



Northeast SARE's Definition of a Farm

Farms and farmers are at the center of Northeast SARE's competitive grants and education efforts. The purpose of this document is to clarify our definition of "farm" to:

- 1) help potential applicants of our Farmer Grants program to determine if they are eligible to apply,
- 2) determine eligibility of farmer partners in our Partnership Grant and other programs, and
- 3) support grant reviewers in their evaluation of proposals where the beneficiaries are farmers.

We encourage potential applicants to reach out to [Northeast SARE staff](#) with any questions.

Farm Definition

[USDA defines a farm](#) as *"any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the year."* For Northeast SARE proposals, this applies to the year prior to a grant program's application deadline. Farms must be located in the Northeast region.

The [USDA Economic Research Service](#) recognizes that some farms *"experience low sales in a particular year due to bad weather, disease, changes in marketing strategies, or other factors."*

Northeast SARE's definition of farm includes those operations taking place in rural and urban settings, on land and in aquatic places, and at any scale (large or small) that meets the definition.

Northeast SARE funds proposals that address a wide variety of agricultural practices and social issues affecting farms, farm families and farm workers. Topics are eligible for Northeast SARE funding only if the proposal describes a clear and strong connection to working farms and if there is a potential benefit to the region's agriculture.

Farms affiliated with an institution, or an organization may qualify as a farm if they meet the definition above.

Eligible Enterprises

While not an exhaustive list, the following is a list of farming enterprises that are eligible as farms for Northeast SARE grant programs; applicants not included in this list may still be eligible so long as they qualify with the Farm definition provided above.

- Agroforestry
- Aquaculture
- Bees
- Cattle (beef, milk cows, etc.)
- Christmas trees
- Equine
- Fiber crops (hemp, kenaf, etc.)
- Flavor and beverage plants (hops, mint, etc.)
- Forage crops
- Fruit (berries, grapes, tree fruit, etc.)
- Grain crops (barley, corn, rice, wheat, etc.)
- Herbs (culinary and medicinal)
- Hogs
- Oilseed crops (canola, flax, sunflower, etc.)
- Ornamental crops (flowers, shrubs)
- Other livestock (alpacas, rabbits, etc.)
- Maple or other tree syrups
- Mushrooms
- Nuts
- Poultry (chickens, turkey, ducks, geese, etc.)
- Small ruminants (including goats, sheep, etc.)
- Sod (turf)
- Vegetables

Examples of Enterprises Considered Eligible Farms

The list below provides examples of situations that have been previously presented to Northeast SARE reviewers and deemed eligible for funding.

While this is not an exhaustive list, it is provided to demonstrate how our definition of a farm has been applied.

Types of Enterprises considered Farms include:

- Aquaculture—Cultivated (not wild-caught) fish, shellfish and algae (seaweed) located in tanks, fresh and seawater environments.
- Equine operations that raise horses (may include breeding) for their sale, land-based with on-site pasture/hay.
- Indigenous agriculture that produces products for community food systems.*
- Ornamental nurseries, greenhouses and turf farms that produce landscape plants and flowers.
- Urban enterprises that produce products for community food systems.*

*These enterprises may be eligible to apply where the production activity has an annual value of >\$1,000 but products are not sold due to cultural factors. Reviewers evaluate the extent to which proposed projects contribute to [Northeast SARE's Outcome Statement](#).

Enterprises Not Considered Eligible Farms

Businesses that only supply agricultural products or services are not considered farms. Wild-caught and wild-crafted enterprises are not considered farms under our definition. Below are examples of enterprises that are not considered farms under our definition.

Types of Enterprises Not Considered Farms:

- Animal slaughter service that is not part of a farming operation.
- Compost manufacturer that is not part of a farming operation.
- Fertilizer production company.
- Home, community gardens and school gardens where the focus is on educational activities.
- Horse stable for recreation (training, boarding, lessons).
- Landscaping company (installation or maintenance of plants).
- Suppliers of animals (like ornamental fish, sea animals, coral, etc.) to pet stores or pet owners.
- Wild fisheries that are not considered part of aquaculture; wild harvested crops.
- Woodlot that is not part of a farming operation.

Examples of topics and their eligibility for Northeast SARE grants

Proposals should touch on one or more topics that address agricultural sustainability issues such as profitability, environmental or health risks, natural resource conservation, farm labor, quality of life, etc. Many other topics may also be addressed provided the issue is substantive, the project results have clear potential to benefit farmers, and the approach explores new ways to advance sustainable agriculture.

In addition to traditional agricultural topics focused on the production and marketing of crops and livestock, SARE also funds proposals that address agritourism, aquaculture, on-farm composting, farm energy, land conservation, urban agriculture, and value-added processing. Both traditional and nontraditional topics are eligible for SARE funding *if the proposal describes a clear and strong connection to working farms and if there is a compelling potential benefit to agriculture*. For example:

Northeast SARE <u>could</u> fund	Northeast SARE <u>could not</u> fund
A proposal aimed at farms growing turfgrass to be sold to golf courses or landscapers	A project aimed at golf course managers or landscapers
A training program for extension educators that improves their ability to advise farmers on labor laws	A program that simply catalogs existing labor laws
A study of composting effects on soil fertility	A proposal to study the economic impact of a composting business that is not clearly part of a farming operation or community.
Research into on-farm production of rabbits for a niche meat market	Research into the use of rabbits for therapy in hospitals
Business training for farms engaged in agritourism to help them improve their financial plans	A project to establish ski trails that simply cross over farmland
An effort to improve breeding stock for aquaculture operations	An effort to improve harvest or marketing methods for non-cultivated fishes
A project to strengthen woodlot management owned by farmers	A woodlot project directed overwhelmingly at all types of rural landowners
A pasture management project on a horse farm aimed at improved stewardship and reduced costs	A proposal to support riding lessons or boarding of horses
An institutional marketing effort that offers farmers better access to public school markets	A project to develop and deliver classroom education materials on farming
An urban farm cooperative marketing plan	Establishment of gardens in urban parks
Education to enhance tribal food sovereignty by providing culturally appropriate information for food producers feeding themselves and their neighbors	Education for master gardeners who produce food as a hobby and donate some surplus food to foodbanks

Sometimes an idea for a project will fall in a gray area and it is up to the applicant to persuade reviewers that there is significant potential benefit to other farmers and to the region's agriculture. Contact Northeast SARE if you have questions on eligibility.