

# Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education

## FIELD NOTES

## Barbara Norman Receives NCR-SARE Diversity Program Grant

The Newsletter  
of the NCR-SARE  
Program

Issue 19

Barbara Norman, a third generation farmer on her blueberry farm in Van Buren County, MI, has been awarded the North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program's (NCR-SARE) first ever Diversity Grant for \$100,000.

The Diversity Research and Education Grant Program is a new NCR-SARE grant program. Its purpose is to fund people and/or projects that can help NCR-SARE reach and work with underserved audiences to improve agricultural sustainability in the region. Chaired by Robin Salverson, the NCR-SARE Diversity Committee was formed to respond to NCR-SARE's goal to reach and work with underserved audiences.

"A majority of NCR-SARE stakeholders believe that agriculture will be more sustainable if we involve a greater variety of people and perspectives in our decision making and if we fund a greater variety of projects," said NCR-SARE Regional Coordinator, Bill Wilcke

It was important for NCR-SARE to consider the value and definition of diversity in the North Central Region. The NCR-SARE Diversity Goals Narrative was written in 2007 to clarify NCR-SARE's goals for the diversity initiative. Along with the narrative, definitions of goals and a Diversity Committee Logic Model were written. In addition to developing a call for proposals, NCR-SARE committed to building strong relationships with existing programs and organizations that currently serve

those that may be under-served by NCR-SARE. That goal will not only influence future funding, but also how NCR-SARE communicates and engages in outreach in the region.

"The Diversity Initiative is a reflection of our acknowledgment that we could use some help in setting up systems and practices in becoming more diverse and serving more diverse audiences," said Wilcke.

Norman's interest in helping underserved farmers is evident in much of the work she has accomplished with Michigan Integrated Food and Farming Systems (MIFFS). In 2002, Norman coordinated a SARE project centered on African-American and Hispanic farmers in order to serve a growing need in southwest Michigan. This newly funded NCR-SARE Diversity Grant project will work with a broader audience and a broader geographic area than her previous work.

"Service providers in other states within the north central region are also interested in working with underserved farmers; however, they need the mentoring of an experienced outreach person who can make the connections within the underserved community that lead to successful projects," explained Norman. "Leaders in the underserved communities recognize the advantage of receiving mentoring from experienced farmer advocates who can bring them together with the service providers who can help them," said Norman.

Norman has selected three specific areas to concentrate efforts for this project: Detroit, MI, Kankakee, IL, and the historical farms of Nicodemus, KS. Norman and MIFFS outreach coordinators targeted these three underserved communities based on demographic data and the potential to build on key relationships with service providers



Photo by Joan Benjamin.

Barbara Norman in her blueberry patch.

in those underserved communities. Moving forward with the project, MIFFS outreach staff will meet with potential leaders and early adopters in the targeted communities, develop partnerships with service providers who are interested in working with the underserved communities, and establish this SARE sponsored project as a means to develop relationships among SARE, the leaders/early adopters, the underserved farmers, and the service providers.

Norman's enthusiasm about the project is sure to inspire the participants.

"I think this project will contribute tremendously to sustainable agriculture in the region. The more people we get involved, the more the word will spread. More people will be aware of SARE and what SARE has available. As more farmers see the advantage of working with SARE, it's going to become more exciting."



## New High School Curriculum Developed to Teach High School Students About Sustainable Agriculture

A new curriculum has been developed for educators to teach high school students about sustainable agriculture.

It was developed by the Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems (CIAS) and the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALS) at the University of Wisconsin Madison with funding in part from NCR-SARE.

Diane Mayerfeld, the Sustainable Agriculture Curriculum Coordinator for CIAS, and the Wisconsin SARE state coordinator, participated in creating the curriculum, and is approaching the project with hopefulness and enthusiasm.

"I developed this curriculum for two reasons. First, high school agriculture teachers did not have access to sustainable agriculture materials," said Mayerfeld. "Quite a lot of the teaching materials they use are provided by larger agribusinesses, and most of the rest also has a large-scale, intensive agriculture focus, where questions of environmental sustainability are at best an afterthought and often are dismissed or ignored," explained Mayerfeld.

"Second, the kinds of information and programs we generally deliver to Extension agents and other agricultural educators are of limited use to teachers who engage with a very different audience in a very different way. They need specifically prepared curriculum materials that they can use directly in the classroom."

What makes this curriculum unique is the comprehensiveness of the project.

It consists of 5 modules:

- 1) Introduction to Sustainable Agriculture
- 2) Corn, Beans, and Burgers: field crops in sustainable agriculture
- 3) Flesh, Fish, and Fowl: animals in

sustainable agriculture

4) Apples, Beets, and Zinnias: sustainable horticulture

5) A Growing Market: organic agriculture

"There are several excellent stand-alone lessons in sustainable agriculture or food systems that have been developed," said Mayerfeld, "but I think there is a need for a curriculum that puts those activities into a comprehensive framework."

From the beginning of the project, Mayerfeld was committed to creating a curriculum specifically for high school students, although she iterates that education about food systems and sustainable agriculture is important for everyone.

"I believe that high school is an important time to open students' minds to critical thinking about food and agriculture. For some students, high school is the final step in their formal schooling," said Mayerfeld. "For those who go on to further education exposure to ideas about sustainability may lead them to look for and demand more education in that area."

*Educators are welcome to adapt and reproduce sections of the curriculum for non-commercial use. It is available online for free at <http://www.cias.wisc.edu/curriculum/index.htm>.*

*To order a CD of the curriculum, please send a check for \$5.00, payable to "UW-Madison CIAS" to:*

*CIAS  
Curriculum Project  
1535 Observatory Dr.  
Madison, WI 53706*

## NCR-SARE Staff Update

Christine Yaeger has joined the NCR-SARE program as the Principal Office and Administrative Specialist in St. Paul, MN.

Yaeger received her B.S. in Environment and Natural Resources from the University of Minnesota in 2006. After graduation she continued her internship with the U.S. Geological Survey, where she sampled, analyzed, and wrote about water quality for offices in Mounds View, MN and in the U of M Civil Engineering Department. Yaeger will support the NCR-SARE program administratively, answering questions, sending out correspondence, managing the databases, and supporting other NCR-SARE staff.

The Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN) has a new name--SARE Outreach.

But our mission remains the same. We'll continue as SARE's national outreach arm, producing practical, how-to information for farmers, ranchers and educators across America. In addition to our trademark line of books, bulletins, and other information products featuring SARE-funded research (see [www.sare.org/WebStore](http://www.sare.org/WebStore)), we'll ramp up our conference sponsorship program, further develop SARE's website, and work collaboratively with SARE's four regional offices and state coordinators on innovative outreach to SARE audiences.

In celebration of our past 20 years and in preparation for the next, SARE has a newly stated vision and mission statement—and a new logo.

SARE's vision is an enduring American agriculture of the highest quality. This agriculture is profitable, protects the nation's land and water and is a force for a rewarding way of life for farmers and ranchers whose quality products and operations sustain their communities and society.

SARE's mission is to advance – to the whole of American agriculture – innovations that improve profitability, stewardship and quality of life by investing in groundbreaking research and education.





After working at a treatment facility for juveniles for 16 years, Tim Carroll never planned to have a successful career logging with horses. But when Carroll married his wife, Doreen, who had three riding horses, he soon grew attached to draft horses and began using them to plow his driveway and do other work on his property.

Soon after, down the road from his home in Minnesota, Carroll noticed a neighbor had hired a machine logger. The rest, you could say, is history.

“Those loggers had left a mess on my neighbor’s property,” explained Carroll. “I asked if I could come by and clean out some of those logs with my horses. It didn’t take long and I had a crowd of people watching. People started asking me if I could come out to their land. Before I had my first job done, I had three contracts waiting. Not long after that, I had 27 contracts. After 5 years, I quit my day job, and started doing this fulltime.”

Other than cutting firewood, Carroll had never been involved in forestry. Soon, “equine forestry,” as Carroll calls it, became his new passion. As his interest in horse logging grew, he traveled around the country working with other horse loggers, such as Jason Rutledge with Healing Harvest Forest Foundation.

Today, Cedar River Horse Logging and Wood Products has been in business for 18 years using draft horses for sustainable forest management.

Carroll developed a strong desire to educate people about the benefits and sustainability of equine forestry, so he submitted a proposal to NCR-SARE. He received a 2006 Farmer Rancher grant from NCR-SARE for \$6,000 to educate the public about this low-impact forest harvesting method with his project, “Equine Forestry: Promotion of a Low-Impact Forest Harvesting Method.”

“Draft horses are incredibly efficient, and people need to know that,” explained Carroll. “This project was started to educate the public about equine forestry and to bring young people into the profession. The average age of a horse logger is 45-55. It’s not for a lack of demand for the work; it’s a lack of educated young people getting involved.”



Tim Carroll logging with draft horses.

## Equine Forestry: A Minnesota Logger Seeks to Educate the Public on Low-Impact Forest Harvesting

Carroll is convinced his method is sustainable from many angles.

“I don’t think that there’s a system that’s more sustainable for logging than ours,” he explained. “Horses cost about \$2.50 per day to operate, including depreciation, and we can move a semi load of logs per day with them. We even use them to harvest the hay they eat. Skidders don’t produce baby skidders. Horses reproduce colts. “With his project funds, Carroll created a DVD to demonstrate and educate the public about the benefits of equine forestry.

The production was aired on Twin Cities Public Television (TPT). For the production, Carroll set up an old fashion logging camp with a 20 man crew, 11 horses, four saw mills, and a camp cook. During production, the camp logged and sawed 36,000 board feet in eight days.

“The film was aired for the first time on January 12, 2008 on TPT and I have had a lot of calls from people who would now prefer to have their land worked with horses,” said Carroll.

“I have done a lot of seminars and demonstrations and found people really want this service. They are interested in learning more about horse logging. Also, this grant has given me an opportunity to understand the Public Broadcasting System and how it works. My role as a businessman is changing from a producer to a manager and teacher,” said Carroll.

Carroll’s project has been featured on the History Channel’s Modern Marvels program in 2008. **Read more about Carroll’s project online at the SARE reporting site. Simply search by the project number, FNC06-605, at <http://www.sare.org/projects/>.**



## Kids Get the Skinny on Whole Grains in North Dakota

Working in an extension office, co-owner of Dakota Family Mill, Adrian Biewer, became aware of the health needs that wholegrain products could address. Developing a better tasting wholegrain product made practical sense.

In 2006, the farm families of Dakota Family Mill, Duane and Jean Smith, Bob and Debra Evenson, and Adrian and Anne Biewer, submitted a proposal to the NCR-SARE Farmer Rancher Grant program, and were selected for funding.

The goal for their project, “Kids Get the Skinny on Whole Grains,” was twofold: to create a niche market for their white wheat products for sustainability and profit for family farms and to promote healthier kids in the North Central region.

They addressed the issue of childhood obesity by developing acceptance of whole grain products through experiential learning, child-friendly marketing and colorful packaging.

They chose the SARE grant program because it was flexible. “It best fit our needs and it

in Wahpeton and The General store in Abercrombie and Colfax, ND. UPC codes were purchased to begin sales. They were part of a two-day sale promotion at Econofoods and sold out the shelf stock three times during that promotion.

“It has been a learning experience to work with our local grocer,” said Biewer. “They were very open to offering our product on the shelf and have started providing baked white wheat products from their bakery. We were part of the baking mix refinements for their batches and were asked to evaluate their products. They have been very helpful and will enable us to better meet the needs of future customers.”

“People who have tried the products seem to really like them. However, we really wish we could do it cheaper so more would consider buying it. When you line it up with other products at, say, Walmart, - it looks expensive. And, there are no places close to us to custom mill or pack,” said Biewer.

They intend to work through distributorship

whole grains can be implemented in recipes and food for every meal of the day.

The expected economic impact of the project is the development and expansion of the hard white wheat market. “In the long term, this would create an alternative profitable crop for farmers and job opportunities in the area, such as trucking, manufacturing and marketing,” said Biewer.

Richland County Extension agent, Colleen Svingen, participated in outreach for the project.

“As research continues to reveal the numerous health benefits of whole grains it reinforces the need to teach the health benefits to the public,” said Svingen.

Community outreach, especially to kids, is an essential component of the project.

Their school program “Kids Get The Skinny on Whole Grains” has met with much success. Colleen Svingen and Deb Evenson with Richland County Extension have been to every public school in Richland County. They have programmed in each sixth grade classroom in Richland County (five rural schools and Wahpeton). Their “Bread in a Bag” program reached 190 students. They reached 130 students with their “Pretzel in a Bag” program. Programming has also occurred for 35 4-H students at various age levels.

**Read more about their project online on the SARE project reporting website. Simply search by the project number, FNC06-607, at <http://www.sare.org/projects/>**

**“As research continues to reveal the numerous health benefits of whole grains it reinforces the need to teach the health benefits to the public.”**

**– Adrian Biewer**

also would allow us to meet the need for nutritional education in the communities,” explained Biewer.

Dakota Family Mill began distributing 5 lb. flour and cracked wheat to Econofoods

in small towns until they have a larger supply and a better understanding of the business. The group is confident that people are ready and willing to learn about and embrace the idea of eating more whole grains. They stress that white wheat whole grain flour can be used in ordinary recipes, and teach that



# NCR-SARE Elects Seven Administrative Council Representatives

David Baker, Rhonda Janke, Hans Kandel, Dough Karlen, Tim Kautza, Juan Martinez, and Tricia Wagner have been elected to serve as Administrative Council (AC) members for the North Central Regional Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program (NCR-SARE) this past year.

Assistant Dean for the College of Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources at the University of Missouri-Colombia, [David Baker](#) has been elected to serve as the Extension Director's representative to the NCR-SARE Administrative Council. From 1975-1994 Baker held the extension appointment for Extension Safety and Occupational Health Specialist at the University of Missouri-Colombia. He has previously served on the NCR-SARE Professional Development Program Committee, the Research and Education Program Review Panel, and the Evaluation Committee, among others.

[Rhonda Janke](#) is an Associate Professor and Extension Specialist for Cropping Systems at Kansas State University (KSU) in the Department of Horticulture. She has been elected to serve as the Kansas research representative to the NCR-SARE Administrative Council to complete the term of Gerad Middendorf, also from KSU. In 2006, Janke developed two new courses at KSU, "Opportunities in Sustainable Agriculture" and "Organic Farming Systems." In 2005, Janke interviewed more than 70 leaders in sustainable agriculture. Those interviews are currently being transcribed for a full-text web site, as well a print publication.

North Dakota State University Extension Broadleaf Agronomist, [Hans Kandel](#) has been elected to serve as the North Dakota research representative to the NCR-SARE Administrative Council. Kandel has previously served as the Minnesota extension representative to the Administrative Council and is a member of the North Dakota State Variety Release Committee.

[Doug Karlen](#), Supervisory Soil Scientist and Research Leader for the National Soil Tilth Laboratory and Professor of Agronomy at Iowa State University has

been elected as the Regional Agricultural Research Service representative to the NCR-SARE Administrative Council. Karlen has previously served on the NCR-SARE Administrative Council and the National Academy of Science as a Panel Member for



NCR-SARE Administrative Council members examine a corn field in North Yates, ND in 2007.

Alternative Liquid Transportation Fuels, among other activities.

## NCR-SARE's Administrative Council represents various agricultural sectors, states and organizations.

A Science and Environmental Education Specialist for the National Catholic Rural Like Conference in Des Moines, IA, [Tim Kautza](#) has been elected to serve as the regional non-profit representative to the NCR-SARE Administrative Council. Kautza critiques and educates about the environment and social implications related to confined animal feeding operations, agricultural pesticides, water supply and quality, bioenergy, and global climate change.

[Juan Martinez](#), Assistant Director for Outreach with the Julian Samora Research Institute at Michigan State University and Regional Director of Michigan State University Extension has been elected to serve as the Michigan extension representative to the NCR-SARE Administrative Council. Martinez has previously served on SARE's Sustainable Agriculture Network Steering Committee. Among other activities, Martinez has served as a panelist for the Hispanic Serving Institution Education Grants Program and the Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers

Competitive Grants Program.

[Tricia Wagner](#) has been elected to serve as the Missouri farmer rancher representative to NCR-SARE's Administrative Council. Wagner is an owner of Yellow Wood Farms in Hermann, MO and has a 100 share Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) in partnership with Lee Farms of Truxton, MO. Among other activities, Wagner is a member of the Missouri Vegetable Growers Association, the Missouri Organic Association, and recently worked as a Community Development Specialist for Local Food Systems with the University of Missouri Extension.

NCR-SARE's Administrative Council represents various agricultural sectors, states and organizations. It sets program priorities and makes granting decisions for the region.

Photo by Marie Flanagan

# NCR-SARE Announces Calls for Proposals

## Farm Bill Brings Changes to SARE Leadership: A letter from Phil Rasmussen

SARE is experiencing the first ripple effects of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act (farm bill) with a new role for Jill Auburn, SARE Director for more than 10 years.

Jill Auburn is being detailed to a new position in USDA reporting to the Chief Scientist and Under Secretary for Research, Education and Economics. She will be chief of the Agricultural Systems and Technology division of the Research, Education and Extension Office. This mouthful was all newly created under the new Act.

While we'll miss Jill's day-to-day leadership of SARE-the detail could last up to four years-she'll be within hollerin' distance. SARE matters will cross Jill's new desk often, so she'll still be contributing to the effort and better able to link our work with other research, extension and education endeavors at the department.

### Employee of the Year

Jill was awarded Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service (CSREES) Employee of the Year in Science and Education award-but SARE widely considers her entire tenure worthy of such recognition. Jill brought an openness to new ideas, intellectual rigor, remarkable organizational and management skills and broad experience to SARE. Says one regional coordinator: "She motivates others with positive attitude, clear vision and an ability to solve problems." It's no wonder that at SARE's 20th Anniversary conference in March Jill was given a standing ovation!

### The Transition Plan

For the first six months, Western SARE Coordinator Phil Rasmussen will give 25 percent of his time to act as national director. He will receive substantial assistance from Kim Kroll, SARE Associate Director, and Andy Clark, SARE Outreach Coordinator. CSREES will revisit the situation after

January 1, 2009 to see what makes most sense going forward as the circumstances of Jill's detail, the new administration, and the transition from CSREES to the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (as mandated by the farm bill) develop.

The new SARE team is confident that, with SARE staff's support, the shift in leadership will go smoothly and SARE's work to advance sustainable agriculture will continue unhampered.

Regards,  
Phil Rasmussen



Phil Rasmussen is a soil scientist at Utah State University and coordinator of the Western Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program, also known as Western SARE.

NCR-SARE announces the 2009 Calls for Proposals for both the Youth & Youth Educator Sustainable Agriculture Grants and the Graduate Student Grant Program.

Youth Grants are a new part of the Farmer Rancher Grant Program. The purpose of the Youth Grant Program is to provide opportunities for youth in the North Central Region to learn more about Sustainable Agriculture.

**YOUTH GRANTS:** These grants are awarded to youth ages 8-21 for on-farm research, demonstration, or education projects. Research and demonstration projects are for hands-on efforts to explore sustainable agriculture issues and practices. Education projects can involve teaching others about sustainable agriculture or attending a sustainable agriculture conference, workshop, or camp. \$400 maximum. Deadline: January 30, 2009.

**YOUTH EDUCATOR GRANTS:** These grants are awarded to educators to provide programming on sustainable agriculture for youth. \$2,000 maximum. Deadline: January 30, 2009.

For more information about the Youth Grant Program contact NCR-SARE Associate Regional Coordinator, Joan Benjamin at 402-472-0809, 1-800-529-1342, or [jbenjamin2@unl.edu](mailto:jbenjamin2@unl.edu).

NCR-SARE instituted the Graduate Student Grant Program for officially registered graduate students (Masters and Ph.D.) enrolled at accredited colleges or universities.

**GRADUATE STUDENT GRANTS:** These grants are for graduate student projects lasting up to three years. Projects must benefit agriculture in the North Central Region. \$10,000 maximum. Deadline: January 28, 2009.

For more information about the Graduate Student Grant Program contact NCR-SARE Graduate Student Program Coordinator, Bill Wilcke at 612-625-8205 or [wilck001@umn.edu](mailto:wilck001@umn.edu).

The calls for both Youth Grants and the Graduate Student Grants will be available on the NCR-SARE website in December 2008 at <http://sare.org/ncrsare/>



# Organic Production and Marketing of Forest Medicinals

## Notes on Building and Supporting a Learning Community Among Growers

### *NCR-SARE project report from Rural Action*

The scope of this NCR-SARE Research and Education project was designed to assist the Roots of Appalachia Growers Association (RAGA) develop a learning network among growers, to close the gap between growers and current research activities, and support RAGA entering the marketplace. Below is an excerpt of the final project report from Rural Action.

#### Introduction

The Appalachian region of Ohio has experienced severe economic distress up to the present day. In the hilly terrain there are very few full-time farmers left, and the land has experienced fragmentation due to development. At the same time reverting tree cover and hills provide prime microclimates for cultivation of high value medicinal plants native to the region.

With prime growing sites and interest in the region from purchasers of herbal products, sound opportunities exist for ecologically and economically sustainable production of these plants. Properly grown wild-simulated ginseng brings at least \$500/pound and is very ecologically sound, whereas improperly grown ginseng can bring only \$20/pound and requires constant applications of fungicides. Already ginseng sales generate nearly \$2 million per year in Ohio.

The project team's focus on ginseng and goldenseal is drawn from the literature on the economics of ginseng and goldenseal production which shows that ginseng produced using wild-simulated methods is more profitable than conventionally cultivated ginseng given the scale of production and availability of natural shaded microclimates (Beyfuss 1998, 1999, Hankins 1998, Persons 1994). Our emphasis with goldenseal will be on organic production,

processing and marketing of certified organic goldenseal to companies that are willing to pay a premium as goldenseal can only be profitably grown on a small scale if it is sold for organic prices (OSU, Strategic Reports). RAGA's focus on ginseng and goldenseal is a result of producer interest.

#### Materials and Methods

A variety of educational approaches and methods were used during the course of this project in order to maximize grower learning and increase grower interaction. Peer-to-peer networking during meetings and field days were used to facilitate interaction with knowledgeable "experts" in an informal setting. These events were conducted at the Rural Action Research and Education (RARE) center, a 68-acre research farm located in rural Meigs County, OH.

Written and web materials were also produced to help facilitate the dissemination and retention of information regarding production practices. Annual conferences and a series of educational workshops were used to provide formal structured information with opportunities for networking and interaction amongst participants. Landowners conference activities were conducted at Camp Oty'okwa, a 300-acre facility near Logan, OH.

#### Impact of Results/Outcomes

Several positive outcomes have resulted from this project. By conducting on-farm field days, workshops, presentations, outreach, festivals, and events, more than 440 growers and potential growers have been reached. By networking at events and through Rural Action's Planting Stock Program it is clear that most growers are pursuing more sustainable and ecological methods of ginseng cultivation, specifically the wild-simulated method. One local root buyer recently stated that he is seeing more wild-simulated roots sold on the market.

Since the beginning of this project RAGA has recruited many new members, but has also maintained a paid membership of 86 growers. RAGA members have continued to promote forest farming and ecological cultivation methods around the state, urging interested landowners and farmers diversify their farm operations by cultivating woodland medicinals. This project has also had important impacts on local extension services and the general public. By partnering with OSU Extension to produce the "Ginseng" series of fact-sheets, RAGA and Rural Action have helped increase the capacity of service providers to disseminate information to forested landowners. These fact-sheets have also helped reach the general public. Many new and existing growers who have participated in the Rural Action Planting Stock Program, or who have called to inquire about additional Non-Timber Forest Products literature

#### Farmer Adoption

In total over 440 growers and potential growers have participated in project activities. Based on evidence and data collected from growers, it is clear that growers are pursuing sustainable and ecological production methods for American ginseng, and goldenseal. Traditional growers who have been involved with forest farming for many years have begun to, or already have, transitioned to these practices. It is also apparent that most new growers are almost exclusively pursuing sustainable wild-simulated production. For traditional growers to complete this transition it is necessary for them to eliminate the use of pesticides, herbicides, and fungicides. Instead of purchasing these chemicals growers can use the money they have saved to purchase 1-2 pounds of extra seed. It is recommended to plant at least this amount of seed every season if growers wish to fully maximize the earning potential of their woodlands.

**Read more from this online project report on the SARE project reporting website. Simply search by the project number, LNC05-256, at <http://www.sare.org/projects/>**



## ABOUT NCR-SARE

NCR-SARE has awarded more than \$30 million worth of competitive grants to farmers and ranchers, researchers, educators, public and private institutions, nonprofit groups, and others exploring sustainable agriculture in 12 states.

NCR-SARE funds 50 to 75 cutting-edge projects every year in four grant programs. NCR Administrative Council (AC) members decide which projects will receive SARE funds. A collection of farm and non-farm citizens, the AC includes a diverse mix of agricultural stakeholders in our 12 states. Council members hail from regional farms and ranches, the Cooperative Extension Service, universities, and nonprofits.

In addition, regional representatives of the U.S. Geological Survey, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and NCR agribusinesses, state agencies, and foundations sit at the table to distribute grant money.

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## GRANT PROGRAM TIMELINES

### Farmer Rancher Grant Timeline

August - Call for Proposals  
December - Proposals Due  
March - Proposal Status Notification  
Spring - Funds Available to Recipients

### Graduate Student Grant Timeline

Fall - Call for Proposals  
January - Proposals Due  
March - Funding Decisions  
Spring - Proposal Status Notification  
Fall - Funds Available to Recipients

### Research and Education Grant Timeline

April - Call for Pre-Proposals  
June - Pre-Proposals Due  
Early Fall - Preproposal Status Notification  
Late Fall - Full Proposals Due  
March - Funding Decisions  
Spring - Proposal Status Notification  
Fall - Funds Available to Recipient

### Professional Development Grant Timeline

March - Call for Pre-Proposals  
Late May - Pre-Proposals Due  
June - Preproposal Notification  
Late August - Full Proposals Due  
November - Funding Decisions

NORTH CENTRAL REGION SUSTAINABLE  
AGRICULTURE RESEARCH AND  
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