

New Resource Helps Organic Food-Grade Grain Producers

The Newsletter
of NCR-SARE

Summer 2024
Issue 50

For farmers interested in producing food-grade grains, there are unique opportunities, challenges, and considerations for growing and selling these higher-value crops. These grains, destined for direct human consumption or as ingredients in products, have a range of markets, from breweries and distilleries to co-op groceries and restaurants. However, navigating these specialized markets requires careful planning and access to focused resources. Enter the Artisan Grain Collaborative (AGC), a network of farmers, makers, and advocates committed to bolstering the Midwest grainshed from seed to table.

With the support of a \$39,997 NCR-SARE Partnership grant, Alyssa Hartman, executive director of AGC, partnered with six farmers to develop resources for farmers interested in growing value-added food-grade grains.

“Improving access to high-value markets for small grains like wheat and rye can offer new avenues for more small and mid-size farmers to improve their ecological and economic resilience,” said Hartman. “To support the successful growth and marketing of less common crops, farmers need comprehensive guidance, particularly on post-harvest handling.”

Highlighting the urgency of proper post-harvest management, Hartman recounted a cautionary tale from a central Illinois farmer involved in their project who suffered setbacks in the previous year when improper storage caused several tons of food-grade barley to spoil due to pest contamination. This underscores the need for resources and support systems.

A New Food-Grade Grain Resource

A major resource supported by the project was AGC’s “New Growers’ Guide to Producing Organic Food-Grade Grains in The Upper Midwest,” created in partnership with UW-Madison Extension and Michael Fields Agricultural Institute (MFAI). This comprehensive guide aims to fill critical

knowledge gaps, equipping farmers with essential insights into the production, management, and storage of diverse grain varieties. Designed for new and experienced farmers, the guide has helpful information on growing culinary grains such as cereal rye, spring wheat, and corn—key food-grain grains in the region. It covers everything from seed sourcing to navigating crop management to post-harvest protocols. The new guide helps address crucial knowledge gaps, empowering farmers with essential insights.

Equipped with this resource, AGC members are expanding. In 2023, 58 AGC farmer members reported planting 19,867 acres of food-grade grains. Looking ahead, a promising 93% of AGC farmer members plan to expand their food-grade grain operations over the next 3-5 years, with 74% intending to increase acreage dedicated to these grains. Hartman is excited about the future and shared AGC’s plan to develop resources for other grains, such as barley and oats, alongside exploring pseudocereals and ancient grains.

Dig Deeper

Download the 43-page “The New Growers’ Guide to Producing Organic Food-Grade Grains in The Upper Midwest” guide for free at [https://northcentral.sare.org/resources/the-new-growers-guide-to-producing-organic-food-grade-grains-in-](https://northcentral.sare.org/resources/the-new-growers-guide-to-producing-organic-food-grade-grains-in-the-upper-midwest/)



The Artisan Grain Collaborative (AGC) is working to strengthen the Midwest grainshed from seed to table, working with farmers like Will Glazik, Mary Ellen Penicook, and Janet Zintambila (pictured). Photo by Christine Johnson, Michael Fields Agricultural Institute.

AGC’s new guide, “The New Growers’ Guide to Producing Organic Food-Grade Grains in The Upper Midwest,” shares helpful information for food-grade grain producers.

the-upper-midwest/.

AGC and MFAI developed a video series about harvesting food-grade wheat and rye on small and mid-size farms. View the videos: <https://www.graincollaborative.com/post-harvest>.

To learn more about the project, visit the SARE project reporting website at <https://projects.sare.org/project-reports/nc21-090/> or contact the NCR-SARE office.

Apply for a Grant

NCR-SARE’s Partnership grant program starts accepting proposals in August. Learn more here: <https://northcentral.sare.org/grants/>.



NCR-SARE Awards \$7.5 Million in Grants

NCR-SARE is pleased to share the results of our grant programs for 2023. This past year, NCR-SARE's competitive grant programs awarded 133 projects, more than \$7.5 million. The programs offer grants for producers, researchers, students, educators, organizations, and others exploring sustainable agriculture in America's Midwest. Another \$1.2 million supported NCR-SARE's regional state coordinators, who train agriculture professionals in sustainable practices and share SARE resources.

The Farmer Rancher Grant Program is a competitive grant program for farmers and ranchers who want to explore sustainable solutions to problems through on-farm research, demonstration, and education projects. In 2023, 43 projects were selected to receive more than \$740,095.

For the 2023 Youth Educator Grant Program, NCR-SARE awarded more than \$91,136 to 16 projects. These grants support educators who want to teach youth about sustainable agriculture practices and careers.

The Graduate Student Grant Program funds graduate student projects addressing sustainable agriculture issues. NCR-SARE awarded more than \$323,675 to 22 projects through this program.

For the 2023 Partnership Grant Program, NCR-SARE awarded more than \$995,781 to 21 projects. This program aims to foster cooperation between agriculture professionals and farmers and ranchers to catalyze on-farm research, demonstration, and education activities.

The Research and Education Program is a competitive grant program for researchers and educators involved in projects exploring and promoting environmentally sound, profitable, and socially responsible food and/or fiber systems. NCR-SARE awarded more than \$4 million to 18 projects in 2023,

For the 2023 Professional Development Program, NCR-SARE awarded almost \$1.2 million to 13 projects. NCR-SARE Professional Development Program grants emphasize training agricultural educators in Extension, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, private and not-for-

profit sectors, using farmers as educators, and addressing emerging issues.

Apply for an NCR-SARE Grant

Visit the NCR-SARE website to apply and for more information about funded projects and timelines at <https://northcentral.sare.org/grants/apply-for-a-grant/> or contact us.

To learn about the SARE grants in your state, visit the NCR-SARE website: <https://sare.org/grants/funded-grants-in-your-state/>, where you can view a portfolio summary and list of grants funded for every state and island protectorate. The focus for each of the NCR-SARE grant programs is on research and education.

Funding considerations are based on how well the applicant presents the problem being addressed, the project's relevance to sustainable agriculture in the region, and how well it aligns with NCR-SARE's goals, among other factors specific to each grant program. NCR-SARE's Administrative Council (AC) members decide which projects to fund. AC members hail from regional farms, ranches, the Cooperative Extension Service, universities, federal agencies, and nonprofits. NCR-SARE has funded projects and conducted outreach to improve agricultural systems since 1988 as part of USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

NCR-SARE recognizes the power and value of diversity in our grantmaking and outreach programs. We recognize that for the greatest and broadest impact when addressing challenges for the whole of agriculture, our programs need to reach many, including those who have been historically excluded. We encourage diversity, equity, and inclusion in our peer grant review teams and in applicants and the audiences applicants are serving in their projects. We encourage projects that involve minority-serving organizations in other ways include work with historically underserved audiences. We recognize that this asks for ALL of us to sit in both the discomforts and the possibilities that can come when diverse perspectives are encouraged to participate in finding solutions and expanding access to our programs for all.

Grant Assistance

NCR-SARE has four grant programs that open in August. If you are interested in writing a proposal for an NCR-SARE grant, we have resources for you. We can provide grant reports from other projects, lists of funded projects, or other information on sustainable agriculture. Visit <https://northcentral.sare.org/grants/apply-for-a-grant/> for more details, or contact the NCR-SARE office at ncrsare@umn.edu.

Grant-Writing Assistance from SARE State Coordinators

SARE has a network of state coordinators working in each state and island protectorate. Your SARE state coordinator can provide advice and feedback as you work on your grant proposal. Find your SARE state coordinator and view documents about funded grants in your state by visiting NCR-SARE online at <https://northcentral.sare.org/state-programs/state-coordinators/>.

Grants Advising from Michael Fields Agricultural Institute (MFAI)

Michael Fields Grants Advising is a free service for Midwestern producers, agricultural entrepreneurs, and institutions. MFAI's Advisors can help you refine your idea, discuss your budget, provide feedback on your draft, and more. For assistance, email grants@michaelfields.org for assistance.



How to Conduct Research on Your Farm or Ranch

“How to Conduct Research on Your Farm or Ranch” highlights

how to conduct research at the farm level using practical strategies and peer-reviewed research findings. Download or order your free print copy at <https://www.sare.org/resources/how-to-conduct-research-on-your-farm-or-ranch/>.

PRAIRIE Group Inspires Youth with Multicultural Food Pathway Program

In the heart of Minnesota's vibrant Red River Valley, the nonprofit organization PRAIRIE is leading the charge in nurturing the next generation of small-scale farmers. Verna Kragnes and Rick Hall founded PRAIRIE, short for Prairie Rose Agricultural Institute for Research, Innovation & Education, which has become a beacon of opportunity for aspiring farmers. Offering a multifaceted approach to education and support, PRAIRIE manages a farm with a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program, a folk school, and a farm incubator co-op, catering to a diverse range of participants, including youth and beginning farmers.

To expand access and create pathways for underrepresented communities in farming and natural resource professions, PRAIRIE received a \$4,000 NCR-SARE Youth Educator grant in 2021. The project aimed to engage students, teachers, and community members in habitat restoration and food production within community gardens. Utilizing the transformative Earth Partnership Curriculum from UW-Madison, students learned how to work with local farmers and organizations to bring their vision to life, building raised beds, and planting vegetables, fruit trees, and native pollinator plants. They created a medicine wheel garden at the Gladys Ray Indigenous Community Garden (pictured upper right).

The grant enabled PRAIRIE to seed a youth development project that, in turn, has become their formalized Youth, Food, and Ecology Partnership, including 5 organizations with 16 youth stewards working in 5 community gardens and two rain gardens. Rick Hall, director of education and program development at PRAIRIE, talked about the project's broader impact, stating, "This initiative will begin to foster a next generation of land and water stewards by creating career pathways and retention strategies for under-represented populations in farming and natural resource professions."

The project strengthened ties within the community and paved the way for future endeavors. Building on its success, PRAIRIE was awarded another NCR-SARE Youth Educator grant in 2024 to continue its mission of empowering underserved youth and their families.

"Including our 2024 project, we are pioneering pathways to include BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) and other underserved communities in regenerative agriculture to meet needs for growing food, farmers and leaders in a rural and urban food system and foodshed," said Hall. "Youth and adults need to know where their food comes from and that they can grow their own. Sustainability is everyone's responsibility. It occurs in a healthy ECO-system, not an EGO-system."

Dig Deeper

Learn more about the Earth Partnership program curriculum here: <https://earthpartnership.wisc.edu/>.

To learn more about PRAIRIE's SARE projects, visit <https://projects.sare.org/people/sarerick/>.

NCR-SARE's Youth Educator grant program starts accepting proposals in mid-August. Learn more: <https://northcentral.sare.org/Grants/>.



Inspired by the Native American medicine wheel, a medicine wheel garden is typically circular and divided into four sections, each representing different elements such as the four cardinal directions (north, south, east, west), seasons, stages of life, or aspects of health and well-being.

PRAIRIE's SARE-supported youth project participants designed and planted this medicine wheel garden at the Gladys Ray Indigenous Community Garden in Fargo, ND.

Photos courtesy of Rick Hall.

A New Anishinaabe Food and Science Curriculum

Bay Mills Community College (BMCC) in Michigan's Upper Peninsula has launched an innovative middle school curriculum framework focused on Anishinaabe science and food sovereignty. Authored by Aamookwe Amy McCoy, the BMCC Anishinaabe science and food sovereignty educator, the curriculum aims to integrate Indigenous knowledge into education.

The Anishinaabe, culturally linked Indigenous communities in the Great Lakes region, have a rich heritage rooted in Anishinaabemowin, a language spoken across several states and provinces. As a Tribal College and a 1994 Land Grant Institution, BMCC is pivotal in supporting Tribal Nations, individuals, and organizations across Michigan.

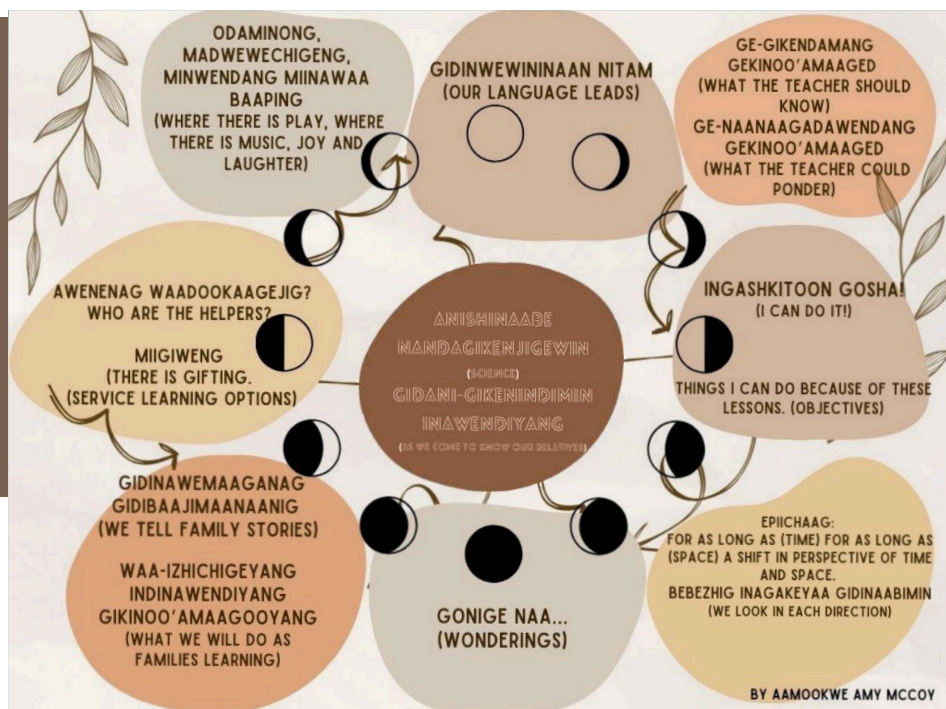
In an area with few FFA programs and K-12 agriculture educators and faced with limited resources, BMCC recognized a significant opportunity to integrate Indigenous knowledge. In 2019, Steve Yanni and BMCC initiated the project with a \$199,987 NCR-SARE Research and Education grant. McCoy joined the initiative in 2021 to create the Indigenous scientific-thought-based curriculum framework. The curriculum is designed to provide hands-on learning experiences centered around Anishinaabe science and food sovereignty principles.

Eastern Upper Michigan, with a significant Native American middle school population of 36%, was chosen as a key area for the curriculum's implementation. Specifically, the Ojibwe Charter School in Bay Mills and the Bahweting School of the Sault Tribe were identified as institutions to advance this curriculum through experiential learning at a Food Sovereignty Middle School Career Fair in Fall 2023.

Designing an Anishinaabe Curriculum

McCoy created "Anishinaabe Nandagikenjigewin Miinawaa Eshandizoyang" [Science as we Come to Know our Relatives and How We Feed Ourselves], a K-12 curriculum rooted in Anishinaabe science and philosophy.

The innovative curriculum is designed to evolve dynamically, reflecting an ongoing journey of cultural reconnection with "more than human relatives" through



Anishinaabe ways of knowing and being. McCoy highlighted the transformative impact of embracing Anishinaabe teachings and fostering intergenerational relationships, emphasizing the interconnectedness of all beings within creation.

"While initially aimed at middle school-aged children through the SARE grant, the curriculum framework grounded in Anishinaabe ways of knowing holds profound significance for individuals of all ages, from infancy through adulthood," McCoy explained.

McCoy arranged workshops and youth opportunities during the grant project, including six immersive farm experiences at BMCC's Waishkey Bay Farm. Activities ranged from cultivating Three Sisters' corn and creating bean and squash beadwork to making maple cream, learning vermiculture, practicing seed-saving techniques, exploring pig farming, participating in honey bottling sessions, and engaging in interactive lessons during seasonal harvests.

Feedback from Tribal youth leaders who experienced the Anishinaabe Science and Food Sovereignty curriculum has been positive. One leader enjoyed learning from the curriculum and desired to repeat the experience in future summers. McCoy presented the curriculum at the Michigan Indian Education Critical Issues Conference and the Great Lakes Indigenous Farming Conference, highlighting its relevance and impact within Indigenous education and sustainability initiatives.

Dig Deeper

Download the curriculum online at <https://northcentral.sare.org/resources/anishinaabe-nandagikenjigewin-miinawaa-eshandizoyang-an-experiential-introduction-to-anishinaabe-science-and-food-sovereignty/>.

Learn more about this NCR-SARE grant project online at https://projects.sare.org/sare_project/Inc19-430/.

NCR-SARE's Research and Education grant program starts accepting proposals in mid-August. Learn more here: <https://northcentral.sare.org/Grants/>.

Aamookwe Amy McCoy (below) designed an experiential science and food curriculum grounded in Anishinaabe scientific epistemology and ontology. Photo courtesy of Aamookwe Amy McCoy.



Celebrating Joan Benjamin



Photo by Carol Buckels.

Joan Benjamin, who has been on staff with the NCR-SARE program since 2005, has announced her retirement.

Before joining NCR-SARE's team, Benjamin worked with the Missouri Department of Agriculture's Sustainable Agriculture Extension Program. She was elected to and served on NCR-SARE's Administrative Council from 2002 to 2005.

In 2005, Benjamin joined NCR-SARE as the Farmer Rancher grant program coordinator, supporting diverse farmers and collaborating with regional farming organizations. This unique program funds producers' innovative ideas and is reviewed by fellow farmers and ranchers. Benjamin emphasized inclusivity and relationship-building, managing over 862 Farmer Rancher grants and fostering a community of sustainable agriculture advocates.

Benjamin's work with council members, educators, and stakeholders led to the successful launch of the Youth Educator Grant Program in 2008. This initiative, which has funded 211 projects, has been instrumental in exposing students and young adults to sustainable agriculture practices, and helping them explore sustainable agriculture as a viable career option.

In all of her work, Joan has shown an unwavering commitment to centering farmers' and ranchers' voices in our work. We wish her a retirement filled with new adventures.

Liz Brownlee succeeds Benjamin. Read more about Brownlee on page 7.

Our 2024 Heroes: Gary Lesoing & Nancy Williams

In 2012, the NCR-SARE Administrative Council created the NCR-SARE Hero Recognition to highlight, recognize, and pay tribute to those who have made contributions to NCR-SARE and/or National SARE. Gary Lesoing and Nancy Williams have been named the 2024 NCR-SARE Heroes.



Photo by Mandy Hall.

Gary Lesoing

Gary Lesoing's journey into agriculture began on a multi-generation farm in Hickman, Nebraska, where his family cultivated crops, raised livestock,

and milked cows. Their dedication to farming earned them the prestigious Aksarben Pioneer Farm Family Award in 1990, highlighting their longstanding commitment to agriculture. Lesoing pursued his passion by earning a bachelor's degree in biology from Peru State College in Nebraska, a master's degree in animal science, and a doctorate in agronomy from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

For more than 18 years, Lesoing served as an Extension educator in Nemaha County, focusing on crop production, sustainable agriculture, and training beginning farmers. His tenure in this role, spanning nearly two decades, ended with his retirement in 2023. He was involved in various organizations and initiatives throughout his career. He served on the board of directors for the Midwest Cover Crops Council. He contributed his expertise to organizations like the National Association of County Agriculture Agents, Nebraska Grazing Lands Coalition, North Central Region Water Network, and the Soil Health Nexus.

One of Lesoing's significant contributions to the agricultural community was as the SARE state coordinator in Nebraska from 2008 to 2022. By actively participating in meetings, organizing SARE booths, and supporting sustainable agriculture events and grantees across the state, he facilitated the exchange of knowledge and resources vital for advancing sustainable farming.



Nancy Williams

Nancy Williams' journey into agriculture began in rural Louisiana, inspired by her family's garden and her grandmother's role as an

Photo by Debra Kaplan.

Extension educator. Her formal involvement started with 4-H in elementary school and FFA in high school. Williams earned a bachelor's degree in horticulture from Louisiana State University. She completed coursework and research for a master's degree in weed science with a minor in plant pathology from Cornell University.

After 15 years in IT leadership at Boys & Girls Clubs of the Midlands, Williams accepted the role of president and CEO of No More Empty Pots (NMEP), a nonprofit enhancing self-sufficiency, regional food security, and economic resilience in Omaha, Nebraska. At NMEP, she launched initiatives like the Community Harvest subscription program. Williams completed a planned succession from NEMP in 2023 and is now the Managing Partner at Block 27 Consulting, a family business focused on leveraging strengths and talents to cultivate collective generational wealth. She supports sustainable innovation through her work on the Center for Rural Affairs Advisory Committee and the Board of Directors for multiple Omaha nonprofits, including Omaha 100 and Heartland Family Service.

During her tenure at NMEP, Williams served on the NCR-SARE Farmer Rancher review committee from 2011 to 2014. She was elected to serve on NCR-SARE's Administrative Council (AC) from 2012 to 2019. From 2017 to 2019, she assumed the role of AC Chair. She also served as co-chair of the Youth Educator Committee, underscoring her commitment to the next generation of agricultural leaders.

Read more about these NCR-SARE Heroes at <https://northcentral.sare.org/heroes>.

Exploring Chestnuts in Southeastern Ohio

Chestnuts are a sustainable and nutritious crop with deep roots in American agriculture.

In a recent episode of ATTRA's Voices from the Field podcast, NCAT Sustainable Agriculture Specialist Tyler Jenkins dives into the world of chestnuts with Michelle Ajamian, who works with Rural Action as a network developer for Appalachian Staple Foods Collaborative.

Ajamian discusses her efforts to establish a thriving market for chestnut growers in the region and explores the success stories of cultivating chestnuts, from fostering community partnerships to promoting environmentally friendly practices.

In 2022, Rural Action received an NCR-SARE Partnership grant to explore value-added opportunities for grade B chestnuts. Working with the Route 9 Chestnut Cooperative, Ajamian examined milling processes and equipment to develop a profitable model for producing fine flour



from chestnuts with a high moisture content. Through her outreach efforts with the Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association, Ajamian also worked with local farmers to collaborate on expanding and strengthening long-term regional chestnut markets through collective dedication.

Dig Deeper

Listen to the podcast episode at <https://northcentral.sare.org/news/exploring-chestnuts-in-southeastern-ohio-with-michelle-ajamian/>.

To learn more about the project, visit the SARE project reporting website at https://projects.sare.org/sare_project/enc22-111/.

NCR-SARE's Partnership grant program starts accepting proposals in August. Learn more here: <https://northcentral.sare.org/Grants/>.

Waterers and Watering Systems

Navigating watering options to find a workable, financially feasible solution to livestock watering needs can be frustrating for ranchers. There are many choices, and some options are incompatible with available land, labor, and capital resources.

A new handbook can assist in the design of a watering system that fits your budget, site, and livestock needs. Some systems require specific geological formations (such as springs) or depend on specific elevation differences. While components may be off-the-shelf, the arrangement and installation of a watering system must be adjusted to each site. You should consider the characteristics of your land and site, the time you have available for management and upkeep, and the size and type of animal



you have. These will all factor into decisions about which option to choose.

Developed with support from an NCR-SARE Professional Development grant, this perennially favorite K-State Research & Extension 173-page publication includes new sections as well as updated older chapters. It was created in 2007 and most recently updated in 2024.

Dig Deeper

See the tool online at: <https://northcentral.sare.org/resources/livestock-waterers-and-watering-systems/>.

To learn more about the project, visit the SARE project reporting website at https://projects.sare.org/sare_project/enc21-200/.

NCR-SARE Grants At-A-Glance

Learn more about exciting SARE-supported projects! Use the project number listed with these projects to find more information at <https://projects.sare.org>, or follow NCR-SARE on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter to receive regular updates like these:



Good Shepherd Montessori School's collection of videos invites teachers and small

farmers interested in land-based learning programs to check out their ongoing video conference. The videos will be available until December 31, 2024. <https://www.gsms.org/food-farming-and-sustainability>. This is SARE grant YENC17-117.



SDSU Extension researchers and farmers found that tarping reduced weed pressure early in the season before

planting. However, other weed management practices were used along with tarping to maintain a viable yield of onions. This is SARE grant LNC22-460.



WJP Farms, named for Willie Joe Patmon, is working with elementary and middle school students in

Detroit, MI, engaging in hands-on work sessions with urban farmers practicing organic techniques. This is SARE grant YENC23-20.



In Minnesota, researchers and farmers are working together on effective and economically feasible pest

management practices for Spotted-Wing Drosophila in day-neutral strawberry systems. This is SARE project LNC21-457.

NCR-SARE's storytelling video series, "Farming Matters," features SARE grantees sharing their project results. Join NCR-SARE staff members as they learn more about what inspires and motivates farmers, researchers, and educators. You'll gain insights into how SARE grantees creatively tackle challenges.

With this project-sharing series, as with all our outreach efforts, NCR-SARE is working to broaden the narrative about farmers and their communities by sharing stories from various perspectives. Watch these videos on YouTube at <https://tinyurl.com/ncrsarefarmingmatters>.

Featured Episodes



John Jamerson

Legacy Taste of the Garden is a farm outside of Lyles Station, Indiana, that

provides education and outreach to diverse farmers, growers, and producers across the state. The multi-generation family farm works to pass on generational knowledge of sustainable growing and entrepreneurial living. Legacy Taste of the Garden Operations Director John Jamerson joined us on Farming Matters to share how they partnered with two other area farms to educate youth and adults about urban farming practices and business opportunities. Participants learned about Legacy's farming methods, such as hoop houses and bucket systems, and

YouTube Series Shares SARE Grant Stories

direct marketing models, such as community-supported agriculture (CSA). Their multifaceted SARE project connected consumers to local producers and provided an example of how one can operate and sustain an urban farm business. Learn about their SARE project here: <https://projects.sare.org/project-reports/fnc19-1169/>.



Megan Mahoney

In Jamestown, North Dakota, Megan Mahoney runs

a honey bee breeding program. Mahoney's work benefits the commercial beekeeping industry by providing sustainable breeding stock using artificial insemination. Mahoney joined us on Farming Matters to tell us about her SARE-funded work developing a viable breeding population of the specialized subspecies of Carniolan honey bee using artificial insemination. This Carnica subspecies of bees is proven to be cold weather acclimated, gentle, productive, tolerant of pests and diseases, and highly sought after. Learn more: <https://projects.sare.org/project-reports/fnc20-1236/>.



Andrew Adamski

From his family farm, Full Circle Farm, in Wisconsin, Adamski

joined us to talk about no-till vegetable soil preparation. With his SARE grant, he worked to incorporate no-till and organic row-cropping methods into his vegetable system. Watch the video to learn how subsoiling and power-harrowing work in his high-rotation vegetable beds of higher-value crops like lettuce, beets, and carrots. Learn more about this project: <https://projects.sare.org/project-reports/fnc20-1204/>.

NCR-SARE's Farmer Rancher Grant program starts accepting proposals in mid-August, with a deadline in December. Learn more here: <https://northcentral.sare.org/Grants>.

NCR-SARE Welcomes New Team Members



Liz Brownlee has been hired as NCR-SARE's Program Coordinator for the Farmer Rancher and Youth Educator Grant Programs. Brownlee, born and raised in Indiana, brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to this role. Brownlee and her husband Nate run Nightfall Farm in Indiana. Brownlee co-founded the Hoosier Young Farmers Coalition, advocating for beginning farmers and nurturing a supportive community. As Co-Director of Partners IN Food and Farming, she spearheaded farmer-to-farmer program development, outreach initiatives, and network expansion. Her commitment to rural revitalization earned her recognition as a 2021 Hoosier Resilience Hero by Indiana University.



Betsy Wieland has joined NCR-SARE as the Associate Director, bringing a depth of experience and expertise in agricultural education and administration. Before this, Wieland served as Department Program Manager for the University of Minnesota Extension's Department of Agricultural and Natural Resource Systems. In this capacity, she oversaw the initiation of new programs, including managing a SARE grant to train new Extension educators in sustainable agriculture systems and practices. Additionally, she spearheaded an undergraduate internship program, demonstrating her commitment to nurturing the next generation of agricultural professionals.

Nate Goodrich attended our July meeting as a new member of NCR-SARE's Administrative Council (AC). The AC sets program priorities and makes grant decisions for NCR-SARE. Goodrich has been elected as an NCRS representative on the AC, and is an Assistant State Conservationist for Partnerships with NRCS in Missouri with a background in forestry.

NCR-SARE would like to thank **Miranda Dushack** and **Eliezer Ortiz-Barbosa**, whose terms on the Administrative Council have ended.

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This product was developed with support from the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture — National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA-NIFA). Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed within do not necessarily reflect the view of the SARE program or the U.S. Department of Agriculture. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Did you know NCR-SARE is on Facebook, X, Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn? Keep track of our grant opportunities, projects, events, and more. Follow, like, or friend us!



ABOUT NCR-SARE

NCR-SARE funds cutting-edge projects every year through competitive grant programs and has awarded more than \$100 million worth of grants to farmers and ranchers, researchers, students, educators, public and private institutions, nonprofit groups, and others exploring sustainable agriculture in the 12 states of the North Central region.

Are you interested in submitting a proposal for an NCR-SARE grant? Before you write the grant proposal, determine a clear project goal and look for sustainable agriculture research on your topic.

Need help determining which program is best suited for your project? Go to <https://northcentral.sare.org/grants> for more information, or contact the NCR-SARE office at ncrsare@umn.edu.

NCR-SARE GRANT TIMELINES*

Farmer Rancher*
August - Call for Proposals Released
December - Proposals Due
February - Funding Decisions
April/May - Funds Available to Recipients

Graduate Student*
February - Call for Proposals Released
April - Proposals Due
July - Funding Decisions
September - Funds Available to Recipients

Research and Education*
August - Call for Preproposals Released
October - Preproposals Due
January - Full Proposals Invited
March - Full Proposals Due
July - Funding Decisions
November - Funds Available to Recipients

Professional Development Program*
February - Call for Proposals Released
April - Proposals Due
July - Funding Decisions
October - Funds Available to Recipients

Youth Educator*
August - Call for Proposals Released
November - Proposals Due
February - Funding Decisions
March/April - Funds Available to Recipients

Partnership*
August - Call for Proposals Released
October - Proposals Due
February - Funding Decisions
March - Funds Available to Recipients

*Timelines are subject to change.

NORTH CENTRAL REGION SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE RESEARCH AND EDUCATION PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION

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