimum of paperwork but annual reports are due to the regional PDP office to document training efforts in each state.

State ag coordinators normally attend a regional meeting in conjunction with the August AC meeting and educational tour. This tour is normally planned by the state coordinator or AC member where the meeting is held. The goal of the tour is to highlight successful farm practices, educate both the AC and the state coordinators, and open up new avenues of discussion.

Regional Staff

The staff in the regional office provides support by managing meeting logistics, travel, mailings, conference calls, and general communications, and by supporting the work of committees and subcommittees. Other staff functions include report and project monitoring, contracts, outreach, publications, coordination with the national office, record keeping, and administrative support.



The staff at University of Georgia, Griffin campus currently includes the program director, assistant director, an associate accountant, a communications specialist, a grants coordinator and administrative associates. A minority and limited-resource outreach staff specialist is located at Fort Valley State University. Staff for the Professional Development Program is based at the Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture in Oklahoma.

Jeff Jordan: Program Director
jjordan@uga.edu

Jeff Jordan is the director of Southern SARE and is also a professor in the Department of Agriculture and Applied Economics at the University of Georgia's Griffin campus. As the SSARE director, Jeff oversees the entire program, but is especially involved in coordinating the Research and Education Grants. He develops the budgets for the overall program, represents the Southern region at the national level and coordinates the activities of the Administrative Council and the SSARE staff.

David Redhage: PDP Manager
dredhage@kerrcenter.com

David Redhage, the agricultural economist for the Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture in Oklahoma, is the program coordinator for the Professional Development Program. David oversees the state ag coordinators and their model state programs in the implementation of sustainable agriculture efforts within each Southern SARE state.

Candace Pollock-Moore: Assistant Director
cpollock@uga.edu

As Assistant Director, Candace Pollock-Moore manages the Producer, On-Farm Research and Graduate Student Grant programs. In addition, she maintains the projects database, approves annual and final reports of grant projects, and works with grantees on the progress of their grant project. She also assists the program director and regional staff where appropriate.

**Brennan Washington: Limited-Resource/Minority Farmer
Outreach Specialist**
washingtonb@fvsu.edu

Brennan Washington works in close liaison with limited-resource/minority outreach farmers and organizations, including NGOs, community groups, and cooperatives across the Southern region, as well as 1890 land-grant institutions in promoting SSARE grants programs, providing sustainable ag educational resources, enhancing quality grant recipients, networking with regional partners, and building new relationships. Brennan travels extensively across the Southern region working with producers, NGOs, and community groups regarding sustainable agriculture.

Sandra Blackwell, Grants Coordinator
youngjs@uga.edu

Sandra Blackwell provides a variety of grant coordinator support functions, including but not limited to: Preparing and submitting annual Cooperative Agreements to the USDA for budgeting for approved projects; working on the SARE Professional Development Program; overseeing the on-line proposal system for five grant programs; answering inquiries from various applicants; and tracking each proposal, ensuring they follow UGA and USDA requirements from the time they are awarded until all budget requirements are met and the subcontract has been signed and received.

Ian Bennett, Communications Specialist
ian.bennett25@uga.edu

Ian Bennett promotes the SSARE program through the development of press releases on funded project results and regional publications, and by traveling to conferences, workshops, field days and other events as a SARE representative. The Communications Specialist also maintains the SSARE website, develops social media strategies, and produces video resources. The Communications Specialist also works with regional and national staff on educational and outreach efforts.

Jami Sealey, Associate Accountant
jsealey@uga.edu

Jami Sealey provides accounting support for the management of the program with project investigators, accountants in the various universities, and the Kerr Center. She is responsible for the daily accounting operations of the award management for the SSARE budgets.

Amanda Hollar, Administrative Associate I
ahollar@uga.edu

Amanda Hollar serves as Southern SARE's accounting technician. She manages forms, processes SSARE travel, processes sponsorship and ex-

hibitor invoices, and handles office mailings and purchase orders. She supports the Associate Accountant where needed.

Isaac Freeman, Administrative Associate
gregory.freeman@uga.edu

Isaac Freeman provides a variety of administrative support functions, including but not limited to: Coordinating all accommodations for Administrative Council meetings and Technical Review Committee meetings; preparing data and charts for Analysis of Activity Logs annually for the February Administrative Council meetings; scheduling and attending monthly zoom meetings/conference calls of the AC Executive Committee; and providing support for the AC. This position also assists the SSARE Director, Assistant Director, and staff as needed in times of overload or critical deadlines.

Shelley Shipman, PDP Program Assistant
sbennett@kerrcenter.com

Shelley Shipman serves as the SARE Professional Development Program (PDP) program assistant, based at the Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture in Poteau, OK.



AC Member Transition

Administrative Council members serve a three-year term. A member may be reappointed to one additional three-year term and can serve a third, three-year term in a Leadership position (AC Chair, Vice-Chair, or Standing AC Sub-Committee Chair) after a vote of the Administrative Council.

When the reappointment for a second term or third term for Leadership position comes due, the Operations/Nominating Committee of the AC reviews the recommendation for renewal and presents to the full AC for a vote. The full AC then votes on the renewal.

If a member of the Administrative Council is unable to complete his or her term of appointment, or misses two consecutive meetings (or three meetings in two years), the member's seat shall be determined to be open and a new member will be appointed.

New AC Members

When a member's service on the AC comes to an end and he/she rotates off the Administrative Council, the following member transition process takes place:

1. AC members at the February (winter) AC meeting review the membership rotation list and release the call for AC nominations to fill vacant seats.
2. AC nominations are solicited via press release, the SSARE website, the monthly e-newsletter Common Ground, social media, staff and AC members, state ag coordinators and grantee list serves. Nominees are asked to submit their information via an online application form by a specific due date.
3. The nomination applications are collected and submitted as an agenda item on the Operations/Nominating Com-

mittee at the summer AC meeting.

4. The Operations/Nominating Committee of the AC reviews applications and recommends new members to the full AC at the summer AC meeting. The full AC then votes in the new members.
5. New members are contacted via email of their selection to serve on the AC. Each new member receives a SARE Welcome Packet (includes SARE resource materials and AC Handbook).
6. New members join the AC after the summer meeting to be involved in the grant review process where voting will take place the following February (winter) meeting. However, the new member's official first three-year term begins at the next February (winter) AC meeting.
7. From the summer meeting to the following February (winter meeting), new members are mentored by the members rotating off the AC.
8. New members take part fully as voting members at the February (winter) AC meeting.
9. Exiting members will be invited to attend the February (winter) AC meeting as mentors, but will not have voting rights.

Mentoring New Members

Incoming members are introduced to the SSARE program in the following ways:

- Between the summer and February (winter) AC meeting, an initial Zoom meeting is conducted with new members, the SSARE Director, and the current AC Chair (with support from SSARE staff) for introductions. Discussions include:
 - o Overview of SSARE and its grants;
 - o Overview of the AC member duties, responsibilities, and expectations (taken from the AC Handbook).

- o Process for reviewing SARE grants based on the seat being filled.
- o Overview of a typical AC meeting.
- Training of the SARE Grant Management System (with support from SSARE staff).
- Members rotating off the Administrative Council mentor incoming members to help ease them into the SARE program, the governing process, and grant proposal reviews. Efforts include:
 - o Being a source of contact for new members for questions leading up to the first AC meeting for the new member.
 - o Supporting of new members in the grant review process leading up to the February (winter) meeting.
 - o Supporting of new members at their first AC meeting. After the first full AC meeting, mentoring ends.
- SSARE staff support of new members continues throughout the first year of the new member's AC term.

New Subcommittee Chairs

New sub-committee chairs appointed at the summer AC meeting will assume their role on the Executive Committee (EC) immediately following the summer meeting. Exiting sub-committee chairs are encouraged to participate in EC calls as mentors, but will not have voting rights.

Program Evaluation of Outgoing AC Members

Members rotating off the AC are asked to evaluate their time with the SARE program. Program evaluations are used internally and are designed to capture the experiences of serving on the Administrative Council, collect suggestions and recommendations for improvement, and evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the Administrative Council.

Program evaluations are conducted at the last AC meeting the member is attending to fulfill his/her term, or immediately following the AC meeting via email if the member is not present.

Program Evaluation questions include:

1. What are your overall impressions of the SARE program in fulfilling its mission and vision as a grants organization and in providing resources to its intended audiences?
2. Provide a few comments regarding your experiences serving on the AC.
3. What recommendations/suggestions (if any) would you provide to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Administrative Council's governing process?
4. If you wish to stay involved with SARE, in what ways would you like to participate? How can the regional office support your efforts?

To help widen the recruitment pool of incoming members, outgoing AC members are asked to provide one potential nomination from colleagues or stakeholders, or from their organization, institution or community.

Past AC Member Involvement

SSARE strives to keep past AC members involved in SARE. Such individuals can participate in SARE in the following ways:

- They may volunteer to serve as technical reviewers on grant proposals.
- They may provide grant reviewer recommendations.
- Through invitation, they may attend the summer farm tour of the AC meeting if it is hosted in their locale.
- Keep past AC members on SSARE mailing list/obtain new resource materials and publications for use in their community.

By-Laws

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this organization shall be “Southern Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Administrative Council.”

The organization shall also be known as “Southern Region SARE Administrative Council.”

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

The purpose of the Administrative Council is to promote, encourage and assist in the development of sustainable agriculture in the Southern Region by fulfilling the responsibilities outlined in Title XVI, Subtitle A, Sec. 1621. Sustainable agriculture, as defined by Title XVI, Subtitle A, Sec. 1603, is “ an integrated system of plant and animal production practices having a site-specific application that will, over the long term: satisfy human food and fiber needs; enhance environmental quality and the natural resource base upon which the agriculture economy depends; make the most use of nonrenewable resources and on-farm resources, and integrate, where appropriate, natural biological cycles and controls; sustain the economic viability of farm/ranch operations; and enhance the quality of life for farmers/ranchers, and society as a whole.”

ARTICLE III - RESPONSIBILITIES

Specific responsibilities of the Administrative Council are:

1. Appoint a Host Institution and Coordinator, subject to the approval of the USDA;
2. Appoint a Professional Development Program management team, subject to the approval of the USDA;
3. Make recommendations to the USDA concerning research and education projects, PDP projects, producer projects, graduate student awards, and all other grant programs that merit funding;
4. Promote Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Programs in the Southern Region;

5. Establish goals and criteria for the selection of projects within the Southern Region;
6. Establish a Technical Advisory review system for the evaluation of proposals for projects to be considered for funding.
7. Review and act upon the recommendations of the Technical Reviewer's and coordination of its activities with the Host Institution, review and act upon the recommendation of the PDP Committee and coordination of its activities with the Management Team; and
8. Prepare and make available an annual report concerning Southern Region activities in sustainable agriculture.

The Host Institution and Coordinator are responsible for the management of the SARE Program, on behalf of the Administrative Council, and in conjunction with the USDA. The attached organization chart provides the conceptual framework of the Southern Region SARE Program.

ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP

The Administrative Council membership and appointing authority shall be the following:

-- Seven (7) farmers/ranchers using systems and practices of sustainable agriculture. Appointments should include farmers/ranchers representing Best Utilization of Biological Applications and representing Integrated Management Systems. Members shall be elected by the Council.

-- Three (3) nonprofit organizations with demonstrable expertise in sustainable agriculture. Appointments should include organizations representing Best Utilization of Biological Applications and organizations representing Integrated Management Systems. Members shall be elected by the Council.

-- One (1) agribusiness person with demonstrable expertise in sustainable agriculture. Member shall be elected by the Council.

-- One (1) member knowledgeable about sustainable agriculture and its impact on the environment and rural communities possessing quality of life expertise. Member shall be elected by the Council.

-- One member each from the following federal or state agencies. Members are appointed by the following respective agency or agency association:

- USDA Agricultural Research Service
- USDA National Institute for Food and Agriculture
- US Environmental Protection Agency
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- State Agency representing sustainable agriculture
- State Agricultural Experiment Stations-1862 Institutions
- State Agricultural Experiment Stations-1890 Institutions
- State Cooperative Extension Services-1862 Institutions
- State Cooperative Extension Services-1890 Institutions
- U.S. Geological Survey
- National Agroforestry Center/USDA Forest Service

Total membership of the Administrative Council shall be twenty-three (23). Other members may be appointed as deemed appropriate by the Council.

The Administrative Council shall solicit nominations for vacancies on the Council for which the Council has appointing authority from the appropriate groups, organizations or public which are represented on the Council and shall elect members from those who are nominated.

The Administrative Council shall also notify each federal and state agency appointing authority when a vacancy occurs or term expires and solicit the appointment or reappointment of their respective agency representative on the Council.

If, at the end of a term, a replacement cannot be appointed, the term will be extended one-year to continue the search.

ARTICLE V - TERM OF OFFICE

The Administrative Council member's terms shall be three years. A member may be reappointed to one additional three-year terms.

Leadership of the Administrative Council (Chair, Vice-Chair, Standing Committee Chairs) can serve a third, three-year term after a vote of the Administrative Council. If a member of the Administrative Council

is unable to complete his or her term of appointment, or misses two consecutive meetings (or three meetings in two years), the members seat shall be determined to be open and a new member will be appointed. Members elected by the Council and members appointed by the appropriate federal or state agency shall be selected in the same manner as the original appointment for the unexpired term.

The terms of office shall be established by the Administrative Council on a three year rotational basis. Any member of the Administrative Council can be removed by a two-thirds vote of the Council at any point during a term.

ARTICLE VI - OFFICERS

Section 1. Officers. The officers of the Administrative Council shall be a Chairperson and one Vice-Chairperson. The officers shall be members of the Administrative Council.

Section 2. Election and Term of Office. The officers shall be elected at the summer meeting of the Administrative Council for the following year, to serve for a three-year term and until their successors shall have been elected.

Section 3. Removal and Vacancies. Any officer elected by the Administrative Council may be removed by the Council whenever in its judgment the best interests of the organization would be served thereby. A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification or otherwise, may be filled by the Administrative Council for the unexpired portion of the term.

Section 4. Duties of the Chairperson. The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Administrative Council and also serve as Chair of the Executive Committee. The Chairperson shall have general supervision of the affairs of the Administrative Council and perform all acts and duties usually incident to and required of an executive and presiding officer, as well as such other duties as may be required of the Council. The Chairperson may sign any contracts or other documents the Administrative Council have authorized to be executed, except in cases where the signing and execution thereof shall be expressly delegated by the Council, such as to the host institution, or by these bylaws; and in general shall perform all duties as may be prescribed by the Council from

time to time.

Section 5. Duties of the Vice-Chairperson. In the absence of the Chairperson or in the event of his or her inability or refusal to act, the Vice-Chairperson shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions upon the Chairperson. The Vice-Chairperson shall perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him or her by the Chairperson or the Administrative Council. Upon the expiration of the Chairperson's term, the Vice-Chairperson shall be appointed Chair.

ARTICLE VII - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Administrative Council shall have an Executive Committee composed of the following members:

Chair, Administrative Council
Vice-Chair, Administrative Council
Chair, Communications Committee
Chair, Operations/Nominations Committee
Chair, Project Review Committee
Chair, Limited Resource Farmer/Minority Outreach Committee
Chair, Producer Grant Review Committee
Chair, PDP Committee

These members of the Executive Committee are designated as the Leadership of the AC under the terms of Article V – Term of Office.

The Chairperson of the Administrative Council shall serve as Chair and presiding officer of the Executive Committee.

The function of the Executive Committee is to handle matters that arise between regularly scheduled Administrative Council meetings, and more particularly to include:

1. Dealing with emergency situations that arise when it would be impractical to present the issue(s) to the full Administrative Council.
2. Provide leadership to the Host Institution on important matters between Administrative Council meetings.
3. Perform fine tuning of mandate of the full Administrative Council.

The Executive Committee and the Council may call upon others to provide information on issues before the Council. In the case of external consultation, the person who is providing the needed information will not be considered as an ad hoc member of the Council unless voted upon by the entire Council.

4. The Executive Committee will perform all other duties that the Administrative Council so designates by a vote of the AC.

The Administrative Council will be given reasonable notice of Executive Committee meetings or conference calls and will be provided, in a timely fashion, minutes of Executive Committee meetings or conference calls. The Executive Committee will meet once a month by conferencing technology unless the meeting is cancelled by the Chair.

ARTICLE VIII - COMMITTEES

The Chairperson is authorized to appoint from members of the Administrative Council, or others, such committees as the Chairperson may deem necessary or as the Council deems necessary for the expeditious handling of the affairs of the Council. These committees shall be in addition to the Standing Committees approved by the Council. No committee, nor any member thereof, shall have authority to commit the Council, except as been duly authorized by the Council.

ARTICLE IX - STANDING COMMITTEES

The Administrative Council shall have six (6) standing committees, whose membership shall be composed only of Council members. The committees and their general responsibilities are:

1. Communications Committee. Facilitate the promotion and communication of sustainable Agriculture Research, Education and Training programs and outreach success stories so as to promote Sustainable Agriculture and SARE in the Southern Region and link with other regions to inform the national dialogue about sustainable issues.
2. Operations/Nominating Committee. Develop and recommend policies for the Administrative Council. The Operations Committee shall also serve as the Nominations Committee to recommend a list of candidates

to serve as Officers and Standing Committee Chairs of the Council, as well as the solicitation of new members.

3. Project Review Committee. Establish goals and criteria for the evaluation of proposals and the review of projects.

4. Limited Resource Farmer & Minority Outreach Committee. Establish goals and programs to support Limited Resource & Minority Farmers.

5. Producer Grant Committee. Establish goals and criteria for the evaluation of proposals and the review of producer and on-farm projects.

6. PDP Committee. Establish goals and criteria for evaluation of proposals, review PDP projects, and make recommendations to the Administrative Council, conduct yearly PDP workshop and all other PDP activities.

Each standing committee shall have a Chair elected annually by the Council at the same meeting as the election of officers. Committee membership shall be equally divided, as much as possible, among the members based upon their expressed interest.

Specific responsibilities of each standing committee shall be determined by the Council.

ARTICLE X - TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Administrative Council shall appoint a Technical Advisory Committee for the evaluation of proposals for projects to be considered for funding. The Technical Advisory Committee shall be subject to oversight by the Project Review Committee.

Technical Advisory Committee membership shall consist of researchers, extension professionals, producers and others who have demonstrable experience and expertise in the area of sustainable agriculture.

Responsibilities of the Technical Advisory Committee are determined by the Administrative Council, however, the primary role of the committee is to provide guidance concerning the technical merit of proposals and projects to the SARE program and provide recommendations for funding through the Project Review Committee, the Producer Grant Committee

or the PDP Committee to the Administrative Council based upon technical merit.

ARTICLE XI - CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Section 1. Meetings. The Administrative Council shall have two regularly scheduled meetings each year. The date and location of each meeting shall be determined by the Council. Administrative Council meetings shall be open to the public.

Public notice of regularly scheduled Council meetings shall be included in the SARE Newsletter. Council members will keep the agenda briefs as part of the minutes.

Section 2. Attendance & Voting. Attendance of two-thirds (2/3) of the Administrative Council membership shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Once a quorum is declared present for the transaction of business, it will be considered in place for the remainder of the scheduled meeting dates. All official actions of the Council shall require the affirmative vote of a majority of the members present and voting. All votes by roll call and secret ballot shall be announced and recorded in the minutes.

Section 3. Proxies. The Administrative Council shall not allow an alternate or proxy to serve on the Council and vote on behalf of a member who is absent.

Section 4. Reimbursement. For AC members who are Producers, self-employed or NGO's a \$250 per day honorarium will be paid for time spent at AC meetings (including travel time). In addition, these AC members receive \$250 at each AC meeting to cover time spent reviewing proposals during the year.

Section 5. Funding Requests. Any request for funds must be made through the appropriate committee and must have its budget and its justification prepared at least six weeks in advance of the Summer or Winter AC meeting so that it is included in the agenda briefs, and all members of the Administrative Council have had the opportunity to review the request.

Section 6. Conflict of Interest. According to the legislation, a

member of an AC or technical committee may not participate in the discussion or recommendation of proposed projects if the member has, or had, a professional or business interest in the organization whose grant application is under review. (7USC 5812(c). This language is interpreted and operationalized as follows.

To avoid any conflict of interest, a member of the Administrative Council (AC), Technical Committee, or any AC-appointed committees or panels, or staff may not review or participate in the discussion or recommendation regarding any competitive grant proposal with any of the following characteristics:

1. From that member's home institution or organization;
2. From institutions or organizations for which he/she acts as a paid consultant, or board member;
3. From applicants for whom he/she has served as a thesis advisor (or advisee) or a postdoctoral advisor (or advisee) within the past five years;
4. From applicants with whom he/she has served as a collaborator on a research proposal or publication within the past five years;
5. From applicants for whom he/she has acted as a paid consultant within the past five years;
6. From applicants for whom he/she will be a project participant during the current grant cycle;
7. That Administrative Council, Technical Committee members, any AC-appointed committees or panels, or staff may not be listed as participants on competitive grant proposals and/or other funding requests under consideration by the committee or panel on which the person serves where they could potentially gain monetary benefits to themselves or other program they represent (benefits do not mean compensation for travel or per diem). AC members will recuse themselves from votes regarding possible funding for their institution or for any organization they represent;
8. The statement applies to current members. Those wanting to submit proposals must resign their memberships.

9. During the discussion or recommendations of proposed projects, any members with a conflict of interest must leave the room. This applies to the regional coordinators and senior staff.

10. Discussion and recommendation should involve individual projects. When a large slate of projects (for example, the farmer grants) is being voted upon – and individual projects are not being discussed – members with a conflict of interest do not need to leave the room.

Section 7. Parliamentary Procedure. The Administrative Council, Executive Committee, Technical Advisory Committee and Standing Committees when in session, shall be governed in their deliberations and in the transaction of their business by these Bylaws. Any matter of procedure not so covered in the Bylaws shall be governed by the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

ARTICLE XII - AMENDMENTS¹

The Administrative Council may amend these Bylaws at any meeting at which there exists a quorum, upon two-thirds vote of the Council. Provided, however, at least ten (10) days notice shall be given to all members, and the intent of such amendments to be considered shall be made a part of the meeting notice.

¹*Bylaws Adopted 2/13/96.*

Amended 4/3/97; 3/22/2000; 8/19/2011; 8/20/2014; 8/10/2016; 7/31/2019.

Conflict of Interest Policy

If you are considering serving on the SARE AC or TRC, it's likely you already have ties to a group that submits proposals to SARE, and you may be wondering if that disqualifies you from serving. Southern SARE realizes that disqualifying such individuals would prevent the most knowledgeable segment of our audience from serving, so the AC drafted a Conflict of Interest Policy to channel ethical participation and input from such individuals.

The 10-point Conflict of Interest Policy protects the process in two ways: it prohibits members of the AC /TRC/Staff from participating in a grant proposal that, if funded, would benefit them financially, and it excuses an AC/TRC /Staff member from the discussion of any proposal submitted by an organization, institution or individual that they have collaborated with in the past five years.

According to the legislation, a member of the AC or TRC may not participate in the discussion or recommendation of proposed projects if the member has, or had, a professional or business interest in the organization whose grant application is under review. (7USC 5812(c). This language is interpreted and operationalized as follows.

To avoid any conflict of interest, a member of the Administrative Council (AC), Technical Review Committee (TRC), or any AC-appointed committees or panels, or staff may not review or participate in the discussion or recommendation regarding any competitive grant proposal with any of the following characteristics:

- From that member's home institution or organization;
- From institutions or organizations for which he/she acts as a paid consultant, or board member;
- From applicants for whom he/she has served as a thesis advisor (or advisee) or a postdoctoral advisor (or advisee) within the past five years;
- From applicants with whom he/she has served as a collaborator on a research proposal or publication within the past five years;

- From applicants for whom he/she has acted as a paid consultant within the past five years;
- From applicants for whom he/she will be a project participant during the current grant cycle;
- That Administrative Council, Technical Review Committee members, any AC-appointed committees or panels, or staff may not be listed as participants on competitive grant proposals (including Producer Grants and PDP proposals) under consideration by the committee or panel on which the person serves where they could potentially gain monetary benefits to themselves or other program (benefits do not mean compensation for travel or per diem);
- The statement applies to current members. Those wanting to submit proposals must resign their memberships;
- During the discussion or recommendations of proposed projects, any members with a conflict of interest must leave the room. This applies to the regional coordinators and senior staff;
- Discussion and recommendation should involve individual projects. When a large slate of projects (for example, the Producer Grants) is being voted upon – and individual projects are not being discussed – members with a conflict of interest do not need to leave the room.



AC Members Quick Contact List

Julia Asherman
Ph: 617-777-0117
ragandfrassfarm@gmail.com

Jewel Bronaugh
Ph: 804-786-3501
jewel.bronaugh@vdacs.virginia.gov

Bonita Clemons
Ph: 803-521-5397
bonitaclemons@gmail.com

Annie Donoghue
Ph: 479-575-2413
annie.donoghue@usda.gov

Scott Edwards
Ph: 573-876-9367
scott.edwards@usda.gov

Dan Glenn
Ph: 229-457-1136
dan@deepgrassgraziers.com

Kim Kroll
Ph: 301-405-9912
assoc_dir@sare.org

Sandi Kronick
Ph: 919-542-3264
sandi@happydirt.com

Patrick Lillard
Ph: 979-450-6142
patrick.lillard@ag.tamu.edu

Tashel Martin
Ph: 504-233-4220
Mamaisis504@gmail.com

Tim Miller
Ph: 512-667-0776
millbergfarm@austin.rr.com

Vance Owens
Vance.owens@usda.gov

Susan Park
Ph: 404-562-9604
park.susan@epa.gov

Bob Scott
Ph: 501-671-2001
bscott@uaex.edu

Raymon Shange
Ph: 334-724-4967
rshange@tuskegee.edu

Nathan Slaton
Ph: 479-502-9804
nslaton@uark.edu

Susan Stein
Ph: 202-360-9737
susan.stein@usda.gov

Tenisio Seanima
Ph: 678-600-1245
naturescandyfarms@gmail.com

Pauline Thiessen
479-409-3254
pauline@onf.coop

Julius Tillery
919-525-5077
julius.tillery@gmail.com

Spencer Wood
spencerwood@gmail.com
sdwood@ksu.edu

Southern Region SARE Administrative Council Membership Rotation

CATEGORY		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Producer 1	Vacant	1	1	1	2	2	2
Producer 2	Dan Glenn	1	1	2	2	2	1
Producer 3	Tim Miller	1	1	1	2	2	2
Producer 4	Julia Asherman	1	2	2	2	1	1
Producer 5	Tenisio Seanima	1	1	1	2	2	2
Producer 6	Pauline Thiessen	X	1	1	1	2	2
Producer 7	Tashel Martin	1	1	2	2	2	1
NGO 1	Julius Tillery	2	2	1	1	1	2
NGO 2	Patrick Lillard	2	2	1	1	1	2
NGO 3	Bonita Clemons	1	1	1	2	2	2
Quality of Life	Spencer Wood	1	1	1	2	2	2
Agribusiness	Sandi Kronick	X	X	1	1	1	2
1890 Extension	Raymon Shange	1	1	2	2	2	1
1890 Research	Vacant	1	1	1	2	2	
1862 Extension	Bob Scott	1	1	1	2	2	2
1862 Research	Nathan Slaton	1	1	1	2	2	2
State Dept. of Ag	Jewel Bronaugh	1	1	1	2	2	2
EPA	Susan Park	1	1	2	2	2	1
USDA-ARS	Annie Donoghue	X	1	1	1	2	2
USDA-NRCS	Scott Edwards	1	1	1	2	2	2
USGS	Vacant						
Agroforestry	Susan Stein	1	2	2	2	1	1
USDA-NIFA	Vance Owens/Kim Kroll						

AC Members serve a three-year term and may be reappointed for one additional term.

1 = First 3-year term; 2 = Second 3-year term; Third 3-year leadership term
 1= First year of new members terms 2= Replace or reappoint member for second 3-year term. This then is either the first year of member's second term or the first year of a new AC member. 3 = Third 3-year term possible for chair positions.

2020 Committees

Executive Committee

Sandi Kronick, Chair
Annie Donoghue
Scott Edwards
Patrick Lillard
Sustan Stein
Pauline Thiessen
Julius Tillery

Communications

Patrick Lillard, Chair
Annie Donoghue
NIFA Rep

Operations/Nominating

Annie Donoghue, Chair
Scott Edwards
Sandi Kronick
Susan Stein
Pauline Thiessen
Susan Park
Bob Scott
Nathan Slaton

Project Review

Susan Stein, Chair
Julia Asherman
Annie Donoghue
NIFA Rep
Sandi Kronick
Tim Miller
Julius Tillery
Susan Park
Nathan Slaton
Spencer Wood

Equity and Prosperity

Julius Tillery, Chair
Julia Asherman
Jewel Bronaugh
Bonita Clemons
Tenisio Seanima
Raymon Shange

Producer Grant

Pauline Thiessen, Chair
Julia Asherman
Bonita Clemons
Dan Glenn
Tashel Martin
Tim Miller
Tenisio Seanima
Julius Tillery

PDP

Scott Edwards, Chair
Jewel Bronaugh
Dan Glenn
NIFA Rep
Patrick Lillard
Bob Scott
Tenisio Seanima
Raymon Shange
Pauline Thiessen
Spencer Wood

Glossary of Terms

AEA -- Association of Extension Administrators represents the 1890 Cooperative Extension System.

AFSIC -- Alternative Farming Systems Information Center collects, organizes and distributes information on alternative agriculture and provides high-level searching and reference services from the National Agricultural Library's vast collection and world-wide databases.

ARD -- Association of 1890 Research Directors is the federation of the 19 1890 land grant universities that provides coordination of research initiatives among member 1890 institutions.

ATTRA -- Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas is a national sustainable agriculture information service that answers questions about specific farming practices and innovative marketing approaches, including organic production. More than 200 free publications on farming and marketing are available.

EC -- Executive Committee of the Southern SARE program. EC members entertain business matters pertaining to the SARE program in times when the Administrative Council is not convening.

MANNRS -- Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences promotes academic and professional advancement by empowering minorities in agriculture, natural resources and related sciences.

NACAA -- National Association of County Ag Agents is the organization for county ag professionals.

NGO -- Non-governmental organization; a non-profit organization that operates independently of any government.

NSAC -- National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition is an alliance of grassroots organizations that advocates for federal policy reform to advance the sustainability of agriculture, food systems, natural resources and rural communities.

NRCS -- Natural Resources Conservation Service is an agency of the USDA that provides technical assistance to farmers and land-owners on conservation practices.

PI -- Principal Investigator; one who leads the research project.

SARE -- Become familiar with the national website and the regional website.

SARE Outreach -- The publishing arm of SARE, with its own budget and staff. SARE Outreach publishes free high quality information bulletins and inexpensive practical books based on SARE research.

TRC -- Technical Review Committee; TRC members volunteer their time to review Southern SARE grant proposals. TRC members are made up of a cross section of ag professionals in the region who lend their expertise in a wide variety of sustainable ag topics.



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