



NCR-SARE Minnesota Office
University of Minnesota | 1390 Eckles Ave | Ste 120 | St Paul, MN 55108 | ph: 612-626-3113
www.sare.org | ncrsare@umn.edu

NCR-SARE Farmer Rancher Grant and Youth Educator Grant Office
Lincoln University | 900 Leslie Blvd, Rm 101 | Jefferson City, MO 65101 | ph: 573-681-5545

NCR-SARE Farmer Rancher Grants to experiment with or demonstrate Sustainable Agriculture Practices 2024 Call for Proposals

PURPOSE: Farmer Rancher Grants provide opportunities for farmers and ranchers to solve problems on the farm or ranch using innovative sustainable agriculture practices. Projects can focus on research or education and demonstration. Approximately \$720,000 is available for this program. Grant recipients have 23 months to complete their projects. There are two types of competitive grants:

1. Individual grants (\$15,000 maximum)
2. Team grants for two or more farmers or ranchers from separate and distinct operations who are working together (\$30,000 maximum).

TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL: go to <https://projects.sare.org/>. The online submission system opens in August 2023. **Proposals must be received online or in the NCR-SARE office by mail or e-mail by 4:00 p.m. Central Time on December 7, 2023.** Faxed proposals will NOT be reviewed. If you are unable to use the online system e-mail: ncrsare@umn.edu or mail proposals to:

NCR-SARE Farmer Rancher Grant Program
120 Biosystems & Ag Eng Bldg, University of Minnesota
1390 Eckles Ave, St Paul MN 55108

This call for proposals is available on the North Central SARE web site at <https://northcentral.sare.org/>. If you need a printed application, call 612-626-3113.

Checklist of Items Needed to Submit a 2024 Grant Proposal

- Proposal Budget Letter of support Confirmation of Commitment from Teams

National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) - USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact NCR-SARE at 612-626-3113 or ncrsare@umn.edu. To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

The SARE Program

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.

Origin & Funding: SARE was created in the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (1990 Farm Bill, Title 16, Subtitle B). It is funded through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). The SARE program works primarily through competitive grant programs administered by four regions: North Central, Northeast, South, and West.

North Central Region-Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (NCR-SARE)

NCR-SARE's mission is to strengthen communities, increase farmer/rancher economic viability, and improve the environment by supporting research and education.

The 12 states of North Central Region-SARE include: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

NCR-SARE Farmer Rancher Grant Program Information

WHAT: Farmer Rancher Grants provide opportunities for farmers and ranchers to use Sustainable Agriculture practices to solve problems on the farm or ranch and share what they learn with others. The program values learning by doing and reporting on what worked, what didn't, and what you would recommend for other farmers and ranchers. Funds are NOT for everyday farming expenses, other than those directly related to the grant project (see Budget instructions and examples on pages 6-7).

- Projects involving drones must have an operator with an FFA approved operating license in place before the project starts. The timeline of the grant doesn't allow time to apply for a license.
- Projects involving industrial hemp must comply with applicable state and USDA regulations. See: <https://nifa.usda.gov/industrial-hemp>.
- Livestock projects need to comply with reasonable animal care requirements to ensure that animals are properly cared for. See the Livestock Care form on pages 17 - 19.

Sustainable Agriculture is farming and ranching that is ecologically sound, economically viable, and socially responsible. Since the start of the program in 1992, more than 1,300 grants have been awarded to explore topics including (but not limited to):

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Agroecology | • Organic Agriculture |
| • Agroforestry | • Permaculture |
| • Alternative Grains as Animal Feed | • Poultry, Small-Scale Livestock |
| • Beneficial Insects, Pollinator Habitat | • Proactive Weed Management |
| • Cover Crops | • Quality of Life Issues for Family/Community |
| • Crop/Landscape Diversity | • Regenerative Agriculture |
| • Educating/Mentoring New Farmers/Ranchers | • Renewable Energy |
| • Farmland Access | • Managed Grazing |
| • Food Sovereignty | • Soil Health |
| • Holistic Farming & Ranching | • Value-Added & Direct Marketing |
| • Integrated Pest Management (IPM) | • Water Quality Improvement/Wetlands |
| • Labor Needs and Issues | |

WHO & WHERE: Any farmer or rancher or team of farmers or ranchers who farm or operate a ranch in the North Central region may apply.

- A farmer/rancher is someone who raises crops or livestock, especially as a business.
- Applicants may be just beginning the transition to a more sustainable operation or may already be using sustainable practices and want to try more.
- Grants to applicants under 21 need to be signed by a parent or guardian.
- Applicants can submit one grant application per year and can participate in one grant per year.
- Previous grant recipients are eligible to apply if reports from previous grants are up to date.
- Team projects must have at least two farmer/rancher participants from separate and distinct operations. If your situation is unique, contact NCR-SARE to discuss your options. Teams must designate a farmer/rancher project coordinator who will submit and sign the proposal, be responsible for reporting, and assume tax liability associated with the grant, if there is any.
- **We have a strong commitment to diversity.** Proposals that involve farmers, ranchers, or youth from historically-underserved* populations are encouraged. **USDA defines historically-underserved audiences to include socially-disadvantaged producers, limited-resource producers, beginning farmers/ranchers, and veterans. They further define socially-disadvantaged farmers and ranchers as belonging to the following groups: American Indians or Alaskan Natives, Asians, Blacks or African Americans, Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders, Hispanics, and women.*
- Most Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) should apply for Partnership Grants for projects working with farmers and ranchers. See: <https://northcentral.sare.org/grants/apply-for-a-grant/partnership-grant/>. NGOs that are actively farming can apply for Farmer Rancher Grants.

WHEN: IMPORTANT DATES AND PAYMENT SCHEDULE

- **August 2023:** Farmer Rancher grant call for proposals is released (this means the grant application and instructions are available)
- **December 7, 2023:** Farmer Rancher grant proposals are due
- **Mid-February 2024:** Grant applicants are notified if they are funded or not
- **March 2024:** Grant project budgets are reviewed and approved. Contracts are prepared for grantees to sign and return to the NCR-SARE office.
- **March 15, 2024:** This is the Project Start Date. Work on funded projects can begin. Any items purchased before this start date cannot be paid for with grant funds.
- **April-May 2024:** 1st payment checks are mailed after the signed contract and other paperwork is approved. Typically, this is between April 1 and May 1. The 1st payment is 50% of the grant.
 - A 1099 form is automatically filed with the IRS with each payment for tax purposes.
 - You must keep receipts for project expenses for a period of three years.
- **January 15, 2025:** A Progress report and budget update are due. The 2nd grant payment (35% of the grant) is released after the progress report and budget are approved.
- **January 15, 2026:** Contract end date and Deadline for submitting a final report with budget. The final payment (15% of the grant) is mailed after the final report and budget are approved. *The final payment is a reimbursement. All funds should be spent, and the grant project completed by this date.*
- **Date to be decided:** If funded, you may receive an on-site visit from NCR-SARE representatives.

HOW: PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Turn in the following items by the deadline.

- 1. Project Proposal**
- 2. Budget with Description and Justification of items requested**
- 3. Letter of Support** (1 is required but you may submit up to 2)
- 4. Confirmation of Commitment** (required for Team grants only)
- 5. Livestock Care Plan** (required for projects involving livestock, see pages 17 - 19)

1. Project Proposal – Fill in general information and answer all questions within word count limits.

- **Do NOT list personal websites or social media profiles or include web-links.** To make the process fair to all applicants, reviewers will base evaluations only on information contained in the proposal. Focus on explaining your ideas and how they advance sustainable agriculture.
- Proposals that are typed should use a font no smaller than 12-point, similar to the text in this call for proposals. Handwritten proposals in dark ink are acceptable if they are legible.
- Mailed proposals should be printed single-sided.

2. Budget - Along with the requested amount of each item, briefly describe how each item will be used in your project, and show how you came up with the budget amount by showing your math (this is the budget justification). Review the Budget Instructions and Example Budget on pgs. 6 - 7.

3. Letter of Support - Applicants must submit one letter of support from someone who can:

- speak to your experience and ability to carry out the project and
- explain why the project is needed and how it will benefit the community

You can submit an optional second letter. Do not submit more than two letters. Contact supporters early and make sure they are familiar with your project so they can write a strong letter. The letter should include information that will support the proposal. (For example, if the supporter will help you with outreach, ask them to include that in the letter and provide specifics about their help.)

Support letters must include the contact information of the supporter. People who might write a support letter include: Extension educator, banker, co-op or grocery manager, implement dealer, or staff from: farm organizations, Farm Service Agency (FSA), local soil and water conservation district offices, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), or non-profit organizations.

4. Team Confirmation of Commitment – For Team online proposals, the team members will be sent an email asking them to confirm their participation and role. For hard copy applications, include a brief statement from each Team member confirming their role in the project.

5. Livestock Care Plan – Complete this form if your project involves livestock (vertebrate animals such as cows, fish, pigs, sheep). Bees and other insects and shrimp are not considered livestock.

REVIEW PROCESS AND CRITERIA

All proposals are reviewed by a committee that includes farmer and rancher members of the NCR-SARE Administrative Council, as well as farmers and ranchers from throughout the North Central region. Funding recommendations are based on how well grant applicants explain the following information in their proposal. The weight of each criterion is shown in parentheses.

1. Project Leader or Team (10%)

- Do the people involved have the experience and skills to successfully carry out the project?

2. Project Design (30%)

- Is the problem clearly explained so someone unfamiliar with the project can understand it?
- Is there a well-thought-out, detailed plan to solve a problem on the farm or ranch using sustainable agriculture practices?
- For education and demonstration projects, is there a well-thought-out, detailed plan to provide potential solutions for other farmers or ranchers through information sharing?
- Does the project have the potential to help farmers and ranchers in the North Central region produce positive environmental, economic, and social benefits?

3. Contribution to the growth of sustainable agriculture (15%)

- Does the project build on and add to existing sustainable agriculture knowledge?

4. Outreach (20%). All projects must share their results with others.

- Are there specific plans to share project information and results with other farmers or ranchers? Some options for information sharing include: workshops, field days, publications, written materials, social media, a web page, radio, television, videos, presenting a poster or giving a talk at a conference or other event.

5. Results (15%) Your project may not produce the results you expect, but if you learn something from the project and share the information, we consider it a success.

- Is there an effective plan to measure the results of the project?
- What will be measured and how will it be measured to determine if there are environmental, economic, and/or social (family/community) benefits from the project?

6. Appropriate budget (10%).

- Are grant funds used for project expenses only?
- Do budget descriptions explain how items will be used in the project?

TO INCREASE YOUR CHANCE OF SUCCESS:

1. **Clearly define a problem and propose a solution** that will work for other farmers and ranchers, and that fits the amount of funding and time frame available for the grant project.
2. **Involve cooperators** who assist with project planning and measuring and sharing project results. Cooperators may include Extension educators; staff of local, state, or regional non-profit groups, local conservation districts, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS); or others.
3. **Have a plan to measure** and document project results throughout the project.
4. **Emphasize outreach** such as field days, workshops, publications, social media, videos, websites.
5. **Demonstrate a good fit with SARE's mission** by explaining how your project will benefit other farmers and ranchers economically, ecologically, and socially.
6. **Address reviewer concerns** and explain revisions for proposals that are being resubmitted.

BUDGET INSTRUCTIONS

Grant funds are for research, demonstration, and education project expenses, not day-to-day farming expenses or business startup costs. For your budget, show the amount of grant funds you intend to spend on each item. Use accurate figures, rounded to the nearest dollar, and include a brief explanation of how each item listed in your budget relates to your project. For example: Weighing produce for yield comparison – 6 hrs x \$25/hr = \$150.

Matching funds are not required. Do not show a match. If outside funds are necessary to carry out your project, note that you have outside resources so reviewers can evaluate your work plan, but do not list the amount.

Personnel Costs. List any farmer/rancher labor and hired labor for project participants except service providers who should be listed under *Other Direct Costs*. Include a realistic estimate of the amount of labor and the cost for each participant being paid with grant funds. NCR-SARE recognizes that farmers and ranchers are skilled workers who should be paid \$25 per hour or more for their labor in grant projects. If participants are not being paid with grant funds, include them but enter \$0 for the grant funds request.

Materials and Supplies. Use for items you plan to purchase to carry out the project. Explain how they will be used to support the project.

Travel. Use a mileage rate of \$0.655 which covers ownership and operating costs.

Other Direct Costs. Use for consultants and service providers. Also use this category for communications, photocopying, conferences-meetings-workshops, speaker/trainer fees, fee for service/stipends, equipment rental, land-use charges, fabrication of equipment, and food and drink expenses. **Note:** Refreshments at field days or group meals for events are allowable if they maintain the continuity of the meeting (there must be programming before and after the meal). Breakfast meals are generally not allowed because no continuity of the meeting exists.

50% Rule for Equipment, Permanent fencing, Perennial seeds and plants, and Livestock: Grant funds can only be used for up to 50% of the cost of these items. Include the total cost in the Details/Justification column but enter 50% or less of the total cost in the Amount column. **Equipment** is defined as items that cost \$5000 or more and have a useful life of more than 1 year.

Calculating Costs. Labor, land, equipment, and supplies should be calculated on an annual cost-equivalent basis. (For example, operator labor per year at \$25 per hour; \$75/acre cash rent equivalent; \$10/acre rental of tillage equipment, etc.). Costs vary widely across the North Central region. Use costs that are accurate for your area. If costs are high in your area, provide an explanation.

UNALLOWABLE EXPENSES. Grant funds **cannot** be used for planning, construction, repair, or remodeling of buildings, or to buy motorized vehicles. These items may be leased or rented with grant funds, if they are needed for the project. Grant funds **cannot** be used for insurance or permanent installations (e.g., wells or buried irrigation lines).

Investigate Cost-Sharing. Many of the practices used in sustainable agriculture may be eligible for cost-sharing from other federal or state government agencies or local soil and water conservation districts, local businesses, private non-profit groups, etc. Additionally, the online resource for federal programs, [Grassroots Guide to Federal Farm and Food Programs](#), has information about requirements for a variety of programs and grants.

EXAMPLE BUDGET

The budget that follows shows examples of line items from different projects. Choose the budget categories that apply to your project, add item descriptions, and list the amounts you are requesting.

Use the **Details/Justification** column to show how you came up with the cost of each item (show your math). This is usually expressed as some per-unit cost multiplied by the number of units. Use rounded numbers. For example: 23 hrs. @ \$25/hr. = \$575, or 89 miles @ \$.655/mile = \$58.30, rounded down to \$58.00. Reviewers look for accurate budgets that match the activities in your proposal.

If you are not asking for the full amount of an item, include a note in the justification explaining that you are only asking for part of the cost.

EXAMPLE

Category	Description	Amount	Details/Justification
Personnel	Estelle Koski, Farmer and project coordinator. Set up blueberry trials, keep records, organize field day workshops	1725	69 hrs @ \$25/hr = \$1725
Personnel	Ruby Farmer, college student. Conduct surveys to determine public interest in new direct marketing techniques. Compile results.	1168	73 hrs x \$16/hr = \$1168
Materials and Supplies	Flexible water pipe for portable solar-powered pasture watering system	196	200 feet of 1.25 inch flexible water pipe x .98 per foot = 196
Materials and Supplies	Cover crop soil builder seed mix (15 species) to prepare area for alternative grain crop planting	956	10 acres x 65 lbs/acre x 1.47/lb = \$955.50 rounded up to \$956
Travel	Abe Lee, cooperating farmer. Travel to 3 farms in different parts of the region to learn holistic planning techniques	481	734 miles x .655/mile = \$480.77 rounded up to \$481
Travel	David Hay, farmer. Pick up Teff grass seed for pasture planting,	103	157 miles x .655/mile = \$102.84 rounded up to \$103
Other Direct Costs	Lease 2 acres of land from neighbor to provide buffer for organic amaranth planting.	294	2 acres x \$147 per acre = \$294
Other Direct Costs	Lunch for day-long farmer training with financial expert speakers before and after lunch.	495	20 participants x \$15/ meal = \$495
Equipment, Permanent fencing, Perennial seeds and plants, or Livestock	Woven wire fence to contain orchard hogs; permanent boundary fence needed since orchard is by highway	746	3 330-foot-rolls woven wire fence @ \$209.99 each = \$629.97 + 123 t-posts @ \$5.79 each = \$712.17 + 1 gate @ \$150 = \$1492.14 total cost x 50% = \$746.07 rounded down to \$746
Equipment, Permanent fencing, Perennial seeds and plants, or Livestock	24 native shrubs and perennial wildflowers (8 each): American plum, Rose mallow, False wild indigo for border to attract beneficial insects	380	24 shrubs x \$25 per gallon pot = \$600 + \$159.48 shipping/handling = \$759.48. Total Cost = \$759.48 x 50% = \$379.74 rounded up to \$380
Equipment, Permanent fencing, Perennial seeds and plants, or Livestock	50 chicks, Buff Orphington breed, females	117	50 chicks @ \$3.87 ea = \$193.50 + \$40 shipping = \$233.50 Total Cost of Item = \$233.50 x 50% = \$116.75 rounded up to \$117.
Total		6661	

HELP WITH GRANT WRITING AND INFORMATION SOURCES

For assistance in preparing your proposal, contact your NCR-SARE State Coordinator. See the list on pg 9 or see: <https://northcentral.sare.org/state-programs/state-coordinators/>.

- Contact NCR-SARE for information on Farmer Rancher Grants and the SARE program:
 Joan Benjamin
 NCR-SARE Associate Regional Coordinator
 Lincoln University
 900 Leslie Blvd, Room 101
 Jefferson City, MO 65101
 573-681-5545
benjaminj@lincolnu.edu
<https://northcentral.sare.org/>
- Contact the national Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Outreach office for information on SARE publications and resources:
 Sean McGovern, Outreach Manager
 SARE Outreach
 614-306-6422
outreach@sare.org
www.sare.org
- The National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service (ATTRA) was developed and is managed by the National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT). ATTRA has online and print information on many sustainable agricultural topics. If you contact ATTRA via e-mail, please describe your role in sustainable agriculture. By mail or fax, please include "ATTRA Information Request" near the top of the correspondence. (Preferred method of contact is telephone.)
 ATTRA- National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service
 P.O. Box 3838
 Butte, MT 59702
 800-346-9140 (English)
 800-411-3222 (Español)
<https://attra.ncat.org/>
- Michael Fields Agricultural Institute (MFAI) provides free Grants Advising services to farmers, ranchers, and youth educators applying for NCR-SARE Farmer Rancher and Youth Educator Grants. MFAI Grants Advising services are open to all Midwestern farmers, agricultural entrepreneurs and institutions and include help applying to non-SARE grant programs, as well as loan, and cost-share programs of state, federal, and private sources. For more information see: <https://www.michaelfields.org/grants-advising-resources>. For help, contact MFAI Grants Advisor, Wren Almitra at: grants@michaelfields.org or 719-318-7936.

2023 NCR-SARE State Coordinator List

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NCR-SARE Farmer Rancher Sustainable Agriculture Grants 2024 Proposal Form

Project Coordinator Information. On the following pages you will see the questions you will be asked on the Online Application website. Read through this call for proposals first. To apply, go to the online system using the link: <https://projects.sare.org/>. For additional information about preparing a proposal, you can view a presentation at: <https://northcentral.sare.org/Grants/Apply-for-a-Grant/Farmer-Rancher-Grant/>. If you are unable to use the online system, complete your proposal using a computer or typewriter, or print legibly in dark ink and mail to NCR-SARE. Do not exceed word limits. Extra words will be removed.

The first time you register in the SARE projects system you will be asked to provide demographic information. The North Central Region SARE program is committed to an ethic of openness, inclusiveness, and diversity in all of its programs, policies, and procedures. To monitor our performance in these areas, we collect demographic information from grant applicants. Demographic information is not linked to your proposal and is compiled in a separate database. Individual demographic information will not be shared or made public. Providing this information is optional. Choose “Prefer not to answer” if you don’t want to answer any of the questions.

Ethnicity

- Hispanic or Latino
- Not Hispanic or Latino
- Prefer not to answer

Sex

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Unidentified (prefer not to identify)

Race

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- White
- Other
- Unidentified (prefer not to identify)

Year of Birth (optional) _____

Choose Your Topic. Select items from the **Farming System** list and from the **Crops** list that best represent your project. They should show the primary focus of your project. This is for sorting proposals for review. It is for SARE use only and will not affect your proposal review.

FARMING SYSTEM

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Animal Production (includes aquaculture, grazing) | <input type="checkbox"/> Pest Management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crop Production (includes agroforestry, beekeeping, pollination) | <input type="checkbox"/> Production Systems (includes agroecosystems, aquaponics, holistic management, hydroponics, integrated crop and livestock systems, organic agriculture, permaculture, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education & Training | <input type="checkbox"/> Soil Management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Communities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Farm Business Management (includes marketing) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Resources/Environment | |

CROPS

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> This project is not crop specific or doesn't apply to crops | <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetables | <input type="checkbox"/> Animal Products (includes honey) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agronomic | <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Plants (herbs, native plants, ornamentals, trees) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Fill in the blank. Use for mushrooms, syrup, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fruits | <input type="checkbox"/> Animals (includes bees, fish) | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nuts | | |

Project Title: This lets reviewers know what your project is about. Use words that are useful for finding your project in a website search. Use 25 words or less—about 150 characters including spaces.

1. DESCRIPTION for search results if funded: Provide a summary of your project in 45 words or less—about 300 characters—including spaces. This tells reviewers what your project is about and may be used for publicity if your project is funded.

Farmer/Rancher:

This person serves as Project Coordinator. If funded, the grant contract will be in this person's name.

Farm Business Name:

Address:

City, State Zip Code:

County:

Phone:

E-Mail:

- **Are you a Farmer or Rancher?** Yes_____ No_____ You must be a farmer or rancher to apply. A farmer/rancher is someone who raises crops or livestock, especially as a business. Beginning farmers/ranchers are eligible to apply. Most Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) should apply for Partnership Grants for projects working with farmers and ranchers. See: <https://northcentral.sare.org/grants/apply-for-a-grant/partnership-grant/>. NGOs that are actively farming can apply for Farmer Rancher Grants. The NGO farmer must be the applicant, but payments can go to the NGO.
- **Is this an Individual _____, or Team (2 or more farmers or ranchers) _____ Project?**
For Team projects, list all members of your team and their contact information.
- **Start Date:** _____ **End Date:** _____ (no later than January 15, 2026)
 - If funded, you have up to 23 months to complete your project. The Start and End Dates help reviewers evaluate if you are allowing enough time to complete your project.
 - Your budget must be approved before you can spend grant funds. This will likely be by March 15, 2024 but may be later. You can start your project before that date but will not be able to use grant funds for expenses incurred before your budget is approved.
- **Have you submitted this, or a similar proposal, to NCR-SARE before?** Yes_____ No_____
- **Have you previously received a SARE Farmer/Rancher Grant?** Yes_____ No_____
 - If you received a SARE grant(s) in the past or have a current grant, list the project number(s) on a separate page along with a summary of your results or progress (for current projects). Use 100 words or less for each grant summary.
 - If the project was not completed, explain why not in the summary.
- **Does this project involve livestock (vertebrate animals only)?** Yes_____ No_____. **If yes, fill out the Livestock Care form on pages 17 - 19.**

2) PEOPLE: Describe the people carrying out the project and their role. (400 words)

- **Individual proposals:** Describe your background and experience so reviewers know what skills and knowledge you bring to the project. Explain your role. Describe your farm or ranch and include the size of your operation, crops grown, etc.
- ***Team proposals,** provide names and background of all Team members, a description of their farms or ranches, and their role in the project. At least two members of the team must be farmers or ranchers. (Once the farmer or rancher requirement is met, feel free to add participants who are not farmers or ranchers.)

***Team Confirmation of Commitment** – For Team proposals, the team members will be sent an email asking them to confirm their participation.

3) PROBLEM: Describe the research or education problem you are trying to solve. (200 words)

4) SOLUTION AND OBJECTIVES: Describe in detail how you plan to solve the problem using sustainable agriculture practices and list your objectives. (600 words total)

Solution (500 words): If this is a research project, describe how the trial will be set up, the materials and methods you will use, and what sustainable agriculture practices you will try. If this is a demonstration and education project, explain the teaching methods and materials you will use and the sustainable practices that you will demonstrate.

Objectives (100 words): Objectives are the major things you plan to accomplish during the project by carrying out research activities or demonstration and education activities. Focus on what you can complete during the 23 months of the grant, even if major objectives will take longer than 23 months. Example objectives:

1. Evaluate the usefulness of 5 cover crops through field testing
2. Identify 3 cover crops for potential use in intensive vegetable production
3. Plant 3 cover crop demonstration plots on 3 separate vegetable farms to use during summer field days.
4. Share findings through 2 field days, and a conference presentation

***Optional drawing or image.** You may include one drawing or image to help explain your project to reviewers. This could be a drawing or photo that shows the plot layout for a crop trial or demonstration, the design for a new piece of equipment you want to build, a sample page of a curriculum you are developing, or another aspect of your project. **(Limited to one page, single sided.)**

Label the upload or attachment so reviewers know what it is. Online attachments can be in these formats: PDF, JPEG, GIF and PNG. Note: once you upload the optional attachment in the online system, you must save it to add it to your application.

5) SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE BENEFITS: How will your solution benefit other farmers or ranchers in your community and the North Central region economically, ecologically, and socially?

From the list that opens when you click on "Edit Answer," choose one or more of the benefits you expect your project will provide, *and that you intend to measure*. Be realistic and do not take on too much. These are small grants. You will be asked to report on these benefits in your project reports.

To see suggestions of items that you can measure to show benefits, go to: <https://projects.sare.org/benefits-and-impacts>.

6) MEASURING RESULTS: How will you measure the results of your project? (300 words) List your answers from the Sustainable Agriculture Benefits question and explain what and how you will measure results for each one. Documenting the results of your project may involve recordkeeping, taking photos, surveys or other methods.

Examples of what you will measure: increased use of more sustainable farming practices, yield changes, increased income, increased access for growers and eaters to traditional foods, increased crop or landscape diversity, improved farmer and farm worker labor conditions, improved farm management decision making.

If your project focuses on one part of sustainability (ecological, economic, or social), that is what you should measure. For example, if you are experimenting with cover crops, your main focus may be ecological (preventing erosion) and you can measure soil loss with a soil erosion measurement stick. If you have an education project, you may measure learning through interviews, by surveying participants, or holding discussion groups.

A table works well for answering this question. Create a table by clicking on "Edit Answer," then selecting the Table icon. Use your mouse to choose the number of rows and columns you want. Here is an example.

Benefits	What will be measured	How you will measure results
Improved Soil Quality/Health	Soil loss (erosion)	Using a soil erosion measurement stick to compare soil loss before and after using cover crops.
Improved Quality of Life	Increase in knowledge and intention to use cover crops by farmers who attend field day workshops	Surveys and discussion held before and after field day workshops.

7) CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE: How will your project add to sustainable agriculture knowledge? (400 words) Explain how your project builds on past research or education efforts – include SARE and non-SARE research. What makes your project innovative and different from what has already been done?

Resources for finding previous work done on your topic:

- Review reports from previous SARE grants at: <https://projects.sare.org/search-projects/>.
- Contact ATTRA, the National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service, to speak to an Ag Expert about work done on your topic. Call 1-800-346-9140 or see: <https://attra.ncat.org>
- Search the Internet for previous solutions to the problem you are trying to solve.

8) OUTREACH: How will you share the information you learned from your project with farmers and ranchers, educators, and others? (400 words) All projects must include outreach. For Research Projects, explain how you will share what you discovered from your trials. For Education Projects, explain how you will share the results of your education efforts. (This is different from the outreach activities you hold for your project participants. These are presentations on what you learned from your education and demonstration efforts.) Outreach can include: articles, conferences, field days, social media, website, etc. List your outreach plans and provide details about when and where you will provide outreach, any educational materials you plan to produce, and the audience and numbers of people you hope to reach. Include Date, Outreach Activity, and Who Participates. See the example below.

DATE	OUTREACH ACTIVITY	WHO PARTICIPATES
Mid-May – August 2024	Document progress of research trials by taking photos weekly and posting them with descriptions on Freeman Farm website and Facebook page. Develop and post 2 YouTube videos on planting and working with cover crops.	Eliza Freeman and son, Terrance Freeman. Current number of Facebook followers is 389. Will work with Extension agent to get videos and postings out to wider audience.
Early-August 2024	Give a presentation at a regional Sustainable Ag Conference on our education project, explaining the methods we used to demonstrate new livestock fencing techniques to farmers statewide. Will provide results of surveys showing which demonstration techniques worked best and the level of interest shown by participants.	Pauline Holtzburger, farmer presents at regional What is Sustainable Ag conference for an audience of 50 to 100 participants.
Late August 2024	Hold field days at each of the 3 participating farms. Give participants pre- and post-test surveys about using cover crops.	Project coordinators: Jan Wiggins, Eliza Freeman, Edgar Holtzburger. Extension educator, Nadia Terrell. Expect 20 or more farmers at each field day for a total of 60 or more.

9) **BUDGET:** Read the Budget Instructions and Example on pages 6 & 7 before you complete your budget.

Here is an example of a budget entry.

Category	Description	Amount	Details/Justification
Materials and supplies	Cover crop seed for test plots that will be used for grazing	\$1980	Custom mix at \$3.30/pound spread at 30 lbs/acre over 20 acres = \$1980

1. **Category.** Choose the budget categories that apply to your project. Choose from the following categories:

- **Personnel:** Use for farmer/rancher labor and hired labor. List everyone who is participating in your project except consultants and service providers who should be listed under *Other Direct Costs*. Include a realistic estimate of the amount of labor and the cost for each participant being paid with grant funds. NCR-SARE recognizes that farmers and ranchers are skilled workers who should be paid \$25 per hour or more for their labor in grant projects. If participants are not being paid with grant funds, include them but enter \$0 for the grant request.
- **Materials and Supplies:** Use for items you plan to purchase to carry out the project.
- **Travel:** For travel costs, use a mileage rate of \$0.655
- **Other Direct Costs:** Use for consultants and service providers, communications, photocopying, conferences/meetings/workshops, speaker/trainer fees, fees for service/stipends, equipment rental, land-use charges
- **Equipment, Permanent fencing, Perennial seeds and plants, or Livestock:** Grant funds can be used for 50% or less of the cost of these items. Include the total cost of the item in the Details/Justification column but enter 50% or less of the total cost in the Amount column. **Equipment definition:** an item that costs \$5000 or more with a useful life of more than one year.

2. **Description:** Provide a brief description of each item you want to purchase that explains why it is needed for the project. For *Personnel*, briefly list the role each person plays in the project.

3. **Amount:** Enter the amount you are requesting for each item. **Unallowable Expenses:** Grant funds **cannot** be used for planning, construction, repair, or remodeling of buildings, or to buy motorized vehicles. These items may be leased or rented with grant funds, if they are needed for the project. Grant funds **cannot** be used for insurance or permanent installations (e.g., wells or buried irrigation lines).

4. **Details/Justification:** show how you came up with the cost for each item (show your math). This is usually a per-unit cost multiplied by the number of units. Use rounded numbers. For example: 23 hrs. @ \$25/hr. = \$575, or 89 miles @ \$.655/mile = \$58.30, rounded down to \$58.00. Reviewers look for accurate budgets that match the activities in your proposal.

If you are not asking for the full amount of an item, include a note in the justification explaining that you are only asking for part of the cost.

ATTACHMENTS

- **Letter of Support** - Applicants **must** submit one letter of support. You can submit an optional second letter. Do not submit more than two letters. The letter(s) must be PDF files to attach them to the application.

Contact supporters early and make sure they are familiar with your project so they can write a strong letter. People who might write a support letter include: Extension educator, banker, co-op or grocery manager, implement dealer, or staff from: farm organizations, Farm Service Agency (FSA), local soil and water conservation district offices, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), or non-profit organizations. Letters of support should include:

- Contact information of the supporter
 - Description of your experience and ability to carry out the project
 - Explanation of why the project is needed and how it will benefit the community
 - Information that will support the proposal. For example, if the supporter will help you with outreach, ask them to include that information in the letter and provide specifics about how they will help.
- **Livestock Care Plan** – All applicants must answer the first question. Complete the rest of the form only if your project involves livestock. For this program, only vertebrate animals (those with a backbone or spinal column) are considered livestock. These include cows, fish, goats, pigs, sheep, etc. Bees, other insects, and shrimp are not considered livestock.

Livestock Care Plan

If your project **does not** involve livestock, answer "No" to the first question: "Does your project involve livestock?" Then click on "Save" and go on to the next section.

If your project involves livestock, answer "Yes" and fill out the Livestock Care form.

For this program, only animals with a backbone or spinal column (vertebrate animals) are considered livestock. These include cows, fish, goats, pigs, sheep, etc.

Bees, other insects, and shrimp **are not** considered livestock.

Please note these questions are written relative to the most common animals used in these projects. If you will use a less-common species (fish for example), answer the question relative to your species. For example, for question #6, stocking density for fish would be number of fish per tank, pond, etc.

It is possible that some of the questions in this section might not apply to your project. If that is the case, simply record "not applicable" or "NA" as your response. However, we expect to see specific responses to all of these questions for most, if not all, of the projects submitted to NCR-SARE.

Once you have completed the Livestock Care form, click on "Save." Then click on "Next Section" to complete your application.

- 1) Does this project involve livestock (vertebrate animals only)? ____ Yes, ____ No
- 2) Please indicate what kind of animals will be involved in your project.
- 3) Please indicate how many of each animal will be involved in your project.
- 4) Please indicate the source (name and location) from which you plan to obtain animals for your project. If you already own the animals and they are already at the project site, where did you obtain them and how long have you had them?

- 5) Will you be using money from NCR-SARE to purchase animals?
- 6) What is stocking density (space per animal)? Please provide a response for all forms of housing (pens, feedlots, pastures, etc.) that will be used in this project.
- 7) Describe the housing or shelter available for the animals in normal and inclement weather.
- 8) How is the housing/shelter cleaned? How often?
- 9) Describe how feed and water is provided, how often it is provided, and how often the feed and water containers are checked and cleaned.
- 10) Describe how the nutritional needs of the animals in this project will be met.
- 11) Describe the vaccination program and the routine procedures used to minimize disease and manage parasites. Include what the animals are vaccinated against and provide common names of the products that are used. Include a description of routine worming or parasite management.
- 12) What procedures will the animals undergo during course of this project? Will these procedures induce or potentially induce distress or pain in the animal and if so, how will you manage or minimize the potential for pain and distress?

- 13) Please indicate if other individuals will participate in handling and or caring for the animals in this project. If other individuals will be involved, please describe their expertise with animal care. If individuals need to be trained to perform the procedures described in this project, please indicate how they will be trained to do the procedures properly.

- 14) At the end of the project--what happens to animals? Please indicate if they will remain at the project site, be sold, or be slaughtered.

- 15) If animals are transported off-site, please describe how they will be transported.

- 16) If animals are slaughtered, please indicate if this will occur at a commercial licensed slaughter facility. If it is not done at a commercial licensed slaughter facility, describe where and how slaughter will be conducted.

- 17) Please indicate if the animals or products from these animals will be used as food for humans and if so, confirm that withdrawal times for medications will be followed before allowing the animals or products from the animals to enter the food chain.

- 18) Identify the veterinarian (name, address, and contact information) who will provide routine and emergency care of the animals used in this project.