Whether it’s on dinner tables, in restaurants, in schools or at markets, consumers are seeking more local food. In 2010, the Traverse Bay Economic Development Corporation and Michigan Good Food Charter set a goal to source 20 percent of the food for the Traverse City area within a 100-mile radius by 2020. When Michigan State University’s Jason Rowntree read that the meat portion of the plan was to be pasture-based if possible, he was inspired.

Rowntree set off to develop a local, pasture-based beef production system for Northwest Michigan. In 2012, he received a SARE grant to connect area beef producers, processors, distributors and retailers to meet Traverse City’s 20 percent local-food benchmark. Rowntree’s plan included identifying producers to participate in a value chain project called the Grand Vision Grass-fed Certification Program (GVGC), and after three years of participating in the GVGC program, seven producers are now producing grass-fed beef at scale and earning price premiums of 25 percent above the market rate. They also hosted seven pasture walks/field days attended by over 200 people in total, advancing their knowledge of grass-fed beef.

For more information on this project, see [www.sare.org/projects](http://www.sare.org/projects), and search for project number LNC12-345.
SARE Grants in Michigan

SARE has awarded a total of 266 grants in Michigan since 1988.

- 125 Farmer/Rancher Grants
- 42 Research & Education Grants
- 20 Professional Development Grants
- 46 Graduate Student Grants
- 23 Youth Educator Grants
- 6 Youth Grants
- 20 On-Farm Research Grants
- 6 Youth Grants

SARE’s Impact

- 53 percent of producers report using a new production technique after reading a SARE publication.
- 79 percent of producers said they improved soil quality through their SARE project.
- 64 percent of producers said their SARE project helped them achieve higher sales.

Contact Your SARE State Coordinator

SARE sustainable ag coordinators run state-level educational programs for Extension and other ag professionals, and many help grant applicants and recipients with planning and outreach. Visit www.northcentral sare.org/michigan to learn more.

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For detailed information on SARE projects, go to www.SARE.org

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