



# Western SARE Farmer/Rancher Conference Mini-Grants Request for Applications

**Submission Deadline: Open on a rolling basis**

Applications must be submitted at least 60 days prior to conference attendance OR 30 days prior to virtual conference attendance

## Program Background:

Western SARE announces a request for applications (RFA) from current and recent Farmer/Rancher Principal Investigators (PIs) interested in attending conferences to present on the outcomes of their Western SARE-funded project and promote the Farmer/Rancher grant program. Financial support may be requested for up to \$2,500 to cover expenses for attending and presenting at relevant regional and national conferences. Funds may cover travel, conference registration fees, and poster and presentation expenses and will be cost reimbursed in accordance with MSU and USDA-NIFA travel policy. Awardees will also receive a \$250 stipend for their time presenting on behalf of Western SARE.

## Eligibility:

This mini-grant program is open to Western SARE Farmer/Rancher PIS who are:

1. Current and up-to-date on all contractual and reporting requirements, or
2. PIs of projects funded in 2019 or later with an approved final report.

Technical advisors are encouraged to attend; however, mini-grant funds may NOT be used to cover their travel expenses.

## Budget and Allowable Expenses:

- Applicants must submit and estimate of anticipated costs in the following categories (not to exceed \$2,500): mileage, airfare, lodging, conference registration fees, poster/presentation expenses, other costs (please justify - subject to approval). Applicants may also request meal per diem while in travel status.
- All eligible expenses will be processed for reimbursement upon submission of receipts and fulfillment of a post-conference survey (to be completed within 14 days of conference conclusion or returning home from travel).
- All receipts should be submitted for reimbursement within 14 days of return travel home or conclusion of conference.

## Travel Policy:

Western SARE is a federally funded USDA-NIFA program hosted by Montana State University (MSU). All travel expenses are subject to approval and must comply with MSU and federal travel policies. Travel expenses incurred while in travel status on behalf of Western SARE through the Farmer/Rancher Conference Mini-Grant will be reimbursed in accordance with the following:

- A current W-9 should be on file with the Western SARE office before the time of travel. Reimbursement and stipend payment will be mailed to the address on the tax form.
- Only the least expensive “class service” (basic economy) airfare will be reimbursed. Upgrades, premium seats, etc. will not be reimbursed. If you purchase a flight with upgrades, please be prepared to provide a comparison flight for the same flight at the basic economy fare from the same day you booked your flight. You will be responsible for the difference in fares. Baggage fees are reimbursable.
- Mileage may be requested for driving to/from the conference location or airport and will be reimbursed at the current rate set by MSU. Mileage rates are subject to change at any time. You will be notified if rates have changed prior to your trip.
- Lodging expenses may not exceed the federal lodging rates for the location of the conference (visit [gsa.gov](https://www.gsa.gov) for rates). If you cannot secure lodging at or below the GSA rate, Western SARE will reimburse up to the maximum nightly GSA rate.
- Provide receipts for all reimbursable expenses incurred. Scanned copies and PDFs of receipts are preferred.
- Meal per diem will be paid in accordance with the rates set by MSU to awardees while in travel status to cover the costs of meals not provided during the conference. Receipts for meals are not required. Meal per diem rates are subject to change at any time. You will be notified if the rates have changed prior to your travel.

## Expectations:

- Meet with the Farmer/Rancher Program Manager to discuss presentation topics, travel requirements, Western SARE talking points, and expectations. Please reach out if you need help with developing your presentation.
- Submit all receipts for reimbursement and complete a brief post-conference survey within 14 days of returning home from conference travel.

### How to apply:

Complete application online: <https://forms.gle/xezGNE8rvGt4xh5v6>.

Questions can be submitted via email to [wsare-fr@sare.org](mailto:wsare-fr@sare.org) or phone at 406-994-4309.