# NORTH CENTRAL REGION Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education





# NCR-SARE Evaluates Research & Education Grant Program

#### By Al Kurki

In 2007 and 2008, NCR-SARE commissioned a survey of Principal Investigators (PIs) and farmers and ranchers who participated in Research and Education (R&E) projects that were funded from 1988 to 2004. The results of the PI and producer survey are now posted at the North Central SARE website http://sare.org/ncrsare/resedu .htm#Evaluation

We'd like to thank all the survey respondents for their patience and commitment to completing what was a real test of memories and fortitude. Here are a few things we want you to know about your hard work:

- 1) Your completing the survey helped us gain a better sense of what kind of impact your projects had and how we can improve the grants program in the future. While most of you rated the NCR-SARE R&E grants program quite highly, we took to heart some areas of improvement that you suggested. For example, we are working to shorten the turnaround time for award and contract paperwork.
- 2) The surveys results, when pooled with the survey results and analysis from the Western SARE and Southern SARE programs, told us how we all might improve our reporting systems and expectations in the future. That work is underway right now, but it'll take time to fully implement.
- 3) This retrospective assessment of the R&E program and its projects funded over 17 years was a one-time event. Any post-project surveys in the future will be much shorter and much closer to the time period in which the project was conducted. We'll be seeking your help in reporting the project results as best you can, but we won't be asking you twice about something that took place eight years ago, for example.

#### **A Few Highlights**

Hallmarks of the SARE program include meaningful farmer involvement in SARE projects, advancing research in sustainable agriculture topics, and creating institutional support for sustainable agriculture research.

The surveyed projects had high levels of farmer and extension involvement. 72% of farmers reported being involved at some level, and 77 percent of Project PIs said extension educators were involved in these projects.

NCR-SARE R&E projects led to cooperation and partnership opportunities in furthering advancement of sustainable agriculture systems and practices. 70 percent of the project PIs reported that the project resulted in "a new collaboration with a new colleague." Nearly six in ten project PIs noted collaboration between a Land Grant institution and a non-profit organization.

At the institutional level, a significant majority of project PIs (67 percent) noted an increase in support for sustainable agriculture research and extension at their institution over the past decade. 15 percent reported, that support had somewhat or greatly decreased. When asked whether support of sustainable agriculture within their institution could be attributed to the North Central Region SARE grants program, 65 percent strongly or somewhat agreed that this was the case and 10 percent strongly or somewhat disagreed.

# What did Involvement in SARE R&E Projects Mean for Farmers?

Nearly eight out of ten farmer cooperators in NCR-SARE R&E projects found the information gained from the SARE project useful, and just over half of them used what they had learned on their farm. Of that group, over eight out of 10 who used the The Newsletter of the NCR-SARE Program Issue 20

Al Kurki, PDP Associate Training Coordinator, Western Region SARE.

technology, practice or approach continued to use it over time.

Market recognition of their farm's products increased for half of farmers who responded to the survey. Farming satisfaction increased for almost half of those who responded. Public recognition for involvement in a NCR-SARE R&E project was reported by almost 70% of the farmer survey respondents.

Farmers involved in NCR-SARE R&E projects said their highest priorities for more information were in soil building crop rotations and cover crops (65.8 percent), followed by ecological pest and disease management ecological weed management strategies, and producing renewable energy.

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## Organic Dairy 101: A Workshop for Agricultural Professionals

The Organic Dairy Short Course for Ag Professionals, a Professional Development Grant Program project, aimed at improving the ability of public and private sector agricultural educators and advisors to serve organic and transitional organic dairy producers.

The project developed, delivered, and evaluated a professional development training module called "Organic Dairy 101: A Workshop for Agricultural Professionals" at four locations in Minnesota and three in Wisconsin, training a total of 174 dairy and agriculture professionals.

During this two-year program, trainings in Minnesota and Wisconsin encouraged participation and local applicability of information. Primary target participants included Extension educators, veterinarians, veterinary students, lenders, farm business management instructors, state dairy inspectors and other state/federal agency regulators, paraprofessional mentor farmers, county feedlot officers, agricultural news and feature, and industry consultants.

Two complementary training events reached 66 additional veterinary students and veterinary professionals in Wisconsin. Evaluation indicted a high level of participant satisfaction with the training, progress toward goals, and interest in further organic dairy training.

As a result of this project, more than 200 current and future agriculture professionals became more informed about organic dairy legal requirements, production practices, performance, and farmer motivations and have increased confidence that organic dairy is a viable production strategy.

Project coordinator Meg Moynihan is an Organic and Diversification Specialist at the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. She said, "At least three fourths of them are working with organic dairy farmers, and since the training about 40% have learned



about organic dairies in their area that they weren't aware of previously. "

"More than 90 percent can identify sources of reliable information about organic dairy that they can draw on or refer clients to," said Moynihan.

"Animal health considerations are something that haven't been adequately addressed by the organic dairy community or by the veterinary industry," explained project cooperator, Laura Paine, Grazing & Organic Agriculture Specialist with the WI Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection. "This project provided a forum to begin discussions between the veterinary establishment and the organic dairy industry."

Martha Rideout, a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin, did a followup survey of some of the vets who participated in the workshops, as well as a group of vets who did not participate. She is summarizing her findings, which will be shared with the University of Wisconsin School of Veterinary Medicine and the Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Association.

Read more about Moynihan's project online on the SARE project reporting website. Simply search by the project number, ENC06-091, at http://www.sare.org/projects/ or contact the NCR-SARE office for more information at ncrsare@umn.edu.

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The farmer survey result reports describe changes in farming operations like fertilizer and pesticide use and net income. However, while the survey response rate was relatively high, responses to individual questions was variable enough that we caution against sweeping generalizations based on the survey data reports.

The results of the PI and producer survey are now posted at http://sare.org/ncrsare/resedu. htm#Evaluation

#### Organic Farm Crop Rotation Manual Available

Crop Rotation on Organic Farms: A Planning Manual provides an in-depth review of the applications of crop rotation-including improving soil quality and health, and managing pests, diseases, and weeds. Consulting with expert organic farmers, the authors share rotation strategies that can be applied under various field conditions and with a wide range of crops.

Published by the Natural Resource, Agriculture and Engineering Service (NRAES) and funded in part by SARE, the book includes instructions for making rotation planning maps and discusses the transition to organic farming. Other features include:

- Problems and opportunities for over 500 crop sequences
- Characteristics of more than 60 crops and 70 weeds
- Crop diseases hosted by over 80 weed species
- Modes of transmission for 250 diseases of 24 crops
- Thirteen sample four- and five-year vegetable and grain crop rotations
- Managing Crop Rotation Chart with key tasks & steps
- Sample worksheets and calculations
- Step-by-step procedure for determining crop rotation plans

Scheduled for release in July of 2009, Crop Rotation on Organic Farms will be a valuable resource for organic farmers, educators, students, and professional advisors interested in the do's, don'ts, how's, and why's of organic crop rotation. Although the manual will be most applicable for the Northeastern United States and Eastern Canada, it will also be useful in other parts of the U.S., Canada, and even Europe.

NRAES will take pre-print orders through June 15, 2009. The book will be available in July. The pre-print price for 1-24 copies is \$16.80 per copy plus S&H and the pre-print price for 25 or more copies is \$14.40 per copy plus S&H. The list price after printing is expected to be \$24 per copy. (Standard quantity discounts will be available after printing; visit http://www.nraes.org for discount information.) NCR-SARE AC members will receive a complimentary copy from NCR-SARE. In Canistota, SD, a group of family farmers have been experimenting with methods for adding value to their products and income to their operations.

Tom and Ruth Neuberger were traditional livestock farmers in '70's. During the credit crunch of early 80's they found themselves in debt "up to their ears." They sold off their livestock to pay off debt, and then had to devise a new business plan.

#### They turned to poultry.

"We turned to poultry mainly because of the faster turnover," explained Tom Neuberger. "Goose was especially profitable because Ruth could make pillows and comforters from the feathers and down, in addition to profit generated from the meat."

The Neubergers had been raising, processing, and direct marketing poultry as whole birds for 15 years. In 2001 they were looking for ways to add value to their products and income to their operations. They, along with a group of family farmers, submitted a proposal to the North Central Region Sustainable Research and Education Program's (NCR-SARE) Farmer Rancher Grant Program and were awarded \$14,513 for their project, "Developing Added Value, Convenience Products from Free-Range Pastured Chickens."

NCR-SARE's Farmer Rancher Grant program funds competitive grants to farmers and ranchers striving for agricultural sustainability. As creative marketing becomes more of a key component of financial success, NCR-SARE assists farmers and ranchers who are examining alternative ways of adding value to their products.

Members of the group working on this project included the Neubergers and three other families. Team leader, Tom Neuberger, hosted the project on his 160-acre grass farm. A poultry processing facility is located on the farm. The chickens used for the project were raised in a free-range manner and cattle and sheep raised on the farm were rotationally grazed.

Rather than purchasing more chickens, the group wanted to find ways to improve the value of the chickens that they already had. On their farm, the chickens used for the project were raised in a free-range manner and cattle and sheep raised on the farm were rotationally grazed. The SARE grant assisted them in acquiring the equipment and supplies necessary to create products that would not only increase profits but also provide convenient food products for consumers.

"The exciting thing we learned from the project was that adding value to a whole bird was more profitable than raising and marketing more birds," explained Neuberger. "For example, we found we could double the value of a whole bird by simply cutting it up in a few minutes and selling the parts in pound packages."



Developing Added Value, Convenience Products From Free-Range Pastured Chickens

Tom Neuberger grinding chicken.

While this project did not produce a profit due to large labor costs and time spent producing the products, it did confirm that there is potential to add profits by adding value to products on the farm. It took 144 hours at \$9 per hour (\$1,296) to produce \$6,301 worth of value-added products. The 781 processed whole chickens from which the value-added products were made were valued at \$5 each (\$3,905).

"Many of the birds were seconds and would have been sold at a discount if sold as whole birds," said Neuburger. "However, the cost of bags and labels, equipment depreciation, and overhead added to the cost of the new products and eliminated any profits during the testing phase."

Neuberger analyzed the labor and cost data for producing the 8 products and determined that a producer could further process 5.42 chickens per hour. Using a rate of \$9 per hour for labor, he determined that a producer could add \$1.66 worth of value to each bird raised on his farm. Neuberger noted that there are several factors that could alter the results of the project. A location with a high demand for value-added products would allow producers to charge a higher price and make the process more profitable.

"Our project should have convinced anyone interested in raising chickens that it is more expedient to increase income by adding value than to raise more chickens and selling them whole" said Neuberger.

Read more about Nueberger's project online on the SARE project reporting website. Simply search by the project number, FNC01-351, at http://www.sare.org/projects/ or contact the NCR-SARE office for more information at ncrsare@umn.edu.



# Missouri Farmer Develops Sustainable Irrigation System for Organic Vegetable Production

Kuebler and his solar irrigation system.

In Ashland, MO, Dan Kuebler is creating an affordable, efficient, and sustainable irrigation system for a two acre organic vegetable operation. Since 1977, Dan Kuebler has been running a certified organic garden operation in Ashland.

Half the property is open fields and the remainder is hardwoods. Kuebler grows a wide variety of vegetables on approximately 1.5 acres of the property, which includes one heated greenhouse for starting plants and two tall tunnels which are unheated.

Kuebler has been intensively growing for over 15 years using organic methods and had been using drip irrigation on his crops for 10 of those years using expensive public county water.

In 2005, Kuebler submitted a proposal for his sustainable solar irrigation project, and was awarded \$5,633 from the North Central Region Sustainable Research and Education Program's (NCR-SARE) Farmer Rancher Grant Program.

"My goal was to irrigate my crops with water from my farm pond and to use renewable energy as the power source for pumping the water up the hill to my fields and to save money in the process," said Kuebler. "I was familiar with SARE over the years and had tried to keep up with many of the projects. It stimulated me to also think in terms of what I could do on my farm since I had always been very interested in solar power and renewable energy projects."

Don Day, Natural Resources Engineer, at Missouri University Extension shot the elevation that Kuebler needed from the pond's surface to the top of the hill in order to properly size the solar water pump needed for the project. Day also advised Kuebler on the proper size pipe to use to capture the rainwater from his barn roof and direct it to the pond.

The total cost of the system was \$5,930.37. Kuebler estimates that it would cost \$2,850 annually using county water for irrigation. He calculated that the solar irrigation system would yield annual savings starting in the third year of operation.

Kuebler hosted a Demonstration Field Day in May 2007 and presented his project at

"My system is very efficient and so it does not really need to run for very many hours of each day. It presents a model that can be duplicated by other growers in our region and the country as well as stimulating others to refine it further for their unique situations. This project is getting me excited about the possibilities for more creative ideas for solar and wind energy on the farm." – Dan Keubler the National Small Farm Today Trade Show & Conference.

"I learned that I should have acted on my idea for a solar irrigation system years ago and I would have been more profitable in my operation," said Kuebler. "My system is very efficient and so it does not really need to run for very many hours of each day. It presents a model that can be duplicated by other growers in our region and the country as well as stimulating others to refine it further for their unique situations. This project is getting me excited about the possibilities for more creative ideas for solar and wind energy on the farm."

NCR-SARE awards Farmer Rancher grants to farmers and ranchers for on-farm research, demonstration, and education projects. There are two types of competitive grants – individual (\$6,000 maximum) and group (\$18,000 maximum). Projects must be completed in 21 months.

Farmer Rancher grants have funded a variety of research topics, including pest and disease management, crop production, education/ outreach, networking, quality of life issues, energy, livestock production, marketing, soil quality, waste management, water quality, and more.

Read more about the Kuebler's project online on the SARE project reporting website. Simply search by the project number, FNC05-557, at http://www.sare.org/projects/ or contact the NCR-SARE office for more information at ncrsare@umn.edu.



# **NCR-SARE Elects New Administrative Council** Representatives

Maurus Brown, Paul Dietmann, Rick Jurchems, and Rob King, 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.

Maurus Brown has been elected to serve as the Ohio extension representative to the NCR-SARE Administrative Council. Brown is an Assistant Professor and Research and Extension Specialist for Small Fruit Crops at The Ohio State University South Centers, Piketon. Brown has developed collaborative partnerships with state agencies, agricultural businesses, university faculty, and fruit producers to obtain funding for research that will help promote small fruit production.

President of the Farm and Rural Services Bureau at the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Customer Service Protection (DATCP), Paul Dietman has been elected to serve as the state agency representative to the NCR-SARE Administrative Council. Prior to joining DATCP, Dietman served nearly eleven years as a University of Wisconsin Extension

Agricultural Agent and Department Head in Sauk County, and was an Associate Professor in the UW-Extension Department of Agriculture/Agribusiness, among other activities.

Rick Jurchems has been elected to serve as the Iowa farmer or rancher representative to the NCR-SARE Administrative Council. Jurchem's family farming opertaion consists of minimum-till corn, no-till beans, and alfalfa. They finish 250 steers and custom finish hogs. Jurcehm is currently the president of the Conservation Districts of Iowa, and is a member of the Iowa Cattlemen. He has served on several boards and committees, including the Bremer County Corn and Soybean Board.

Professor in the Department of Applied Economics at the University of Minnesota, Rob King, has been elected to serve as the Minnesota state representative to the NCR-SARE Administrative Council. King's research focuses on management issues facing food retailers, farmer cooperatives, and farmers. It also focuses on the impacts new information technologies are having on the food system. King has lectured in Brazil, Hungary, Italy, The Netherlands, and Poland over the past several years.

NCR-SARE would like to extend gratitude to the following AC members whose terms have expired: past Administrative Council Chair Brad Brummond, state agency representative Judy Grundler, Iowa state research representative Mark Hanna, Ohio state farmer rancher representative Ken Rider, and Minnesota state extension representative Liz Stahl.

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



NCR-SARE Administrative Council members attend the Spring meeting in March 2009 in Bloomington, MN.

### **NCR-SARE Initiates Listening Sessions**

More than 10 years ago, in 1997, NCR-SARE's Administrative Council awarded four special Diversity Enhancement grants for Native American communities to implement sustainable practices and concepts on reservation lands. This initiative was intended to open doors and forge partnerships with Native American land grant universities.

At that point, NCR-SARE made a pledge: "Future NCR-SARE initiatives will encourage more participation of minority groups and underserved communities." During the summer of 2007 NCR-SARE's AC met in Bismarck, ND. At this meeting, the AC not only had the opportunity to meet with people representing various Native American Nations, but they also had the opportunity to personally visit Standing Rock Sioux Reservation and Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park to observe traditional practices.

Frank Kutka, State Coordinator for the Dakotas, was eager to help facilitate the bringing together of people from many communities for one purpose. "It was so nice to see that my visits to the reservations had generated so much interest in SARE and this meeting," said

Kutka. "The Native communities' long term experiences here will help us all to better formulate our long-term goals and vision of sustainability on the northern plains."

After having met and formed connections, members of these communities and NCR-SARE committed to keeping the dialog alive through additional visits and conversations in the northern plains. In November 2007, NCR-SARE's AC approved funds to sponsor a series of small-group listening sessions on North and South Dakota reservations to follow up on the June 2007 meeting, and a group representing NCR-SARE organized and attended listening sessions in North and South Dakota during the summer of 2008.

"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.

The group intends to continue on with its listening sessions with corn and soybean farmers in Minnesota during the summer of 2009.



## **Recently Funded Grants in the NCR**

NCR-SARE has made public the lists of projects most recently recommended for funding for each of its grant programs: Farmer Rancher, Research and Education, Professional Development, Grdaute Student Grant, and the Farmer Rancher Grant Program's Youth and Youth Educator grants.

Go to http://sare.org/ncrsare/ to find links to lists of the projects recently recommended for funding.

NCR-SARE administers these grant programs, each with specific priorities, audiences, and timelines. The focus for each of the NCR-SARE grant programs is on research and education.

Funding considerations are made based on how well the applicant articulates the nature of the research and/or education components of their sustainable agriculture grant proposals.

NCR-SARE Administrative Council (AC) members decide which projects will receive NCR-SARE funds. A collection of farm and non-farm residents, 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. 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.

Since 1988, the USDA's NCR-SARE program has awarded more than \$40 million worth of competitive grants to farmers and ranchers, researchers, educators, public and private institutions, nonprofit groups, and others exploring sustainable agriculture.

## NCR-SARE Announces New Native American Grant Program

The NCR-SARE 2010 Call for Native American Sustainable Agriculture Grant Proposals is now available online at http://sare.org/ncrsare/cfp.htm

The Native American Sustainable Agricultural Grant Program is initially funded as a one-time NCR-SARE grant program.

The purpose of this grant program is to fund project(s) that can help Native Americans to improve agricultural sustainability in the North Central Region.

Maximum total grant size is \$275,000, with a maximum duration of three years. The deadline for proposals is 4:30pm CDT, Wednesday, September 30, 2009.

NCR-SARE urges interested parties to review the call for proposals carefully and to contact the NCR-SARE office with questions. Potential applicants can contact the office at ncrsare@umn.edu or 612-626-3113.

#### SARE Outreach and "Cooking Up a Story" Announce Online Video Partnership

SARE Outreach is pleased to announce a unique partnership with the online television series Cooking Up a Story to produce a series of videos highlighting SARE grantees and sustainable production and marketing practices. The two year project will produce a series of "how-to" technical videos featuring SARE grantees putting groundbreaking advancements to work across the nation.

Part of the Local Food Sustainable Network, Cooking Up a Story offers a variety of shows about people, food, and sustainable living that builds audiences around the many

important and interconnected issues that involve food and sustainability. With over 4 million videos streamed to date, Cooking Up A Story highlights how consumers, farmers and ranchers are working together to advance farming systems that are profitable, environmentally sound and good for communities.

The partnership will enable SARE to leverage Cooking Up a Story's distribution agreements with online video service providers like Youtube, Hulu, Fora.tv, Blinkx, and iTunes through Wizzard Media to advance sustainable innovations to an ever wider audience. Visit http://cookingupastory.com/ to view the most recent show, search the archives and subscribe to the series by email or web feed.



# **Evaluation of Supplemental Flowering Plant Strips for Sustainable Enhancement of Beneficial Insects:**

## Notes on Increasing Biodiversity in a Perennial Fruit System

REPORT SUMMARY FOR RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY NATHANIEL WALTON, MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERISTY

The primary short-term goal of this gradudate student grant project was to test a strategy for utilization of native plants to increase biodiversity in a perennial fruit system. This project is of particular relevance to specialty crop farmers that are under pressure to reduce pesticide inputs while also producing the highest quality food. Walton was concerned that these crops are becoming more important in the North Central Region as commercial farms diversify, small farms are established to supply fresh food to local markets, and the public increasingly values fresh produce grown near to the point of sale.

Walton tested whether sown native flower strips could support beneficial insects and thereby provide greater pest control and pollination in specialty crop landscapes, with the aim of building a foundation for more effective conservation of natural enemies and pollinators in the region.

#### **Impact of Results/Outcomes**

Walton compared blueberry fields with native perennial flower plantings on their perimeters to fields without flower perimeters in order to determine the impact of this conservation strategy on beneficial insects in crop fields. They found significantly more pollinators and natural enemies of crop pests in the fields adjacent to wildflower plantings. Natural enemies (mostly parasitoid wasps) were especially impacted by the presence of flowers, and were found in greater abundance in fields with flower plantings even 40 meters inside fields. Also, a late-season recovery of natural enemies following pre-harvest insecticide applications was seen only in fields adjacent to wildflower plantings.

Native perennial wildflower conservation plantings, such as those evaluated by this research, have tremendous potential for benefiting society, the environment, and agricultural sustainability. For the grower, they can reduce erosion, encourage beneficial insects, and improve the aesthetic value of their land. For the environment, they can reduce pesticide and nutrient runoff, provide wildlife refuge, and reduce the impact of pesticide drift. All of the above in turn benefit society by improving human welfare and ensuring a sustainable food supply. We expect that as more research and education is devoted to this and similar practices more farms will incorporate them into their management strategy.

#### **Economic Analysis**

Estimates based on current costs of native seed mixes range from \$700 - \$3000 per acre, depending on the species composition of the seed mix. The flowering plant strips evaluated in this study were approximately 1/33 of an acre and the impact was measured at the scale of a 1 acre field of blueberry. In other words, to receive the a benefit equivalent to that documented by our research a grower would need to spend between 21 and 90 dollars per acre for seed. This does not include the cost of planting, herbicide, soil preparation, etc. However, this is a one time cost if perennials are used and can be expected to provide a benefit for several years at no additional cost.

#### **Publications/Outreach**

The information gathered during this multi-year study has been presented to growers in the North central region through a variety of outlets. Walton presented results at the 2008 Great Lakes Fruit, Vegetable and Farm Market Expo in Grand Rapids, MI and the 2008 Entomological Society of America annual meeting in Reno, NV. A meeting was held at one of their field sites September of 2008, attended by about 20 growers. Growers were able to see a flower planting in bloom and hear presentations by representatives of USDA-NRCS, the Xerces society, project participant Dr. Rufus Isaacs of Michigan State University, and Walton, covering topics such as native pollinator conservation and how growers can receive incentives from NRCS to plant wildlife habitat on their farms.

#### **Farmer Adoption**

In a survey of Michigan blueberry growers in March of 2009, 17% responded yes to the question, "Do you currently have a region of your farm dedicated to beneficial insect conservation?," 8% said that they were planning to do so, and 59% said no and that they had never considered doing so. In the same survey, 17% of the growers said that they were receiving funds from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) or the Farm Services Agency (FSA), but in a follow-up question only 1 of those growers surveyed was receiving those funds specifically for beneficial insect conservation.

A new FSA program introduced in January of 2008, State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (CRP-SAFE), provides cost-sharing, rental payments, and implementation incentives to landowners who undertake practices to restore habitats that benefit high priority species conservation. In Michigan, FSA has set a goal for SAFE of preserving 2,500 acres for pollinator conservation in 22 counties in the Western Lower Peninsula. This SARE funded research will help FSA meet this goal as more growers are made aware of the benefits of integrating flowering plants into their croplands.

Read more about Walton's project online on the SARE project reporting website. Simply search by the project number, GNC07-086, at http://www.sare.org/projects/ or contact the NCR-SARE office for more information at ncrsare@umn.edu.



## UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA



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#### **ABOUT NCR-SARE**

NCR-SARE has awarded more than \$40 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 cutting-edge projects every year through grant programs.

Are you interested in becoming a project coordinator for a NCR-SARE grant? Before you write the grant proposal, determine a clear project goal, and engage in sustainable agriculture research on your topic. Need help determing which program is best suited for your project? Go to http://sare.org/ ncrsare/apply.htm for more information, or contact the NCR-SARE office.

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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**

April: Call for Pre-Proposals June: Pre-Proposals Due Early Fall: Prepropsal Status Notification Late Fall: Full Proposals Due March: Funding Decisions Made 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 Made

For more information about any of the NCR-SARE grant programs, go to http://sare.org/ ncrsare/cfp.htm or contact the NCR-SARE office at 612-626-3113 or ncrsare@umn.edu. NORTH CENTRAL REGION SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE RESEARCH AND EDUCATION PROGRAM

#### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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