



Managing Your Northeast SARE Farmer Grant

Congratulations on your grant award from Northeast SARE! We look forward to working with you as you conduct your project. To help clarify the grant management process, the following guidelines will walk you through the next steps of managing your grant award.

Accepting the award and creating a contract

The first step to take is to review and respond to the email you received from the program coordinator within two weeks after your award notification. The email includes your grant's project number (FNE24-xxx); please keep this number handy and include it in the subject line of any correspondence so we can serve you quickly. To get your project started, we will need you to do the following:

- Verify contact information.** Make sure your contact information is correct for future communications.
- Note contract start date for the project.** The start date for all 2024 projects is March 1, 2024 (note: expenses may be incurred on or after 3/1/24 but not before). A project end date will be assigned that will allow for outreach and possible delays.
- Complete financial forms for contracting.** Our office will send you forms to complete in order to generate the contract with the University of Vermont (UVM), the host institution of Northeast SARE.
 - **Farmers or individual business owners** will be issued a supplier services agreement as their contract. Complete UVM's New Vendor W-9 Form, sign and return. List the person or entity that will receive project reimbursement payments. Note the secure file transfer option on the W-9 form to protect sensitive personal or business information. You will also receive an ACH form to complete if you would like to receive reimbursements as direct deposit (quicker than a physical check).
 - **Non-profit organizations** will be issued a subaward contract. Complete UVM's New Vendor W-9 Form and a Subrecipient Commitment Form that provides UVM with basic information on your project and your organization's fiscal management. Organizations must have a UEI (Unique Entity Identifier) and be registered in SAM (US federal System for Award Management), and keep their SAM registration active for the entire term of the contract.
- Review plan of work and budget.** Candice will review your budget and let you know if there are any further details needed. There may also be suggested or required changes to the plan of work described in your proposal. Once you have approved the budget, and, if needed, a revised plan of work, we will send you a final copy for your reference.
- Review the contract.** A contract (or services agreement) will be issued from UVM to confirm your commitment to conduct the project and will establish award requirements. When you receive it, please review the details. Candice is available to answer any questions you may have.
- Sign and return the contract.** This is the last step needed to set up your award. Following receipt of the signed contract from you, UVM will provide final signature; a copy will be returned to you for your records. Please take action on the contract as soon as possible—while you may begin to incur expenses as of the award date, we cannot process reimbursements until the contract has been fully executed.

Submitting expenses for reimbursement

You may start incurring expenses on or after March 1, 2024. Project expenses are handled on a reimbursement basis. You will be working with our financial manager, Lacey Ford, who will send you detailed instructions to request reimbursements. If your organization does not have project expense reimbursement procedures in place, please take the following steps for submitting expenses.

- ❑ **Download the invoice template.** It is available at: www.northeastsare.org/manageFarmerGrant.
- ❑ **Complete invoice, print, sign and scan.** Fill out the Excel invoice template and save it (as an .xlsx file). Print out a copy, sign and date it, and scan it.
- ❑ **Send in for payment.** You will email the following to financenortheastsare@uvm.edu:
 - 1) the completed Excel invoice template .xlsx file,
 - 2) the signed and scanned copy (PDF), and
 - 3) proof of payment for expenses (receipt copies).

Or you may mail them to: Lacey Ford; Northeast SARE; 140 Kennedy Drive, Suite 202; South Burlington, Vermont 05403. Please remember to include your project number in your correspondence.

Conducting outreach and acknowledging SARE

All outreach and project products (journal articles and other publications, presentations, press releases, flyers, etc.) are **required** to include acknowledgement of Northeast SARE. Contact our communications specialist with questions or requests for assistance.

- ❑ **The logo is available at:** <https://northeast.sare.org/logo>.
- ❑ **Include funding acknowledgement language.** Please use: *“This material is based upon work supported by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, through the Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program under subaward number [insert your project number here, e.g., FNE24-xxx].”*

The following resources may help you spread the word about your project and planned outreach activities:

- ❑ **Check out the Farmer Field Day Toolkit.** The toolkit includes field day tips, sample press releases, and more: www.sare.org/Learning-Center/Topic-Rooms/The-Farmer-Field-Day-Toolkit.
- ❑ **Conducting Online Outreach.** Find tips for sharing your results beyond in-person events: www.northeastsare.org/ConductOutreachOnline.
- ❑ **Contact a state coordinator.** There is a state SARE coordinator at every land grant university; they may have ideas for promoting your outreach efforts and grant outcomes. Find your state coordinator at: <https://northeast.sare.org/sare-in-your-state/>.

Project reporting

Project reporting is required for all grant awards at: projects.sare.org. This is the same site you used to submit your proposal so you can log in at any time using your same username and password.

Please check the following sections to confirm they are still accurate from when you submitted your proposal:

- 1) *Your contact information.*
- 2) *Cooperator information:* At minimum, please list your Technical Advisor.
- 3) *Benefits and Impacts, Commodities, and Practices:* The appropriate menu boxes should be checked.

As you conduct your project, you must submit two types of reports as follows. Online instructions are available at: projects.sare.org/sare-reporting-system-instructions.

- Annual progress reports.** These must be completed while the project is active—due every January 15.
- Final report.** The final report is due no later than 30 days after project end date. Your project's end date is found on your contract.

Note: Any late reports will trigger a hold on expense reimbursements until you are current with reporting. SARE will hold the final invoice or any invoices that include the last 20% of the total award until the project work, including outreach, has been completed and the final project report has been submitted and approved.

Managing project changes

Sometimes projects don't proceed as planned. Changes in the project plan or budget **must** be approved *in advance* by Northeast SARE. Please contact Candice should any of the following circumstances arise.

- Delays, challenges or a different idea to accomplish the project.** Keep in mind that the approved project should be honored so changes need to be discussed in advance with and approved by Candice.
- Budget changes.** Minor variations in the planned costs are expected and acceptable. Please contact Candice for any new expenditures or major budget reallocations in advance of incurring these expenses.
- Extend end date.** Should you need a bit more time to complete your project, you may submit a request for a no-cost extension at least 30 days before the current end date.

Questions?

We are here to answer any questions you have. Please contact us!

- For general Farmer Grant questions: Candice Huber, 802/656-7587; northeast-fr@sare.org.
- For invoicing: Lacey Ford, 802/656-7657; financenortheastsare@uvm.edu.
- For communications/outreach: Contact our main office, 802/656-7650; northeastsare@uvm.edu.

The Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program is funded by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Our programs are offered to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or familial status. 2/21/24