Farmer Grant Program 2027 Call for Proposals

Proposal Due Date: Tuesday, December 8, 2026, 4:00 pm ET

Proposals must be submitted online at: projects.sare.org

Questions?

For questions, please contact Jillian Eller at northeast-fr@sare.org or 802-656-7643.

All links, templates, appendices, and other resources for Farmer Grant Materials, including registration for live Q&A sessions, can be found at: www.northeastsare.org/FarmerGrant.

About Northeast SARE

The Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Program offers competitive grants, in sustainable/regenerative agriculture in the Northeast region. We support agriculture in the Northeast that is regenerative so that farmers and farm employees can steward resources to ensure economic viability and a high quality of life.

SARE Legislated Priorities

By law, projects that Northeast SARE funds must contribute to SARE's legislated priorities:

- Maintain and enhance the quality and productivity of the soil;
- Conserve soil, water, energy, natural resources, and fish and wildlife habitat;
- Maintain and enhance the quality of surface and ground water;
- Protect the health and safety of persons involved in the food and farm system;
- Promote the well-being of animals; and
- Increase employment opportunities in agriculture.

Every proposal must show how it supports one or more of these priorities. Reviewers will use this list when scoring proposals, and projects that don't align with these priorities may not be funded.

Outcome Statement

All Northeast SARE projects must also explore one or more of the sustainable agriculture themes of the Northeast SARE outcome statement:

> *Northeast agricultural communities honor the holistic connection among land, water, air, and all living beings. Agriculture in the Northeast is regenerative so all farmers and farm employees can steward resources to ensure sustainability, resilience, economic viability, and a high quality of life.*

Administration Priorities
Proposals submitted to this program must be in alignment with current administration priorities (i.e. Executive Orders—https://www.federalregister.gov/presidential-documents/executive-orders; USDA Research Priorities—https://www.usda.gov/memos). We are unable to fund any proposals where the identity of a particular person and/or community is the key beneficiary. We encourage you to focus on projects that have high farmer impact and can be generally adopted by a high percentage of farmers in the Northeast. We also cannot fund projects focused on climate change but can fund projects that focus on environmental work that provides direct or indirect benefits to farmers. It is encouraged to focus on local agriculture and the significance of regenerative practices to increase production and profitability.

Farmer Impact
Projects having a significant impact/impression on farmers and farming communities is critical. Impact can be economic, social, environmental etc. For example:

- How does the project support farmer/farming community livelihoods?
- How does the project build strong economies through local and/or regional trade?
- How does the project improve crop production?

For impact, replicability is important. Replicability is the ability of another farmer or farming community to obtain similar results when applying the same method(s). In other words, another farmer can utilize the results of the research and/or education to benefit their farming practices or behavior.

Innovation
Innovation is defined as the development or adoption of new concepts or ideas and the successful exploration of new ideas. Ideation is the basis of creativity. The process of creative ideation develops new concepts; innovation applies them. Creativity can only emerge when an innovator takes the idea and puts it into practice. Innovation can also be social and develop and implement novel and effective solutions to meet social and environmental challenges. The results should improve the welfare and well-being of individual farmers and farming communities and be reproducible. Within the scope of Northeast SARE, examples can include, but are not limited to:

- The introduction of a new behavior/practice, one with which farmers are not yet familiar.
- The introduction of an improved or better agricultural behavior/practice, which may not be new, but is an improvement upon what occurred before.
- The opening of a new market that has not been entered previously, whether this market has existed previously or not.
- A new source of supply of materials or goods, again irrespective of whether this source already exists or whether it has first to be created.
- Improved organizational structure and/or capacity.

Statement from USDA, NIFA

Northeast SARE is a program of the USDA, NIFA. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), to the extent permitted by law, will no longer make grants or otherwise fund programs or activities that improperly discriminate based on race or sex, including discrimination in the name of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion policies. Instead, USDA will prioritize merit and efficiency. USDA recognizes programs and initiatives will have the greatest impact when these programs and initiatives put American farmers, ranchers, and foresters first by:

- solving the most pressing challenges they face;
- protecting America's food, fuel, and fiber supply to enhance national security;
- supporting production of healthy and safe food for consumers;
- expanding and developing domestic markets;
- training the next generation of agriculturalists; and
- fueling innovation to keep American farmers at the forefront of productivity.

The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) is committed to advancing these principles and encourages applicants to actively engage farmers, ranchers, and foresters when applying for funding opportunities to ensure relevancy and adherence to them. NIFA also encourages agricultural leaders to engage in the peer review panel process to ensure American producers are better served through research, education, and extension activities.

Projects submitted under this CFP should align with USDA Secretary's Memorandum 1078- 020 Directive on Departmental Research and Development Priorities:

1. Increasing Profitability of Farmers and Ranchers
2. Expanding Markets and Creating New Uses of U.S. Agricultural Products
3. Protecting the Integrity of American Agriculture from Invasive Species
4. Promoting Soil Health to Regenerate Long-Term Productivity of Land
5. Improving Human Health through Precision Nutrition and Food Quality

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PART I: At a Glance

Project type	Farmers, working with a technical advisor, lead a research and/or education project that explores innovative and sustainable solutions to challenges on the farm. All projects must include outreach, where project activities/results are shared with other farmers.
Project team requirements	1. Farmer as project leader (see Definition of a Farm) 2. Technical Advisor
Geographic area	Northeast SARE grants must engage communities in the Northeast USA, which includes the following areas: Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, Maryland, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, West Virginia, Vermont, and Washington, D.C.
Grant amount and total allocation	Up to $50,000 per grant. Approximately $1,000,000 has been allocated to fund projects this cycle.
Success Rate	In 2026, 16% of Farmer Grant submissions were funded.
Project period	Typical project length is 1-3 years, starting March 1, 2027. Projects must be completed by November 30, 2030.
Estimated time to complete proposal	Applicants report that on average they spent 25-30 hours to complete their proposal.
Funding	This grant is reimbursement based; you must spend money to receive the grant funds. Please get in touch to inquire as to how small organizations have made this work for them. Northeast SARE grants do not require or encourage any matching funds and can be used as match funds for non-federal grant programs.
Reporting required of funded projects	Annual progress report each year of the grant, plus a final report within 60 days of the end of the project.

2027 Program Highlights

Changes to the Farmer Grant Program this year include:

1. The submission deadline is **4:00 pm** (not 5pm) on December 8, 2026.
2. The funding cap for the program has been increased to $50,000

PART 2: Grant Timeline

Farmer Grant Question and Answer sessions	November 3, 10, 17 and 24, noon-1 p.m. ET Register for Q&A Sessions here. (recordings will be available)
If needed, request technical assistance HERE by	November 16, 2026
Suggested date to submit accommodation requests before	November 17, 2026, 5 p.m. ET
Online submission deadline	December 8, 2026, **4 p.m**. ET
Review panel ranks proposals	January 2027
Award decisions announced to applicants	Late February 2027
Contract start date for awarded projects	March 1, 2027

PART 3: Grant Overview & Eligibility

This part contains nine sections:

1: Overview
2: Eligibility
3: People Involved in the Project
4: Eligible and Ineligible Expenses
5: Distribution of funds
6: Public Domain
7: Accommodation Requests
8: Technical Assistance
9: Evaluation/Scoring

SECTION 1: Overview

The Northeast SARE Farmer Grant program provides funds to farmers to explore innovative concepts in sustainable agriculture conducted through experiments, surveys, prototypes, on-farm demonstrations, or other research and education techniques.

Farmer Grant projects must:

- be led by a farmer who meets Northeast SARE's definition of a farm.
- collaborate with a technical advisor.
- impact both the farmer Project Leader and other farms in the region.
- explore an innovative practice and/or introduce an existing practice to a new audience of farmers.
- include outreach activities, or sharing of project impacts and results, to farmers beyond the project team and project participants.
- align with proposal criteria.

The program encourages innovative solutions to challenges in farming and food systems in the Northeast USA, including but not limited to the areas of:

- Marketing and business
- Crop production
- Raising livestock
- Aquaculture
- Economic and/or Social sustainability
- Unconventional agriculture
- Ecological knowledge
- and more

This program does not support:

- Educational programs for the general public
- Food donation efforts
- General public awareness campaigns about agriculture and nutrition
- Community or school gardening initiatives

For guidance on how to design your project, refer to SARE's bulletin**, How to Conduct Research on Your Farm or Ranch**. To see examples of funded Farmer Grant projects, visit the national SARE project database at projects.sare.org/search-projects/.

SECTION 2: Eligibility

Project Leader and Farm Eligibility

The Project Leader can be a farm owner or farm employee of a for-profit, non-profit, or institutional farm.

The project leader must be:

- ✓ Able to implement the project as outlined in the proposal.
- ✓ Willing to submit annual reports each year of the project, plus a final report within 60 days of the project end date.
- ✓ Willing to respond promptly to communications from Northeast SARE.

If you are applying as a farm employee, you must complete a Grant Commitment Form and ensure that it includes both your signature and the farm owner or organizational official's signature verifying they will be financially responsible for the project.

The farm must be:

- ✓ A farm from which $1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the census year. For more information see Northeast SARE's Definition of Farm. This grant program accepts all types and scales of farms – for-profit or non-profit, large or small scale, organic or conventional, urban or rural, full- or part-time, etc.
- ✓ Able to sign and commit to a contract with Northeast SARE.

Proposals are limited to one per farm per year.

Location Eligibility

Project activities must primarily take place in the Northeast region of the U.S., described in Part 1. Applicants and host organizations may be located outside of the Northeast region.

Ineligibility
Members of the Northeast SARE Administrative Council, SARE staff, and SARE State Coordinators are not permitted to be funded or named in proposals.

Past SARE grant recipients with unfulfilled reporting requirements cannot apply (for example, no final project report was filed). Current grant recipients are eligible to apply as long as they are up to date on their project reporting (for example, annual and/or final reports are filed on time).

If you have received other grant funding to support your project, you cannot receive funding to support the same project activities from Northeast SARE.

SECTION 3: People Involved in the Project

Project Leader
The Farmer is the Project Leader and applicant. If awarded, the Project Leader is responsible for the oversight and implementation of the project.

Technical Advisor
All projects must enlist a technical advisor. The technical advisor should be someone outside of your farm or organization who can provide needed expertise to the proposed project. Technical advisors do not have to live in the Northeast region. They should not be close friends or family members. Identify your technical advisor before writing your proposal and talk your project through with them.

Here are some examples of who your technical advisor could be:

- Extension educator
- Researcher
- NRCS or other government employee
- Nonprofit staff
- Private consultant
- Veterinarian
- Other agricultural service provider
- Another experienced farmer

A letter of commitment from your technical advisor is required. It should describe their background, expertise and role in the project. The letter must be uploaded to your proposal at the time of submission.

See our "Guide for Farmer Grant Technical Advisors" for more information about the roles and responsibilities of technical advisors on Farmer Grant projects.

SECTION 4: Eligible and Ineligible Expenses

Budget categories are described in Appendix C. The appendix will provide detailed support on common budget expenses, which categories they should be classified as, and tips and directions on how to write these into your budget.

SECTION 5: Distribution of funds

Northeast SARE grants are paid on a reimbursement basis. Therefore, your farm must have the legal structure and financial capacity in place to receive and execute a Northeast SARE contract, including expending funds needed for the project prior to receiving reimbursements from Northeast SARE; advance payments are not possible.

SECTION 6: Public Domain

Proposals and reviews are kept confidential, shared only among Northeast SARE staff, Administrative Council members, and grant program reviewers. However, Northeast SARE, as a USDA NIFA program, is committed to public accessibility of results of funded projects; therefore, funded proposal text and funded project reports will be in the public domain.

SECTION 7: Accommodation Requests

Northeast SARE is committed to accessibility for all eligible applicants. We encourage you to reach out to us regarding any challenges you experience as you plan and submit your proposal. To do so or to specifically request a disability-related accommodation, please contact the grant administrator at 802-656-7643 or northeast-fr@sare.org. If possible, please make your accommodation request at least three weeks prior to the proposal deadline. Northeast SARE will do our best to address requests made with less notice but may not have the resources to do so.

Proposals include required and optional attachments in Microsoft Excel and Adobe Acrobat, or PDF, formats. If you don't have access to Microsoft Excel, you may open and edit the budget template in Google Sheets. Please contact northeast-fr@sare.org if you encounter any difficulties.

SECTION 8: Technical Assistance

Technical assistance for developing an application is available upon request. Northeast SARE will provide a technical assistant to assist with developing and submitting your application to the Farmer Grant Program. To request technical assistance please fill out this Technical Assistance request form no later than November 16, 2026.

SECTION 9: Evaluation/Scoring

Proposals are reviewed through a multi-step process to ensure fairness and alignment with Northeast SARE's priorities. All reviewers receive orientation and adhere to Northeast SARE's Conflict of Interest Policy.

1. **Initial Review Panels -** Independent panels made up of farmers, researchers, nonprofit staff, and agricultural service providers evaluate each proposal. Single blind reviews are conducted using a detailed scoring rubric. Each question and the overall proposal are scored based on specific criteria, including alignment with program goals (ex: comprehensive review) as noted in the rubric at the end of the CFP.
2. **Ranking** – Reviewer scores and comments are reviewed by Grant Administrators for completion and creation of a ranked proposal listing.
3. **Oversight Panel -** Top-ranked proposals from the initial review are forwarded to an oversight panel composed of USDA-NIFA representatives and the Regional Director. This group ensures that proposals meet federal administrative requirements.

4. **Final Funding Decisions -** The oversight panel recommends a slate of proposals for funding. This slate is then submitted to the Northeast SARE Administrative Council, who ensures a fair review process and makes the final decisions on which proposals will be funded in accordance with organizational goals and priorities, and alignment with their previously approved budget and program allocations.

PART 4: Proposal Questions and Instructions

This part contains four sections, including instructions and proposal questions:

1: General Instructions for Applicants

2: Proposal Questions: Project Overview, General Information, & Verification and Commitment

3: Proposal Questions: Scored Questions

4: Proposal Questions: Human Subjects Research & Livestock Research

SECTION 1: General Instructions for Applicants

To submit your proposal, go to https://projects.sare.org/.

There are many kinds of projects that are eligible for Northeast SARE grant programs. Some project concepts may be eligible in more than one program area. Do your best to answer each question in a way that demonstrates why your project is a strong fit for the specific program you're applying to. Appendix A includes instructions for preparing and submitting your proposal.

Tip! The national SARE project database (projects.sare.org/search-projects) includes funded projects from all four SARE regions and is searchable by state, grant type, project coordinator, and keyword.

Each question in the application includes specific guidance, which corresponds to the rubric provided. In addition, keep the following in mind as you complete your proposal:

- Northeast SARE values all ways of knowing and accepts a wide range of supporting evidence, including academic research, personal experience, community voices, cultural knowledge, and more. Examples of acceptable evidence include (but are not limited to): published literature, unpublished reports, pilot study data, survey or focus group results, community engagement records, case studies, and sources like the Census of Agriculture.

- Do not include external website links in your proposal (except in citations); reviewers will not have access to links, and they will not be considered.

- You may use any official citation style. You can learn about the different citation styles in Owl Purdue's Style Guide Overview or learn more about research and citations here.

- Optional materials or information in the proposal are marked as such. They are not required, are not expected, and are not necessary to receive a strong score. However, these optional materials provide additional space for clarity to reviewers, which in return could impact scores. Applicants are encouraged to use optional uploads (following the instructions for allowability) in order to strengthen the reviewer's understanding.

- Allowable file types for uploads include PDFs, images, and Excel spreadsheets. Specific questions may require a particular format. All files must be unprotected and accessible.

- You may not exceed the stated word limits, and longer responses are not viewed more favorably; Clear, concise answers are encouraged.

- Project expenses and funding requests should align with the project duration, scope of the work, and corresponding engagement and outreach.

- Northeast SARE strongly encourages that proposals request funds to pay farmers (and others who take time out of their normal work to provide a service to the project) for the time they contribute to a project at a reasonable rate. *For example, Northeast SARE compensates farmers who serve on its Administrative Council and review teams at a rate of $54.40/hour.*

SECTION 2: Proposal Questions: Project Overview, General Information, & Verification and Commitment

Project Overview

This section is not scored by reviewers. It has no review criteria.

Project Title: The project title lets reviewers know what your project is about. The maximum length is 150 characters, which is about 35 words or less. Please use title case.

Project Description: This description will be posted in the public Northeast SARE database if the project is funded. Limit of 300 characters.

Applicant: The name of the person who starts the proposal in the online system is automatically entered as the Applicant. The applicant can give the project leader and/or the additional editor permission to submit the application. Otherwise, the applicant must submit the application. Typically, the farmer is the applicant and the project leader.

Project Leader: The Applicant's name is automatically entered as the Project Leader. If the applicant and project leader are different, you can change it. The Project Leader must have a projects.sare.org account to be added to the proposal. They must complete their full profile information, including demographic information, before the proposal can be submitted. The project leader will be responsible for all aspects of the project and will be the primary contact.

Additional Editor (*optional*): The Applicant may give editing access to one additional person. The person must have an existing projects.sare.org account. Once you have added someone, a checkbox will appear allowing you to give them permission to submit the proposal on your behalf.

General Information

This section is not scored by reviewers. It has no review criteria.

Project Start Date: Choose a start date from the calendar pop-up. Contract start dates will be March 1, 2027, but project work may begin after that date. Note: SARE cannot reimburse expenses incurred before the contract start date.

Project End Date: Choose an end date from the calendar pop-up. All projects must be completed by November 30, 2030.

Primary State: Select the state where most work will be done, i.e., the primary location of the grant activities. Usually this is the home state of the project leader.

Optional: Geographic Scope: If this project will take place in more than just the primary state, list all the states where this project will take place.

Primary Commodities, Primary Practices, and Primary Benefits and Impacts: Choose only the primary categories being addressed by the project, not every category that might potentially be affected. Most projects should select no more than 5 options per category. For the complete list of choices that may help you select the appropriate categories, please refer to the Commodities, Practices, and Benefits and Impacts webpages. This information will be used to categorize projects and aggregate project results.

Project Summary (400-word limit): This is a standalone summary of the project. It should briefly describe 1) the context of the project, 2) the objective(s), 3) the key components of your plan of work, and 4) the outreach strategy. Since the summary is the first thing reviewers will see, take some time to make it clear and compelling. You may want to compose the summary after you have written the rest of your proposal.

Verification and Commitment

This section is not scored by reviewers. It has no review criteria.

Farm Eligibility (200-word limit):
Please describe your farm operation and how it meets Northeast SARE's Definition of a Farm. This is used to confirm your project's eligibility to apply. Include a description of the production enterprises (e.g., acres, livestock numbers, etc.) and types of market outlets (wholesale, retail, farm stand, CSA), how long the farm has been in operation, gross sales, and other key information about the enterprise.

Organization and Employment Type: Select the option that best describes the farm and your relationship to it. For more information, see the eligibility section on page 6.

- ❑ This is a commercial farm business that meets the eligibility requirements, and I am the owner of the farm business. No Grant Commitment Form is needed.
- ❑ This is a commercial farm business that meets the eligibility requirements, and I am a farm employee. A Grant Commitment Form is submitted below.
- ❑ This is a non-profit or institutional farm that meets the eligibility requirements, and I am a farm employee. A Grant Commitment Form is submitted below.

If you are a farm owner, skip to Section 4. You do not need to submit a grant commitment form.

If you are a farm employee of an institution, non-profit, or private farm, complete these next two questions:

Grant Commitment Form
Download the form at: northeast.sare.org/FarmerGrantCommitment. You must sign the form as the project leader. The owner of the farm at which you work, an authorized official of your institutional grants office, or the fiscal agent for your organization must sign the bottom section. Upload a PDF or image copy of the fully completed Grant Commitment form to the online system.

Organizational Official Information: Provide the name and contact information of the organizational official. For non-profits and institutions, this is usually someone who oversees grants for the organization. For for-profit farms, this is usually the farm owner.

SECTION 3: Proposal Questions: Scored Questions

This section contains five categories of questions that align with the criteria used in the reviewer rubric. Each category's weight and the number of questions it contains are shown below:

(1) Comprehensive Review – 15% of total score
   a. Legislation (5%)
   b. Innovation (5%)
   c. Impact (5%)

(2) Context – 20% of total score
   a. Introduction *(1500-word limit)*
   b. Previous Work *(750-word limit)*
   c. Citation List *(no word limit)*

(3) Project Team – 15% of total score
   a. Project Leader *(400-word limit)*
   b. Technical Advisor *(400-word limit)*
   c. Collaborators *(600-word limit)*
   d. Letters of Commitment *(file upload)*

(4) Plan of work – 25% of total score
   a. Project Objective(S) *(300-word limit)*
   b. Project Activities *(2000-word limit)*
   c. Timeline *(500-word limit)*
   d. Optional: Other Relevant Research Information *(Upload)*

(5) Outreach and Impact – 15% of total score
   a. Outreach *(500-word limit)*
   b. Impact *(500-word limit)*

(6) Budget – 10% of total score
   a. Spreadsheet / Budget Justification and Narrative Template *(Upload)*
   b. Total Direct Costs *(Data entry into GMS)*
   c. Total Indirect Costs *(Data entry into GMS)*
   d. Total SARE Request *(Data entry into GMS)*
   e. *Optional:* Other Funding Sources *(300-word limit)*

The following questions are scored based on the reviewer rubric. Each section is assigned a specific scoring weight. 15% of a proposal's total score is based on the Comprehensive Review Criteria, which reviewers use to assess the proposal as a whole.

Generous word limits are given for all questions. Your responses don't need to meet the limit. The length of responses is not considered when reviewing applications. Be sure to answer all parts of each question thoroughly.

1. Comprehensive Review – 15% of total score

All project proposals must demonstrate alignment with Northeast SARE priorities. Reviewers will evaluate three core competencies throughout your proposal as 'comprehensive review'. These are defined in the rubric and include:

1. **LEGISLATION (5%):** Does this project contribute to SARE's legislated priorities? These include:
    1. Maintain and enhance the quality and productivity of the soil;
    2. Conserve soil, water, energy, natural resources, and fish and wildlife habitat;
    3. Maintain and enhance the quality of surface and ground water;
    4. Protect the health and safety of persons involved in the food and farm system;
    5. Promote the well-being of animals; and
    6. Increase employment opportunities in agriculture.
2. **INNOVATION (5%):** Is this project innovative by addressing new practices, improving existing practices, or introducing existing practices to a new farmer audience?
3. **IMPACT (5%):** Will the project have substantive impact on farmers' ability to steward resources to ensure sustainability, resilience, economic viability, and a high quality of life in the Northeast?

These comprehensive review criteria guide the overall evaluation of your proposal and should be evident across multiple sections, in addition to the specific contributions described in the Project Summary.

2. Context – 20% of Total Score

Please note: There are many different kinds of projects that fall under the umbrella of the Farmer grant - from research, to education, to community building. Your response to this question helps reviewers better understand and to make informed scoring decisions on your responses to the remaining questions in the Plan of Work.

Introduction (1500-word limit).

Tell the story of your project. Include:

- ✓ Description of the issue being addressed and why it is important.
- ✓ How your project will address the issue.
- ✓ How the project connects to the needs and interests of farmers in the Northeast.
- ✓ How the project aligns with SARE's outcome statement and legislative priorities.

Previous Work (750-word limit)

Describe efforts that have been made by others to solve the problem or use this opportunity. This section is the place to show reviewers how the current body of knowledge provides a foundation for your research question.

- ✓ Describe the current knowledge and practice on this topic and how your project builds on existing efforts.

- ✓ If the practice is known but has not been applied in your community, explain how you will test what has worked elsewhere or make adaptations for your area.

Citation List (no word limit)
Citations are important if you are referencing someone else's work or claims. Provide a list of citations referenced in your proposal using the style/format of your choosing. Cite the source every time you incorporate research, words, ideas, data, or information that is not your own. Northeast SARE values all ways of knowing and accepts a wide variety of sources of information including academic sources, personal experience, community voices, and other ways of knowing.

3. Project Team – 15% of Total Score

Project Leader (400-word limit)
- ✓ Describe your agricultural experience, skills and commitment to the project. Include any other experience or skills that could apply to the project.
- ✓ Describe the resources you have access to that are needed for the project, within your farm and other.

Technical Advisor (400-word limit)
Describe the technical advisor's:
- ✓ Organization and position
- ✓ Their relevant experiences and skills
- ✓ Specific role in the project

Select "Add a cooperator" to enter the name and contact information for the technical advisor.

Optional: Collaborators (600-word limit)
For each collaborator clearly state:
- ✓ Name and position
- ✓ Their relevant experiences and skills
- ✓ Specific role in the project
- ✓ Identify positions to be hired with required qualifications if team members are not yet identified.

Select "Add a cooperator" to enter the name and contact information for each collaborator.

Letter(s) of Commitment (Upload)
Please submit a Letter of Commitment written and signed by the technical advisor and each collaborator (if applicable) in which they:
- ✓ Describe their farm or organization
- ✓ Describe their experience as related to the project
- ✓ Describe their role in the project
- ✓ Describe their relationship with the Project Leader
- ✓ Confirm their commitment to the project

4. Plan of Work – 25% of Total Score

Project Objectives (300-word limit)
- ✓ State the objectives of your project – an objective is a statement in specific and measurable terms that describes what you intend to achieve or the question you seek to answer.
    - Keep objectives simple to ensure they are clear and specific.

- Number your objectives to correlate them with your project activities.

Project Activities (2,000-word limit)

- ✓ Describe the **key activities**. As a general guide, provide the following types of information depending on your project's focus:
  - For research activities, describe
    - treatments or populations
    - controls
    - data to be collected and analyzed (experimental, survey, and/or observational) including how it will be collected
    - how findings will be used to inform or improve farming practices
  - For education activities, describe
    - the specific information that will be shared
    - the audience for your educational activities
    - the methods you will use to share the information
- ✓ Describe any **challenges or risks** that you anticipate and how you intend to address them.

Statistical analysis is not required for this grant program. If you plan to use a statistical method, be sure to describe it.

For more information on experimental design, refer to the bulletin, How to Conduct Research on Your Farm or Ranch.

Timeline (500-word limit)

- ✓ Provide a clear timeline of major activities throughout the project period, including dissemination of results. Include who is responsible for each activity. Provide a **timeline** that includes the activities for each objective. You may insert a table, use bullet points, or use any format that works for you.
  - What will happen?
  - When will it happen?
  - Where will it happen?
  - Who will do it?

Tip: Use a table such as:

Time Period	**Activity**	**Personnel involved/time allotted**
August - September, 2026	Meet with partner farmer and set up plots	Lisa Chiang, project leader; Anthony De Campo, farmer. Est. 32 hours per person.
March 2027, first 2 weeks	Prepare beds and plant seeds for control and treatments	Anthony De Campo and one assistant., 24 hours per person.
March - August 2027	Take measurements weekly	Lisa Chiang, 2 hours /week for 18 weeks
September - October	Analyze results, produce recommendations guide, and write up report	Lisa Chiang, 60 hrs
October	Present results at Farmer conference	Lisa Chiang, 8 hrs

Optional: Supporting Materials (Upload)

- ✓ If relevant, you may upload supporting materials such as field maps, sample curriculums, prototype drawings, survey instruments, or other materials as needed. Limit uploads to 5 total pages. Images and PDFs are acceptable.

5. Outreach & Impacts – 15% of Total Score

Outreach is a required component of SARE projects. Outreach is sharing the results of your project with farmers and others in the agricultural community. It also includes education about your topic. Effective outreach is key to long-term impact.

Outreach (500-word limit)

Describe how you will share the results of your project with farmers who can use the information, as well as with relevant organizations or other stakeholders.

- ✓ Specify the dissemination methods including outreach publications, events, partners, or resources you will utilize.
- ✓ Identify your target audiences.
- ✓ List only what you can reasonably accomplish within your project's timeline

Impact (500-word limit)

Briefly describe how sharing your project could potentially impact the agricultural community. Include:

- ✓ How it will benefit each target audience.
- ✓ What impact will the project have on your farm and other farms in the Northeast if it is successful?
- ✓ The documentation you will collect to assess project impact - both quantitative and qualitative documentation is welcome.

6. Budget – 10% of Total Score

Budget Justification and Narrative Spreadsheet (Upload)

1. Download and complete the Northeast SARE Budget Justification and Narrative Template (Excel spreadsheet) provided at: **https://northeast.sare.org/budgetjustification.**
2. Upload your completed budget as an Excel file (.xlsx) to your online submission.

Please note that most spreadsheet software (such as Google Sheets and Apple Numbers) can download or save files in .xlsx format. Alternative instructions are available to those who cannot access Excel (contact northeast-fr@sare.org).

Within the template

3. itemize all expected expenses
4. Include the quantity and per-unit cost of each expense
5. include a narrative justification that explains the need for and use of each expense.

Providing this level of detail show reviewers what funds are needed to carry out your project and why they are needed.

Considerations:

- For an explanation of budget categories and an overview of allowable and unallowable expenses please see the details listed in the Template or Appendix C.

- We encourage project teams to consider how to compensate farmers and other project collaborators in the project budget.
- Only include expenses that will be paid for by this grant on the budget. Any expenses that will be paid for with other funds should be explained in the "Other Funding Sources" question below.
- If this proposal includes any sub-awards (contracting out to another organization to perform a specific portion of the work), the applicant must submit a Budget Justification and Narrative Template for each sub-awardee. For more information about what a subaward is please see pages 14-15 in Appendix C.

Total Direct Costs

6. Enter the total direct dollar amount requested (including cents) from your Budget Justification and Narrative ("Total Direct Costs").

Direct costs are all the expenses that are specific to the project and would not be needed if the project was not funded.

Total Indirect Costs

7. Enter the total indirect dollar amount requested (including cents) from the Budget Justification and Narrative Template ("Total Indirect Costs").

Indirect costs are also known as "overhead" or "facilities and administration" costs. These are costs for utilities, office space, administrative staff, etc. that would exist whether the project was funded or not (although a specific percentage of these costs might be allocated to a specific project).

Total SARE Request

8. Enter the total dollar amount requested (including cents) from your Budget Justification and Narrative spreadsheet ("Total SARE Request").

Your request cannot exceed the $50,000.00 cap for this grant program. The Total SARE Request is the sum of the Total Direct plus Total Indirect Costs.

Optional: Other Funding Sources (300-word limit)

9. If other resources are necessary for the success of the project (not requested in SARE budget), how will they be provided?

SECTION 4: Proposal Questions: Human Subjects Research & Livestock Research

This section is not scored by reviewers. It has no review criteria.

Human Subjects Research

Does your project involve human subjects research? This question requires a yes or no response.

If you select "No," save your response and skip to the next section.

If your project will solicit data from people using surveys, interviews or observational studies to make generalizable conclusions, it is likely considered human subjects research. In this case, select "Yes" and answer the following questions so that Northeast SARE can verify that this project is implemented safely and in accordance with human subjects protections as is required by USDA NIFA for research projects.

Subject participation (no word limit). Who will be participating in your human subjects research?

Data collected (no word limit). What information will be collected from the participants?

Method of data collection (no word limit). What are your methods for data collection (surveys, interviews, focus groups, etc.)? How will you protect anonymity for collection of sensitive information? Sensitive information could include income, demographics, etc.; you could protect the anonymity by, for example, coding responses or removing names.

Livestock Research

Does this project involve vertebrate animals? This question requires a yes or no response.

If you select "No," save your response and skip to the next section.

If your project will work with livestock or other vertebrate animals, select "Yes" and respond to the following questions; these responses help Northeast SARE verify that this project's handling of animals complies with the Animal Welfare Act, as is required by USDA NIFA for research projects.

Kind of animals (no word limit). What kind of animals will be involved in your project?

Number of animals (no word limit). Please indicate how many of each animal will be involved in your project.

Source of animals (no word limit). State the source (name and location) from which you plan to obtain animals for your project. If you already own the animals and they are already at the project site, where did you obtain them and how long have you had them?

Stocking density (no word limit). What is stocking density (space per animal)? Please provide a response for all forms of housing (pens, feedlots, pastures, etc.) that will be used in this project.

Housing/Shelter (no word limit). Describe the housing or shelter available for the animals in normal and inclement weather.

Cleaning of housing/shelter (no word limit). For the study period, how is the housing/shelter cleaned? How often?

Feeding and water (no word limit). Describe how feed and water is provided, how often it is provided, and how often the feed and water containers are checked and cleaned.

Nutritional needs (no word limit). Describe how the nutritional needs of the animals in this project will be met.

Health management (no word limit). Describe the vaccination program and the routine procedures used to minimize disease and manage parasites. Include what the animals are vaccinated against and provide common names of the products that are used. Include a description of routine worming or parasite management.

Procedures (no word limit). What procedures will the animals undergo during the course of this project? Will these procedures induce or potentially induce distress or pain in the animal and if so, how will you manage or minimize the potential for pain and distress?

Other people handling/caring for Animals (no word limit). Please indicate if other individuals will participate in handling and/or caring for the animals in this project. If other individuals will be involved, please describe their expertise in animal care. If individuals need to be trained to perform the procedures described in this project, please indicate how they will be trained to do the procedures properly.

Post project animal outcome (no word limit). At the end of the project, what happens to the animals? Please indicate if they will remain at the project site, be sold, or be slaughtered.

Transportation (no word limit). If animals are transported off-site, please describe how they will be transported.

Animal slaughter (no word limit). If animals will be slaughtered, please indicate if this will occur at a commercial licensed slaughter facility. If it is not done at a commercial licensed slaughter facility, describe where and how slaughter will be conducted.

Human consumption (no word limit). Please indicate if the animals or products from these animals will be used as food for humans and if so, confirm that withdrawal times for medications will be followed before allowing the animals or products from the animals to enter the food chain.

Veterinarian (no word limit). Identify the veterinarian (name, address, and contact information) who will provide routine and emergency care of the animals used in this project.

PART 5: Appendices

You may access the appendices referenced, using the links below:

Appendix A: Preparing and Submitting your Proposal
Appendix B: Expectations For Funded Proposals
Appendix C: Budget Guidance – Explanation of Expense Categories and Examples
Appendix D: Reviewer Scoring Rubric

All links, templates, appendices and other resources for Farmer Grant Program Materials can be found at: http://northeastsare.org/farmergrant