

2024 NCR-SARE Partnership Grant Projects Recommended for Funding

| Project # | Title | PI Name | Primary Grantee | Project State | \$\$ Amt Funded | Cumulative | Brief Description |
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| ONC24-137 | From the Vine to Wine Production: Grape and Wine Producer Antimicrobial Resistance Curriculum | Sarah Al-Mazroa Smith | Iowa State University | IA | \$ 49,988 | \$ 49,988 | Antimicrobial resistance and anti-fungal practices are a growing concern in the grape and wine industry. This curriculum will increase producers' knowledge, awareness and motivation to implement new practices resulting in a more sustainable system in which these tools continue to be effective. |
| ONC24-138 | Establishing Honeyberry Collaborative Trials using SeedLinked to Crowdsource Cultivar Performance Data and Inform Grower Selections | Amaya Atucha | University of Wisconsin Madison | WI | \$ 29,716 | \$ 79,704 | We seek to crowdsource performance data on honeyberry cultivars from a large network of growers, researchers, and breeders. The data shared by the honeyberry community on SeedLinked will help inform grower cultivar choices and pave the way for the platform's use with other emerging perennial crops. |
| ONC24-139 | Solving the Compost Conundrum: Utilizing Microbial Inoculation to Increase Fertility and Soil Health on Small Farms | Megan Ayers | Urban Soil Health | IN | \$ 15,565 | \$ 95,269 | With the high-quality compost vacuum in many rural areas, small-scale farmers are forced to pay significant costs for inputs and transportation of organic materials. By inoculating lower-quality, locally-available composts, we hope to solve this problem for diversified specialty crop farmers. |
| ONC24-140 | Insight into Action: A Needs-Based Assessment of Four Sustainable Farms in Iowa | Jennifer Beltran | SILT | IA | \$ 50,000 | \$ 145,269 | We Will Perform a Needs-Based Assessment of Four Sustainable Farms in Iowa, Conduct Actionable Research Based on Data, and Create Tailored Educational Materials and Training Sessions That Address Vulnerabilities, Challenges, and Opportunities for Small, Sustainable Farmers |
| ONC24-141 | Addressing knowledge gaps in animal traction for vegetable production and forest management on Midwest farms | Moriah Bilenky | Purdue University | IN | \$ 46,660 | \$ 191,929 | This project will address knowledge gaps for Midwest growers interested in adopting animal traction on their farms and woodlots through hands on-intensive trainings, farm planning, and field day demonstrations. |
| ONC24-142 | Evaluate the sustainability of multiple fungicide applications to corn | Mandy Bish | University of Missouri | MO | \$ 49,991 | \$ 241,920 | Tar spot and southern rust diseases of corn recently emerged in the north central US resulting in fields receiving multiple fungicide applications with no way to measure effectiveness. This project allows evaluation of this practice with on-farm strip trials. |

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| ONC24-143 | Re-Integration of Mixed-Power Systems in Agroecological Intensification | Ruth Burke | Illinois State University | IL | \$ 49,248 | \$ 291,168 | This proposal focuses on community, pollinators, and mixed-use power systems to promote small farm and environmental sustainability. |
| ONC24-144 | Improving cover crop performance with community science | Jennifer Blesh | University of Michigan | MI | \$ 49,992 | \$ 341,160 | We will collaborate with NCR farmers from six states (MI, OH, IN, IL, WI, MN) to: understand variation in cover crop biomass across different farming conditions; develop practical recommendations for optimizing cover crops; and facilitate network building and knowledge sharing across the region. |
| ONC24-145 | Implementing precision irrigation management tools to improve the sustainability of Christmas tree production in a changing climate | Younsuk Dong | Michigan State University | MI | \$ 49,995 | \$ 391,155 | The project goal is to partner with 4 Christmas tree growers to demonstrate and evaluate the effects of irrigation management tools, including weather-based irrigation scheduling, soil moisture monitoring equipment, and automated irrigation control systems for use in Christmas tree production. |
| ONC24-146 | Ecological Outcome Verification: Could it be the incentive that catalyzes scalable change across Midwestern dairy farms? | Phil Forbes | Kalona Regenerative Network | IA | \$ 50,000 | \$ 441,155 | Nonprofit, Kalona Regenerative Network (KRN) supports a network of predominantly Amish dairy producers throughout the Midwestern United States and is catalyzing sustainability in the dairy industry by offering an innovative premium market pathway, EOY, which is the first step in gaining Land to Mark |
| ONC24-147 | Multi-state safe and humane shearing workshops to address the shortage of US sheep shearers | Jaelyn Whaley | South Dakota State University | SD | \$ 19,940 | \$ 461,095 | The U.S. has a shortage of quality sheep shearers. The goal is to provide shearing workshops over a 4 state region to beginning and intermediate shearers so they can learn and improve how to safely, humanely, and effectively shear sheep and increase the number of region-specific sheep shearers. |
| ONC24-148 | Exploring the Potential of Cultural Cash Crops and Cover Crops in Specialty Crop Production | Amy Gerdes | Community Crops | NE | \$ 42,344 | \$ 503,439 | Cover Crops; Specialty Crop Production; Vegetables; Pulses; Culturally Relevant Cover Crops |
| ONC24-149 | Partnership to Study Sustainable Methods for Growing Figs in the North Central Region | Kris Heeter | NAFEX | IN | \$ 49,898 | \$ 553,337 | This partnership project compares cold climate production models for growing three cold-hardy fig varieties in zones 5/6 on four farms in the North Central region with the goal of establishing the best conditions for growing fresh figs and providing new farming opportunities for local farmers. |

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| ONC24-150 | Building local partnerships to sustain local farm festivals and relocalize markets | Jan Joannides | Renewing the Countryside | MN | \$ 47,141 | \$ 600,478 | This project collaboratively develops and builds capacity for 7 local food festivals in rural communities across MN. Local farmer-led teams, supported by ag professionals, will build diverse partnerships within their communities to sustain the festivals as annual events and build out local markets. |
| ONC24-151 | Training and On-Farm Support to Onboard Farmers to the Wholesale Ready Program | Philip Kauth | REAP Food Group | WI | \$ 49,608 | \$ 650,086 | REAP Food Group will support the onboarding process for farmers selling their produce in the Wholesale Ready Marketplace through technical training and on-farm support in implementing best practices for wholesale production. |
| ONC24-152 | Increasing Highly Digestible Forage Density per Acre Utilizing No-till, Cover Crops, and Manure Application | Dave Lawstuen | Northeast Iowa Community College | IA | \$ 46,492 | \$ 696,578 | This project will demonstrate a 3 crop rotation with no-till, cover crops & manure application at the NE IA Dairy & Ag Foundation and on 3 farms in northeast Iowa. We will be analyzing the forage digestibility per acre. There will also be an on-site field day for local farmers and community members. |
| ONC24-153 | The Northern Queen Initiative: Improving Value, Availability, and Production of Mite-Resistant Honey Bee Queens in Northern Climates | James Lee | Sustainable Beekeepers Guild of Michigan | MI | \$ 50,000 | \$ 746,578 | This project is designed to identify, promote, and distribute locally adapted honey bee queen stock with a focus on resistance to Varroa-destroyer. This project will result in a network of queen producers that make stock available locally and regionally and educate beekeepers to do the same. |
| ONC24-155 | Expanding opportunities of season-long row covers in cucurbit production using native pollinators | Logan Minter | Ohio State University, South Centers | OH | \$ 49,529 | \$ 796,107 | Cooperative research to apply use of season-long row covers and native pollinators to enhance sustainability of cucurbit crops on production farms |
| ONC24-156 | Improving Viability for Small Farms Operated by Underserved Producers through Scaled Market Connections and Cooperative Sales | Kenda Templeton | Dalla Terra Ranch Foundation | IA | \$ 49,999 | \$ 846,106 | In Harmony Farm and seven farm partners will implement a digital sales platform for scaled purchases of sustainably produced foods. The platform and outreach activities will improve farmer sustainability through scaled presales and grow institutional access to climate-smart, locally sourced foods. |
| ONC24-157 | Soil and Crop Biology Testing - What It Means - Why Do It | Alan Sundermeier | Conservation Action Project | OH | \$ 49,107 | \$ 895,213 | Soil Health, Tissue Testing, Microbial Populations, Biology, Sustainable, Nutrient Management |

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| ONC24-158 | Ohio African Heritage Crop Project | Clare Thorn | Central State University Extension | OH | \$ 49,999 | \$ 945,212 | As an 1890 Land-Grant Institution and Historically Black College/University (HBCU), Central State University Extension will partner with four African American urban farmers with the Ohio African Heritage Crop Project testing viability, productivity, sustainability of African heritage crops. |
| ONC24-159 | Enhancing sheep health and productivity trainings | Jaelyn Whaley | South Dakota State University | SD | \$ 21,697 | \$ 966,909 | Five field days will be hosted at innovative sheep farms across the North Central region. Each of these field days will provide hands-on training for sheep producers to learn how to utilize recent advancements in genetic selection to improve sheep health, productivity and fitness to the environment. |