



2020 Call for Partnership Grant Proposals

Important Dates

The online system will open for submissions:

March 5, 2020

Applications, with authorized signatures, are due:

April 14, 2020, 5:00 p.m. ET

Applications are submitted online at: projects.sare.org

Questions?

Visit the Northeast SARE website at: www.northeastsare.org/PartnershipGrant.

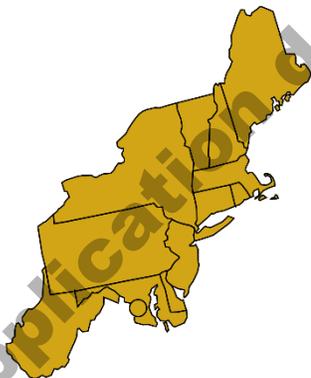
Contact grant coordinator Candice Huber at candice.huber@uvm.edu or 802/651-8335 x554.

About Northeast SARE

The Northeast Sustainable Research and Education (SARE) Program offers competitive grants to farmers, educators, service providers, researchers, and graduate students to address key issues affecting the sustainability of agriculture throughout our region. With funding from the USDA, Northeast SARE is one of four regional SARE programs that aims to improve farm profits, stewardship, and quality of life for farmers.

The program—including funding decisions—is driven by the Northeast SARE outcome statement:

Agriculture in the Northeast will be diversified and profitable, providing healthful products to its customers; it will be conducted by farmers who manage resources wisely, who are satisfied with their lifestyles, and have a positive influence on their communities and the environment.



The Northeast region includes:

Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, Maryland, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, West Virginia, Vermont, and Washington, D.C.

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Northeast SARE
University of Vermont
140 Kennedy Drive, Suite 202
South Burlington, VT 05403
802/651-8335
northeastsare@uvm.edu
www.northeastsare.org



Northeast SARE, one of four regional SARE programs, is hosted by the University of Vermont and is funded by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Northeast SARE programs are offered to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or familial status. 02.27.2020

About the Northeast SARE Partnership Grant Program

Overview

The Partnership Grant program funds projects conducted by researchers, educators and agricultural service providers working in direct partnership with farmers. Projects should encourage design and implementation of innovative solutions to current sustainability challenges related to production, marketing and/or farmer and community well-being in Northeast farming and food systems.

Northeast SARE funds a broad range of projects; there are no set restrictions on the topics that Partnership Grants may address so long as the projects lead to new information or working relationships that are consistent with the Northeast SARE outcome statement (page 1) and address the program's review criteria. Projects may conduct research to improve production practices, pest management techniques, marketing approaches, and farmer, farmworker or community well-being; offer education and training programs to increase knowledge and improve decision-making about sustainable practices; develop unique machines and tools; organize on-farm or in-market demonstrations of new techniques; explore new farm management and community development approaches that support sustainable agriculture outcomes; and propose other work to strengthen our Northeast SARE agricultural community.

See examples of past projects at: www.northeastsare.org/PartnershipGrantExamples.

The Partnership Grant program requires an explicit connection to the needs and interests of farmers in the Northeast. It is **not** designed to support educational programs for the non-farming general public, food donation efforts, general public awareness campaigns about agriculture and nutrition, or community and school gardening initiatives.

Eligible Applicants

Partnership Grants are open to anyone who works with the farming community, including personnel at nonprofit organizations such as colleges and universities, Cooperative Extension, and agricultural and community NGOs; municipalities, state departments of agriculture and federal agencies like NRCS; and for-profit business entities that provide agricultural consulting, veterinary services, etc. Personnel from 1890 Land-Grant Institutions and other historically black colleges and universities, as well as Hispanic-serving institutions are encouraged to apply. As a project leader, you must have the skills and experience needed to oversee and carry out the proposed work. Your organization must have the legal structure and financial capacity in place to receive and execute a Northeast SARE contract, including expending funds needed for the project prior to receiving reimbursements from Northeast SARE; advance payments are not possible.

Applications are limited to one per individual per year. While you may only submit one proposal in a year, other individuals from your organization may also apply. Current grant recipients who are behind in their reporting cannot apply.

Projects must take place within the Northeast region that includes Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, Maryland, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, West Virginia, Vermont, and Washington, D.C.

Northeast SARE will not fund proposals that appear to duplicate work that has been approved for funding by another grant program (within or external to SARE). It is your responsibility to make clear to reviewers that any proposed work is unique, and that if it is part of a project submitted to or funded by another grant program, the project builds on or complements the other work and is not duplicating it.

New for the 2020 Cycle

Candice Huber is now managing the Partnership Grant Program; please **contact her** with your questions.

You will submit your proposal on SARE's online grant submission platform at projects.sare.org. Instructions on how to access and submit proposals in the system are included on page 7.

Farmer Partner Role

Farmers must be partners in the planning and implementation of the project. If you, as the applicant, are a farmer, you must include at least one other farmer in the proposal as the designated farmer partner.

Northeast SARE defines a farm as a commercial operation with an established farm income of at least \$1,000 on a regular basis from crop and/or livestock enterprises that may include aquaculture or land-based production; see the “What is a farm?” guide at www.northeastsare.org/PartnershipGrant for more information. Trial replications on a research farm in addition to those conducted on partner farms are acceptable.

Your proposal must include a letter from each farmer partner that describes their farm and farming experience, confirms their commitment to and importance of the project, and outlines the duties they will perform.

Funding Available

Partnership Grants are capped at \$30,000 and typically run for one to two years. One-year projects with funding requests well under the cap are encouraged. Proposals with relatively high funding requests should clearly justify the need for a more robust budget. This justification may include: 1) enlisting multi-institution or multi-disciplinary collaboration, 2) exploring more complex subject matter, or 3) taking longer to document results or changes.

There is no matching funds requirement for Northeast SARE grants.

While collaborations are encouraged, you, as the applicant, hold primary responsibility for the project and must be the primary recipient of funds to carry it out. If collaborating organizations receive funds, their role must be subsidiary and they may not receive more than 50% of the grant award.

Partnership grants are competitive. Proposals are reviewed based on the review criteria outlined in the application instructions. The strongest proposals are selected from among those received during the current cycle; past proposals are not considered.

Conflict of Interest

Members of the Northeast SARE Administrative Council and state SARE program staff are not permitted to apply for or receive funding from SARE competitive grants. Members of grant review teams are not permitted to discuss or vote on applications that involve institutions for which they work, organizations for which they serve as board members or advisors, former graduate student advisees, or close personal friends and family.

Public Domain

Applications and reviews are kept confidential, shared only among Northeast SARE staff, Administrative Council members, and grant program reviewers. However, Northeast SARE, as a USDA NIFA program, is committed to public access of results of funded projects; therefore, information, exclusive or proprietary processes, procedures or techniques developed with SARE funds, project reports, and related information will be in the public domain.

Acknowledging SARE

All funded projects are required to acknowledge Northeast SARE as the funding source in all project publications and outreach materials.

Use of Funds

SARE funding must comply with USDA/NIFA and University of Vermont guidelines and, therefore, there are certain allowable and ineligible expenses for this grant program, listed below. All grant expenses must be incurred during the contract period, defined in the approved contract before the project begins.

Funds may be used for expenses specific to the project:

- **Labor**, including wages or salary, and benefits, for individuals working directly on the project;
- **Supplies**, including research supplies, outreach materials, copies, postage, printing, and software specific to the project;
- **Farm equipment rental** or operating charges;
- **Services**, like soil testing, interview transcription, consulting, etc.;
- **Travel and per diem** necessary for the project;
- **Specialized equipment** rented or purchased essential for the project;
- **Journal publication fees** so long as they are incurred during the contract period; and
- **Indirect costs** up to 10 percent of total grant request.

Funds may NOT be used for:

- **Capital costs** for either the applicant institution or the partner farmer, including the purchase of land, buildings, livestock, machinery, orchards, greenhouses, and other major farm improvements, fixtures and expansion expenses;
- **Normal operating expenses**. Do not ask for specific overhead costs in the form of utility bills, general maintenance, general supplies, or any other expenses that would be there in the absence of the project.
- **Incentive offers and promotional items**, including items of clothing (hats, tee shirts, aprons, etc.), swag, giveaways, subsidies, raffles, gift cards, and branded promotional material;
- Purchase of **motorized vehicles** and **equipment**;
- **Travel to scholarly meetings** unless essential to the project, such as presentation of project results;
- **International travel** unless integral to the project's success and described in the budget justification (Note: There are certain restrictions on costs and carriers.);
- **Cell phone** charges, even if you use your cell phone in the course of the project;
- **Food** expenses unless necessary for the continuity of a training event or project meeting. (Note: When SARE funds are used for meals, USDA employees should note this on their expense reports and deduct meal costs from any per diem reimbursements.); and
- **Expenses outside the grant period**. SARE cannot pay for expenses incurred before the award start date or after the end date on the grant contract.

Additionally, it is expected that costs for copiers, cameras, computers, video equipment, and other items that have a wide range of uses beyond the boundaries of the project be provided by the applicant. To be considered a direct cost, the item must be clearly essential and used 100% for the project.

Grant Timeline

Online system opens for submissions.....	March 5, 2020
Online submission deadline.....	April 14, 2020, 5:00 p.m. ET
Review panel ranks applications.....	April to June 2020
Northeast SARE Administrative Council makes final selections	July 2020
Award decisions announced to applicants.....	Late July 2020
Funding start date for awarded projects.....	August 1, 2020

Preparing Your Application

Advanced Planning

You will submit your proposal online at: projects.sare.org. Please prepare your application well in advance of the deadline, keeping in mind that the Grant Commitment Form must be completed and signed by you, the applicant, as well as the authorized official at your organization or institution. Work on the budget well ahead of time to verify amounts as you go. Also, allow time to receive the commitment letter(s) from your farmer partners and other collaborators. All required documents must be included with your online application by the deadline; failure to upload required documents will result in the rejection of your proposal.

Recommend Crafting Responses Offline

We highly recommend that you prepare your application offline, completing your responses per the instructions that follow and then copying and pasting responses into the online system. To that end, a Word document of the proposal questions is available at: www.northeastsare.org/PartnershipGrant.

Text Limits, Formatting, and Writing Suggestions

Keep your writing clear and simple. Avoid jargon and write for a mixed audience that includes farmers, researchers, extension staff and other agricultural service providers. Grant reviewers have knowledge on a range of agricultural topics but do not assume they have deep expertise in your subject area.

There are word limits for most sections of the application. Again, it is highly advisable to develop the proposal content offline, ensuring it is accurate and complies with the word limits. Depending on the word processor used, your word count may differ than the online submission system and additional editing may be necessary after pasting it into the online system.

Note that when word count limits are exceeded in the online submission system, the word count font changes to red and you will not be able to save that answer until the word count is at or below the limit. Also note that copying and pasting from some word processing programs may result in the loss of formatting; make any formatting corrections applied from within the online system. Figures, tables, and other supporting graphics are allowed only in specified sections.

Ask a colleague or someone familiar with the grant program to review the draft of your application. A fresh set of eyes can help you identify sections that may be unclear, correct errors, and strengthen areas that may need help. SARE staff (including state SARE coordinators) cannot provide specific edits to written drafts of proposals but can answer general questions as to what is appropriate to include in a SARE proposal and perhaps provide some overall direction as to topic relevancy.

It is advisable to correct any mistakes online before submitting and to print out the final copy for your records.

Application Outline/ Checklist

Components of the application and their word limits appear below, listed in the order they appear in the online application system. You may use this outline as a checklist to ensure the application is complete before submitting.

Attachments must be directly related to the proposed project work. Do not attach extraneous materials such as brochures or resumes. Do not attach letters of general support from people who are not direct participants.

- Project Title (150-character limit, including spaces)
- Project Description (300-character limit, including spaces)

Proposal Information

- Project Start Date
- Project End Date
- State
- Primary Commodities
- Primary Practices
- Benefits and Impacts
- Project Summary (250-word limit)

Applicant and Collaborator Information

- Experience, Skills and Capacity (750-word limit)
- Partner Farmers(s)
- Other Key Collaborator(s) (if applicable)
- Letters of Commitment from Farmer Partner(s) and, when applicable, letters of commitment from other Key Collaborators with their plans of work (file upload)

Introduction

- Problem and Solution (750-word limit)
- Previous Work (750-word limit)
- Citation List (750-word limit)

Plan of Work

- Objectives (200-word limit)
- Materials and Methods (1000-word limit)
- Other Relevant Research Information (file upload)
- Outreach (500-word limit)
- Timeline (500-word limit)

Budget

- Budget Justification and Narratives from applicant and subawardees, if any (file upload)
- Budget Summary

Commitment of Organization

- Grant Commitment Form (file upload)
- Institutional Official Information
- FDP Clearinghouse

Required Documents

Applications with missing or incomplete required documents will not advance to grant review so be sure the following required documents are uploaded:

- Letters of Commitment from farmers and collaborators (PDF)
- Budget Justification and Narrative Spreadsheet(s) (.xlsx)
- Grant Commitment Form for each institution receiving funds (PDF or image)

SARE's Grant Management System

The online application system will be open for Partnership Grant submissions from March 5, 2020 until the deadline, **5:00 p.m. ET on April 14, 2020**. Staff support to answer questions and address technical submission issues will be available until 5:00 p.m. ET on the due date. Applications submitted after 5:00 p.m. ET on April 14 will not be accepted. We strongly suggest you submit your application well in advance of the deadline, in the unlikely event you experience technical issues that take time to resolve.

Getting a User Account

Northeast SARE has recently migrated all of its grant submissions to SARE's national Grant Management System. Enter the SARE Grant Management System at projects.sare.org.

All new users should select "Create an account" and complete the registration information. The system will send you an email with instructions to create your password.

If you have previously received SARE grants and submitted reports, you are registered as a user in the system and should use your account to submit your application.

Logging In

From the SARE Grant Management System landing page at projects.sare.org, select "Log in." Once logged in, select "Start a new grant proposal." Grant opportunities for all four SARE regions will be listed; scroll down until you see Northeast. Under "2020 Northeast SARE Partnership Grants" choose "Begin a New Proposal."

Entering Your Proposal

Start your proposal by clicking "Edit Title" and entering a clear, succinct title of under 150 characters (including spaces) that captures the essence of the project's intent. Avoid acronyms, jargon and unnecessary words.

Click on each section and submit responses to the questions. Detailed instructions for each question are provided in this document. Enter responses by clicking on "Edit Answer" for each question. Be sure to click "Save" after each entry; you must save each question individually. Clicking "save" for one question does not save responses entered in other questions.

At any time during the preparation of your proposal, you may preview a draft from the Proposal Overview Page by clicking "View Draft." You may also share the draft of your proposal with your farmer partner and other collaborators by selecting "Link to Share" found at the top of the Draft Page (or by creating and sending a PDF of the application).

When all proposal questions are answered to your satisfaction and you have uploaded all required attachments, go to the Proposal Overview page and click the "Submit Proposal" button at the bottom of the page. The "Submit" button will not appear until you have answered all the required questions.

Prior to the deadline, you may "unsubmit" your proposal to revise it. If you choose to unsubmit, don't forget to submit it again when you are done editing, otherwise it will not go forward to review. Each time you submit or unsubmit, you will receive an email confirmation.

Step-by-Step Application Instructions

The online proposal application is divided into sections that contain multiple questions to answer. Instructions for all questions follow. Review criteria appear next to their associated questions throughout the application. All submitted proposals are evaluated using these criteria and must be adequately addressed for a proposal to be funded.

Project Title (150-character limit, including spaces)

Use a clear title that briefly and appropriately describes the primary focus of the project. Avoid acronyms, jargon, and unnecessary words.

Project Description (300-character limit, including spaces)

A short description of what the project intends to accomplish. Should your project be funded, this is the description that will show up as the search result in the SARE database.

Proposal Information

Project start date. Choose a start date from the calendar pop-up. Projects should not start before August 1, 2020. Note: SARE cannot pay for expenses incurred before the project start date.

Project end date. Choose an end date from the calendar pop-up. You will be asked for yearly budget information for each project period of 12 months or more, as defined by start and end dates. All projects must be complete by November 30, 2023.

State. Select the state where the majority of work will be carried out.

Primary Commodities. Select only the primary production commodities being addressed or investigated by the project, not every commodity that might potentially be affected. If your project is not commodity specific, select "Does not apply to specific commodities".

Primary Practices. Select only the primary production practices being addressed or investigated by the project, not every practice that might potentially be affected.

Benefits and Impacts. Of the choices listed, how might your project have the most benefit and impact? Select up to two areas of benefits and impacts.

Project Summary (250-word limit). This is a standalone summary of the project. It should briefly describe the issue, the project objective(s), key components of your study's plan of work, and outreach strategy. Since the summary is the first thing reviewers will see, take some time to make it clear and compelling. You may want to compose the summary after you have written the rest of your proposal.

Applicant and Collaborator Information

Describe your team including you, your partner farmer and any additional key collaborators.

What experience, skills and capacity do you, your organization, partner farmer(s), and key collaborators bring to the project? (750-word limit)

Describe your qualifications to carry out this work, including your expertise, management skills, and outreach capabilities. Explain your organization's or business's experience with projects like this one and, if applicable, specify any contribution of labor, money or facilities such as a laboratory, greenhouse, livestock, fields, etc. to the project.

Present your partner farmer(s) by describing their farm(s), their experience in farming, and their role(s) in the project.

Describe any other key collaborators (including consultants, trainers, etc.) that will be involved. Details for any subawardees should be listed here. Subawardees need to have their own plan of work which should be attached below with their letter of commitment.

Partner Farmer(s).

Select "Add a cooperator" to enter the name and contact information for each partner farmer. Be sure each farmer listed here is described above.

Other Collaborators.

If other collaborators are integral to the project, select "Add a cooperator" and enter the name and contact information for each. Be sure each collaborator is described above.

Letters of commitment from collaborators. (File upload)

Your partner farmer(s) and other key collaborators (other than the applicant) must provide letters of commitment. The letters are required and should indicate that they understand their role, what they will bring to the effort, and that they are ready and willing to participate. Letters should be written by the individuals and not the applicant.

If your project budget includes consultant fees or subawardees, these individuals must be listed above as collaborators; a signed letter of commitment from each individual that includes their plan of work must be included in the proposal. Subawardees are also required to provide a budget justification and narrative; it should be uploaded in the budget section.

Combine all letters into one PDF attachment for the upload.

Do NOT upload any letters of general support from individuals not involved in your project, curricula vitae, or sample promotional materials about you or your farm.

Review criteria:

The application adequately describes the technical, professional and organizational capacity of both the project leader and their organization to manage the project. The partner farmer(s) is/are experienced and able to host and support the proposed project.

Review criteria:

Signed letters of commitment from the partner farmer(s) and other key collaborators (if applicable), stating their roles and commitment, are uploaded to the application.

Introduction

Define the problem or opportunity and its importance to the Northeast farming community, and past efforts to address it.

Problem and Solution (500-word limit)

What is the problem or opportunity, why is it important, and what is your proposed solution? Briefly state the problem or opportunity the project will address and explain why it matters. Convey how addressing this problem or opportunity will improve the sustainability of farming locally or regionally and what the impact could be as related to the key themes of sustainable agriculture.

State the demonstrated farmer need for this type of investigation; what evidence do you have that your project will address a need of the farming community, for example, through articles, communications, or surveys?

If you reference a study or article, put the full citation in the Citation List below.

Review criteria:

The application adequately demonstrates a clear interest or need for the project information and specifies how it will help farmers. The proposed project makes a direct link to at least one of the following key sustainable agriculture themes:

- reduction of environmental and/or health risks in agriculture;
- improved productivity, reduction of costs and/or increase of net farm income;
- conservation of soil, improvement of water quality, and protection of natural resources;
- enhancement of employment in farm communities; and
- improvement of quality of life for farmers, their employees, and the farming community.

Previous Work (750-word limit)

What efforts have been made by others to solve the problem or take advantage of this opportunity? Tell us how your project builds on what is currently known and how it is different. If the practice or approach is known but has not been applied in the Northeast region, explain how you will test what has worked elsewhere or make adaptations for your area. Citing other studies and articles is an acceptable way to demonstrate your knowledge of current research. Note: while you can include SARE studies, it is best not to rely solely on the SARE reporting database.

Full citations should be listed in the Citation List section below.

Citation List (750-word limit)

Provide a list of citations that you reference anywhere in your application.

Review criteria:

The project will contribute new information based on a demonstrated understanding of related work; the proposal builds on current knowledge rather than merely verifying that an established sustainable practice or approach already works in the Northeast.

Plan of Work

Describe the project objective(s), materials and methods, project timeline, and outreach plan.

Objectives (200-word limit)

What is(are) your proposal's objective(s)? State your project's objective(s) starting with the phrase, "This project seeks to..." or "The question(s) we will answer is/are..." Be specific. End by stating the benefits to farmers if the project is successful.

Review criteria:

Project objectives are clearly stated and include anticipated results that will benefit farmers.

Materials and Methods (1,000-word limit)

What are the planned materials and methods for each of your project objectives? For field and laboratory research, include a description of proposed treatments, experimental design, treatment application, data to be collected, measurement protocols, and methods of analysis. Research methods should be rigorous; quantitative methods should yield statistically valid results when possible. While statistical analysis is not required for this grant program, it can provide a competitive advantage, depending on the type of study. If you plan to use a statistical model, state the design (e.g., one-way ANOVA, etc.) and the sample size sufficient for the method chosen.

Review criteria:

The materials and methods described will provide the evidence needed to meet project objectives. It is clear what will be measured; how, where, and when data will be collected, and how the data will be summarized to present the results. Appropriate and sufficient supporting documentation is provided.

For social science and marketing research, include a description of the target population(s), research design, methods and instruments to be used, data to be collected, measurement protocols, and methods of analysis. Explain how you will analyze, summarize, interpret and present any data gathered or program results, whether qualitative or quantitative.

For project objectives that involve education, demonstration, training and organizing efforts, include a description of the planned activities, engagement strategies, and how the various project components will be carried out.

General recommendations and sharing of project results should be described in the outreach section.

Other Relevant Research Information (file upload)

Upload supporting documents by using the "Add Media" button, including plots and sampling plans, experiment diagrams, prototype images or drawings, survey questions, proof of concept for economic analysis, and other supporting research documentation as needed.

Inserting URLs of websites into the methods section are ill-advised since reviewers may not have time to investigate all of them; as an alternative, refer to them and place them in your citation list.

Documents are required for certain situations. See the list below to see if they apply to your specific proposal:

- If you are conducting field trials or on-farm demonstrations, attach plot plans or diagrams for experimental design (hand-drawn is acceptable).
- If you are proposing an invention or prototype, attach diagrams, sketches or explanatory images.
- If your project proposes a feasibility or economic viability study, attach a proof of concept or pro-forma budget.
- If your project will measure changes in human learning or behavior, include sample surveys.
- Note: Subawardee plans of work should be uploaded with their letters of commitment.

Outreach (500-word limit)

How will you disseminate your project's results? Describe the capacity of your organization or business to provide project outreach. Describe how, with specific events or modes of distribution, you will share the results of your project with farmers who can use the information, as well as with relevant organizations or stakeholders. List only what you can reasonably accomplish within your project's timeline and share what audience(s) and projected numbers will be reached.

Review criteria:

The capacity to conduct outreach is clearly described. There is a sound plan to reach farmers and other stakeholders that could benefit from the project results. Specific events and other modes of distribution are described that have clear and realistic deliverables. The geographic area targeted for outreach is ambitious but appropriate for the project.

Timeline (500-word limit)

Outline the project activities in a chronological timeline that states the steps you will take, including planned outreach activities. Beginning with your start date, specify in a month/year format when activities happen. Include how long each step will take and who will do them. Keep in mind that SARE funds will not cover any work prior to August 1, 2020 and that the timeline should align with your project budget in terms of personnel paid, testing, etc. You may write out your timeline in outline form or put it in a table format as below:

Review criteria:

The timeline is realistic and includes descriptions of who will do what, when and how long each step will take. The timetable is aligned with the project's budget.

Example timeline in table form.

Time Period	Activity	Personnel involved/time allotted
August - September, 2020	Meet with partner farmer and set up plots	Lisa Chiang - PI, Anthony De Campo - farmer, Taylor Allende -student assistant. Est. 32 hours per person.
March 2021, first 2 weeks	Prepare beds and plant seeds for control and treatments	Anthony De Campo and Taylor Allende. Est. 16 hours per person.
March - June 2021	Take measurements weekly	Taylor Allende, est. 2 hours /week for 18 weeks = 36 hours.

Budget

Both a summary and a detailed description and justification of the budget is necessary to establish the specifics of your request for funding.

The funding needed is defined by the project budget that provides your best estimate for the expenses you expect to encounter. All expected expenses should be itemized in the Budget Justification and Narrative. Calculate your costs as precisely as possible to show reviewers what funds are needed to carry out your project, and why they are needed.

The budget should be realistic and complete. A budget lacking sufficient detail, containing grossly over- or under-estimated expenses, or including unallowable expenses may decrease the chances for funding.

Review criteria:

A clear and sensible budget is proposed. The budget is internally consistent (units provided and math is correct), and justifies how the funds will be spent. Budget items are allowable and reasonable. The overall budget request is appropriate to the scale, scope, and expected results of the project.

See [Appendix A](#) for a sample Budget Justification and Narrative and Budget Summary.

Budget Justification and Narrative (file upload)

Download and complete the appropriate Northeast SARE Budget Justification and Narrative Template (Excel spreadsheet) provided in the “Tools For Applicants” box at:

www.northeastsare.org/PartnershipGrant. Select the template that matches your project’s length (i.e., one-, two-, or three-year overall budget length). Use only the categories in the template (personnel, materials and supplies, travel, printing/publications, other direct costs, etc.), adding rows or expanding row heights as needed to accommodate your narrative and justification. Justify each expense with narrative description. Show how each requested amount was determined by itemizing the quantity and per-unit cost of each expense.

Enter any funds for collaborator(s) at another institution or organization in the “Subcontract/Subawards” section. Make sure their funding request is not the majority of the total budget. A separate budget justification and narrative template is required for each institution that will receive funds through subcontracts. Take time to calculate your expenses for this project—the budget submitted is what reviewers will consider and requests for changes after submission may not be approved. Only include funds requested from SARE in this budget justification. When complete, upload the Excel file (do not convert to a pdf format) to the online application system.

Budget Summary

Enter the summed subtotals for each major budget category from the completed Budget Justification and Narrative into the Budget Summary (*see example in Appendix A*). Click “Add a budget item” and select the appropriate funding category (i.e., personnel, materials and supplies, travel, printing and publication costs, other direct costs, subawards, and indirect costs). In the “Item Description” box, type “Subtotal from budget justification and narrative template”. Skip and leave blank the “Details/Justification” box (you provided this information in the Budget Justification and Narrative template). Enter the summed subtotal amount from the template, broken out by year if project exceeds one year. The number of years provided are defined by the project start and end dates entered in the General Information section at the beginning of the application.

Click on “Add another budget item” to enter summed subtotals from more categories.

Commitment of Organization

This last section requests information needed to verify that your organization or business supports your application and has the capacity to manage the finances of the project.

Grant Commitment Form (file upload)

This form certifies that you have received institutional approval from an authorized official of your organization or business. Print the Grant Commitment form that is available with the Application Instructions at www.northeastsare.org/PartnershipGrant. You, as the applicant, must sign as the project leader. You must also obtain the signature of the owner of the business, an authorized official of the applicant institutional grants office, or fiscal agent for the organization.

You can share your final proposal with your institution’s authorized official by clicking on the “View Draft” button on the previous page, then printing the proposal or sharing the proposal by providing the “Link to share” URL available at the “View Draft” page. The completed sign-off sheet is required at the time of application, so be sure to bring this to your authorized personnel well before the submission deadline.

Upload a pdf or image copy of the fully officiated Grant Commitment form.

Note: Completed Grant Commitment Forms are also required from all institutions and organizations that receive SARE funds as Collaborator/subawards—so please sure to work with your project partners

to receive their completed (and signed) Grant Commitment Forms well in advance of the deadline. You must upload PDFs of these forms with your submitted proposal.

Institutional Official Information

Provide the name and contact information of the official for the institution, organization or business serving as fiscal agent for the project.

FDP Clearinghouse

Is this institution registered in the Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP) Expanded Clearinghouse? This information will most likely be provided by your authorized official and Yes or No will be indicated on your completed Grant Commitment Form. A list of participating organizations can be found at: fdpclearinghouse.org/organizations.

Submission Acknowledgment

When all proposal questions are answered to your satisfaction and you have uploaded all required attachments, return to the proposal overview and click the “Submit Proposal” button. Prior to the deadline, you may “unsubmit” to revise the proposal. If you choose to unsubmit, don’t forget to submit it again when you are done editing, otherwise it will not go forward to review. Each time you submit or unsubmit, you will receive an email confirmation. The deadline for final submission is April 14, 2020 at 5 pm est.

After the deadline when your proposal has been reviewed for completion, you will receive another submission acknowledgement from the Northeast SARE office as an email that includes a link to a survey that asks about your experience with the grant application process. Your feedback is anonymous but Northeast SARE staff greatly appreciate it as it helps improve the grant program.

Applications Selected for Funding

Proposals are evaluated, based on the criteria listed above, by independent review teams made up of agricultural stakeholders from across the region. Grants are awarded based on the review team rankings. The Administrative Council may give additional consideration to states, audiences and topics that are underrepresented in the Northeast SARE portfolio. If the Northeast SARE Administrative Council selects your project for funding, you may expect the following.

Notification

The Northeast SARE Administrative Council will select applications for funding in July 2020. SARE staff will notify applicants of the status of their applications in late July 2020.

Contracting and Disbursement of Funds

The authorized official of the grant recipient’s organization or institution will receive a Subcontract Agreement from the University of Vermont, the host institution for Northeast SARE. Businesses will receive a vendor services agreement for the work. Funds are to be used exclusively for project activities, subject to the restrictions outlined in “Use of Funds.” Funds are released on a reimbursement basis on a net 30-day term to the institution/organization/business upon receipt of invoices with supporting documentation. Since funds are released on a reimbursement basis, your organization/business needs to have the financial capacity to pay project expenses up front, including payments for any collaborators. Northeast SARE will hold the last 20 percent of the award until the project work, including outreach, has been completed and the final project report has been received and approved by SARE staff. For more information, please refer to, “Managing Your Northeast SARE Partnership Grant,” at: www.northeastsare.org/ManagePartnershipGrant.

IACUC and IRB Documentation

If your project is funded and involves livestock, SARE will require certification of protocol review from your institution's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). If your project is funded and involves human research subjects, SARE will need a completed approval document from your institution's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Protection of Human Subjects in Research. If your organization does not have this capability, you should include at least one key collaborator that is compensated in the budget from an institution with this service and who has agreed to conduct the animal care or human subjects review. You will need to send this documentation to grant manager Candice Huber.

Required Reporting

Northeast SARE requires annual progress reports and a comprehensive final report for all projects. All reports will be submitted in the national SARE Grant Management System. Reports should describe the progress made on the project, detail findings observed, and document any outputs and impacts. All outreach and educational activities should be reported as well as any measured changes in knowledge or awareness, attitudes and opinions, and/or the adoption of new practices. Publications, photos, and other documentation should be added to the report as attachments to help document and promote the project.

Progress reports for the previous calendar year are due by January 15 while the project continues. Final reports are due within 60 days of project completion and include should include full, detailed results of experiments, research, and outreach activities that were defined in the application, regardless of pending or published journal article submissions.

Northeast SARE asks that Partnership Grant recipients provide contact information for at least two years after the project has ended to allow for follow-up and response to inquiries about the project (see [Appendix B](#) for types of post-project information SARE collects). For more information on what SARE hopes its project investments will achieve, see the SARE Logic Model at: www.northeastsare.org/About-Us/SARE-logic-models.

Resources

The following resources may help you as plan and write your application.

- To learn about all projects funded to date by the SARE program, visit the national reporting site at: projects.sare.org/search-projects. You may search the database by region, state, project type, year, commodities and practices addressed, as well as by keywords.
- The Alternative Farming Systems Information Center (AFSIC) at the National Agricultural Library specializes in identifying resources about sustainable food systems and practices: www.nal.usda.gov/afsic. Information specialists can share resources and search techniques that may be relevant to your application.

Appendix A: Budget Guidance--Explanation of Expense Categories and Examples

Use one of the Northeast SARE budget justification and narrative templates (Excel spreadsheet) provided at: www.northeast sare.org/PartnershipGrant. You may select a template that matches your project's length (i.e., one-, two-, or three-year overall budget length) and fits your institution's budgeting needs. Complete descriptions for each item; the template will total categories for each year, and you will use these category totals to enter in the online project summary. Expenses must be itemized—comprised by the quantity and per-unit cost of each expense--and include a narrative description that explains the need for and use of each expense, and calculate the total cost of each item. Round subtotals to the nearest dollar. Save and upload the budget justification in a spreadsheet format (.xlsx only). While descriptions of budget items are provided in the template, see below for more explanations of some budget categories.

Personnel

Show **personnel costs** – your time or the time of other employees – as an hourly rate times anticipated time needed to complete the project, or, if salaried, the percentage of time (FTE) and salary rate. Only people employed by your organization should be listed in this section. Use your timeline section to help you estimate the hours worked. Farmer collaborators and consultants should be listed in under “Other Direct Costs” as consultants.

Non-Personnel

For **materials and supplies**, be sure to itemize the quantity and per-unit cost of each expense. For example, if under materials you are proposing to buy spiral-bound notebooks, your budget line should list the item, specify why they are needed, how many are needed, and the cost per unit (“Notebooks for field day trainings, 150 @\$3 each = \$450”).

Perennials and livestock may be considered within the materials and supplies expense line. Perennial crops or livestock are generally unallowable expenses for the purposes of establishing a commercial enterprise. However, if you are conducting a variety trial, or testing a crop that is new to your region, and the amount is clearly what would be sufficient for plot trials and not to establish commercial production, the purchase of perennial plants is allowable. The purchase of bees for research is also allowable when the numbers are in accord with creating a common basis for treatment comparison. The introduction of smaller, shorter-lived animal species as a treatment of a study can be an allowable expense if the cost is low, an example being the use of ducks or chickens as pest or weed control. Feed during the study period is allowed and housing or fencing investments are treated as equipment expenses, as described above in the previous section. If the livestock are a normal part of your farm operation, only request the cost of the livestock if they are in addition to the numbers you usually carry and the study involves a loss of income. SARE funds are not meant to subsidize farm expansions.

For **travel**, include who is traveling, where they are going, the purpose of the trip, and the distance per trip (“Four farmers, car travel to trainings, travel from their farms to the research station, once a month for three months for twelve 60-mile average round trips @ \$0.75/mile = \$414.00”). International travel is discouraged and, if proposed, must be integral to the project's success and described in your budget justification. There are certain restrictions on costs and carriers; contact SARE staff for details.

Other Direct Costs

Conferences/Meetings/Workshops-Expenses. This section is for events that you will be hosting. **Food expenses** are typically **not** allowed unless clearly justified as light refreshments or working lunches necessary for the continuity of a training or meeting. Events you are attending should be listed under Travel.

Purchase of Equipment / Rental of Equipment or Land-use Charges. Your organization should already have essential office supplies such as copiers, cameras, computers, video equipment, and other

items that could have a wide range of uses beyond the boundaries of the project, so any requests for these items must be clearly justified as essential and specific to the project. SARE funds cannot be used to pay general overhead expenses such as utility bills, general maintenance, general office supplies, ongoing operating costs, or other expenses that would be there in the absence of the project. General-use items like these are part of your institutional overhead and are covered by the allowance for indirect costs.

Subcontracts/Subawards. Provide the name and institution of the subawardee and the total funds requested. The subawardee will provide a plan of work and their own budget (may use SARE budget template or own as long as detail is there.) Be sure to attach the budget narrative and justification for the subaward.

Indirect Costs

If your institution or organization has a currently active federally negotiated indirect cost rate, you can request 10% of the overall award as indirect. Calculate this amount by dividing the project's direct costs by nine, or estimate it as 11.11 percent of direct costs. If your institution's rate is less than this calculation, you must use the lesser amount or, if your institution has never had a federally negotiated rate, you may request a de minimis rate of 10 percent of direct costs.

Private businesses are issued service agreement contracts and do not qualify for indirect funds, and they may include any direct office and administrative expenses as direct costs.

Example of Budget Justification and Narrative

The following example is provided for illustrative purposes only. This example is for a one-year project. For projects that exceed one year, follow the directions at the top of the template and enter each item as illustrated here.

Budget Detail, Justification and Narrative					
Lisa Chang, Jackson College					
Item name	Narrative justification of expense	Unit	Quantity	\$ per unit	Quantity x \$ =
PERSONNEL					
<i>Only people employed by the recipient organization or farm should be listed in this category. Those employed elsewhere should be listed under "Other direct costs," or, if individuals are to be paid by another institution via a subaward to that institution, they should be included in a separately detailed subcontract budget and the subcontract total should be listed below under "Subcontracts" in "Other direct costs."</i>					
Salaries and wages.					
<i>Provide narrative detail of each person's role in the project or the services they are providing through their work on the project. Show full-time equivalency as a percentage and salary for each year, or provide hourly wage times number of hours, to equal total \$ requested.</i>					
Project leader(s).					
Lisa Chiang, associate director, Home Research Center, Jackson College	Coordinate activity with the participating farm to oversee the experiment and outreach effort, 1 year	FTE	0.05	\$75,580.00	\$ 3,779.00
					\$ -
Student wages.					
Taylor Allende, student assistant	summer labor; setting out treatments, collecting the insect counts and samples, entering data into computer database, measuring harvest yields; 8 weeks, 30 hours per week.	hr.	240	\$ 15.50	\$ 3,720.00
					\$ -
Support staff.					
					\$ -
Other hired labor.					
					\$ -
Subtotal: Salaries and wages (rounded to the nearest dollar)					\$ 7,499
Fringe benefits.					
<i>If applicable, provide the fringe rate that will be applied to wages above and the total for each wage line or category.</i>					
Fringe on PI labor at 45%		%	.45	\$ 3,779.00	\$ 1,700.55
Fringe on student labor at 22%		%	.22	\$ 3,720.00	\$ 818.40
					\$ -
Subtotal: Fringe benefits (rounded to the nearest dollar)					\$ 2,519
PERSONNEL TOTAL (salaries, hourly labor, and fringe benefits)					\$10,018

Sample Budget Detail, continued

NON-PERSONNEL		Unit	Quantity	\$ per unit	Quantity x \$ =
Materials and supplies.					
<i>Indicate each item with quantity and estimated cost. Include narrative justification on how the item fits the project, its direct need and why not otherwise available through the organization. Items must be project-specific and able to be tracked as being used for the project. General-use items such as office supplies are not allowable unless the items can be tracked and itemized for a project-specific purpose.</i>					
Seed	for planting treatment plots, 3 lbs per 40 plots	lb.	120	\$ 4.69	\$ 562.80
Chilean nitrate	fertilizer for test plots, various rates over 40 plots, 50 lb. bags	50 lb.	8	\$ 31.99	\$ 255.92
Insect traps	for monitoring aphids, one per 12.5 feet X 10 sides	ea.	125	\$ 5.49	\$ 686.25
Plastic mulch	for field plot planting	acre	2	\$ 400.00	\$ 800.00
Sample bags, one ream of 500 #6	for field samples, plant material	ream	1	\$ 49.59	\$ 49.59
Zip-lock bags	for field samples, soil samples, 20 per box	box	10	\$ 4.89	\$ 48.90
Notebook	Notebooks, for field day trainings, 150 @\$3 each				\$ -
Subtotal: Materials and supplies (rounded to the nearest dollar)					\$ 2,403
Travel.					
<i>For travel of employees/personnel only; list consultant travel under consultants and list conference attendee travel under trainee support. Provide detail as to the destination, purpose of the travel, who is traveling, number of travelers. If a mileage reimbursement, provide miles x rate (not more than federal rate). If lodging, provide rate x number of nights. If travel meals, specify the per diem or allowance to be used.</i>					
Lisa Chiang	Seventeen round trips from campus to cooperating farm to monitor project and collect samples by project leader @ 25 miles	miles	425	\$ 0.575	\$ 244.38
Lisa Chiang	One round trip from campus to State Experiment Station by project leader to share preliminary results	miles	60	\$ 0.575	\$ 34.50
Lisa Chiang	Project leader to present at regional vegetable conference, lodging 3 nights	nights	3	\$ 150.000	\$ 450.00
					\$ -
Subtotal: Travel (rounded to the nearest dollar)					\$ 729
Publications/printing.					
<i>Publishing of an article in a scientific or technical journal or other type of field/program related publication or for commercial printing of brochures and program materials. Photocopying costs should be included under "Other direct costs."</i>					
Color guidebook, to be printed and bound at Princeton Printing.	For outreach in winter workshop training programs. Cost estimate from printer for 24 page booklets.	each	100	\$ 9.95	\$ 995.00
					\$ -
Subtotal: Publications (rounded to the nearest dollar)					\$ 995
Other Direct Costs		Unit	Quantity	\$ per unit	Quantity x \$ =
Communications. Mailings, postage, conference calls. Cell phone charges are not allowable.					
Postage for field day outreach	300 flyers sent in mail @ \$0.46 each	each	300	\$ 0.460	\$ 138.00
					\$ -
Photocopying. In-house photocopying.					
Photocopying of handout for field day	for field day, 12 pages each packet, 50 attendees	page	600	\$ 0.05	\$ 30.00
					\$ -
Speaker / trainer fees.					
<i>Include name, fee, and description of the services they are providing, expenses to be reimbursed, including travel.</i>					
Peter Bouvier, retired extension entomologist	Four half-days assisting with training farmer and staff on major dates for data collection, measurements, and interpretation	half-day	4	\$ 125.00	\$ 500.00
Peter Bouvier, retired extension entomologist	Travel to State Research station to assist in presenting preliminary results	miles	232	0.575	\$ 133.40
					\$ -
Consultants.					
<i>Name of those receiving stipends or payments for services and their organization or farm, statement of work or description of what will be done to earn the payment, and breakdown of number of days or hours of service and rate of pay. Provide detail of consultant expenses to be reimbursed such as travel. Add attachment if needed to define the scope of work.</i>					
Anthony Martinez	Cooperating farmer for test field prep, laying mulch, planting, and maintenance	days	5	\$ 300.00	\$ 1,500.00
Sam Carter	Cooperating farmer for test field prep, laying mulch, planting, and maintenance	days	5	\$ 300.00	\$ 1,500.00
Insect Specialist/Consultant, TBD	For insect IPM work in study to determine threshold and identification of pests-2.5 hrs/month for 4 months @ \$35/hr	hrs	10	\$ 55.00	\$ 550.00
					\$ -

Sample Budget Detail, continued

Services. For services rendered for the project. Provide details (fees or hired payments, purpose and quantities).					
LabTech, LLC.	Tissue analyses of 99 forage samples	each	99	\$ 22.00	\$ 2,178.00
LabTech, LLC.	PSNT tests, 40 soil samples	each	40	\$ 6.00	\$ 240.00
					\$ -
Conferences/meetings/workshops. Expenses of hosting/conducting meetings and training events. List expenses for a project leader or staff attending a conference under Travel . List presenter expenses under Consultants or Speaker/Trainer fees . List trainee-participant expenses under Trainee support .					
					\$ -
Trainee support (participant support costs). A subsidy payment to or on behalf of those who receive training , usually for registration fees, lodging, and associated travel expenses. (N.B. Payments for services rendered should be listed above in speaker / trainer fees or consultant payments. Other Conference/meeting/workshop expenses may be listed in that category above.)					
					\$ -
Off-site office rental. Only allowable if necessary for a project specific purpose.					
					\$ -
					\$ -
Purchase of equipment (or the cost of fabrication of equipment) Only project specific research equipment with clear justification of need and full use in the project is allowable. General use equipment is not allowed..					
					\$ -
Rental of equipment or land-use charges rental.					
Land rental for experimental plots Fat Potato Farm	Supplemental research plots at neighboring farm, rented by the acre per season	acre	4	\$ 125.00	\$ 500.00
					\$ -
Other / miscellaneous. These costs must always be identified in order to be allowed.					
					\$ -
Subtotal: Other Direct Costs before subcontracts/subawards (rounded to the nearest dollar)					\$ 7,269
Subcontracts/Subawards. List the institution, organization, or farm, the project leader's name, and amount of subaward. For each subaward, attach a proposed plan of work and include a spreadsheet for Budget Detail, Justification and Narrative. It is expected that the prime recipient is taking the lead on the effort with full responsibility for reporting, and each subaward must be less than 50% of the overall project funding request.					
				Total from separate spreadsheet:	
				Total from separate spreadsheet:	
Sum of all subcontracts					\$ -
Other Direct Costs total (rounded to the nearest dollar)					\$ 7,269
NON-PERSONNEL TOTAL					\$ 11,396
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS					\$21,414
Indirect costs. Complete the check-off below as to the basis for the amount being requested. Enter total indirect request amount on this line. Farms and other private businesses should leave the indirect cost amount blank or enter \$0 (see below).					\$ 2,379.00
TOTAL SARE REQUEST					\$ 23,793
Acknowledge that indirect has been offered through the application instructions by checking (X) in the appropriate box on the left					
X	Indirect is requested, based on having a federally negotiated indirect rate (subject to USDA/NIFA cap of 10% federal funds). We have entered the amount requested on the Indirect costs line above.				
	Indirect is requested, based on the de minimis rate (our organization has never had a federally negotiated indirect rate). We have entered the amount requested for indirect on the Indirect costs line above.				
	No indirect is requested (check if your organization is ineligible for indirect, is eligible but chooses not to request indirect, or if a farm or other small business eligible for indirect, as specified below)				

Example of Budget Summary

The subtotals are taken from the budget justification and narrative template above and entered into the online application system.

Category	Description	Amount
Personnel	Subtotal from budget justification and narrative template	\$10,018
Materials and supplies	Subtotal from budget justification and narrative template	\$2,403
Travel	Subtotal from budget justification and narrative template	\$729
Printing and publications	Subtotal from budget justification and narrative template	\$995
Other direct costs	Subtotal from budget justification and narrative template	\$7,269
Indirect costs*	Subtotal from budget justification and narrative template	\$2,379
Total		\$23,793

*The indirect may be up to 10 percent of the total award, as shown here, if your organization has an approved federal indirect cost rate. If not eligible, enter 0 or leave blank.

Eligible for indirect:

Non-profit organizations and academic institutions may be eligible to claim indirect cost recovery as follows:

Organization having a current federally negotiated rate for indirect costs may request indirect up to the USDA/NIFA cap for this program, which currently is 10% of the total SARE request. To calculate the cap, divide total direct costs by nine or multiply direct costs by 11.11%. The allowed indirect is the lesser of the cap or the negotiated rate.

Organizations that have never had a federally negotiated rate agreement may use a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC). MTDC includes all direct costs except for subaward amounts above \$25,000 for each subaward organization, and also excludes trainee/participant support costs, long-term rentals, and equipment purchases.

Ineligible for indirect:

Organizations that previously had negotiated indirect cost rates, but their rates are no longer in effect, may not use the previous rate and may not use de minimis. These organizations are not eligible to receive indirect costs.

Small for-profit businesses (such as commercial farms, veterinary services, private consultants, farm service or product suppliers) receiving SARE awards through UVM will receive vendor service agreements as a contract (rather than a subaward agreement with the flow down of federal regulation) and these service agreements cannot include indirect. Any overhead expenses that can be directly attributable to the grant project may be included in the direct cost budget.

Appendix B: SARE Partnership Grantee Reporting and SARE Post-Project Evaluation

Logic model category	Performance indicators <i>(When you report, you will receive prompts for these indicators, but are expected to report only where you have information to report.)</i>	Who Collects / When Reported	
		Grantee collects/ reports by end of project	SARE collects/ post project (from grantee and/or farmer partner(s))
Participant s	Number of farmers participating in research	✓	
	Number of farmers reached through outreach	✓	
	Number of agricultural service providers reached through outreach	✓	
Outputs: activities information products	Research activities conducted	✓	
	Research results of the project	✓	
	Number and type of outreach activities conducted to share project results	✓	
	Number of journal articles in press or published <i>(if produced)</i>	✓	✓G, F
	Number and types of other, non-refereed outreach publications <i>(if produced)</i>	✓	✓G, F
Learning outcomes	Number of farmers directly involved in project who report changes in KASA (knowledge, attitudes, skills, awareness)	✓	✓G, F
Action outcomes	Number of farmers directly involved in project who use information learned to adopt a practice, approach, technology <i>(including what is adopted)</i>	✓	✓G, F
	New collaborations as a result of project <i>(by grantee and/or farmers)</i>	✓	✓G, F
	SARE grant leveraged another grant <i>(by grantee and/or farmers)</i>	✓	✓G, F
	Number of citations of project results		✓G, F
Condition outcomes	Economic, environmental, social benefit(s) for farmers/ranchers from making changes on farm/ranch		✓G, F