



# Profile from the Field

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## Adjusting your Farm Plan to Avoid the Bumps in the Road

**Project Title:** Adjusting your Farm Plan to Avoid the Bumps in the Road  
**Coordinator:** John Mesko

**Location:** Princeton, Minnesota  
**SARE Grant:** \$165,294  
**Duration:** 2012-2015

To read the full project report, go to [www.sare.org/projects](http://www.sare.org/projects) and search for project number LNC12-342.



The Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota (SFA) supports the development and enhancement of sustainable farming systems through farmer-to-farmer networking, innovation, demonstration, and education.

In 2012, SFA received a \$165,294 NCR-SARE Research and Education grant to work on two programs, Adjust 2015 and the New Farm Reality Check™.

Through paid surveys and interviews with beginning farmers, Adjust 2015 will summarize the stories of farmers who have had less than desired success, or have had to make changes to their operations and plans in order to survive. Adjust 2015 will be the basis for SFA's New Farm Reality Check™ educational materials, which will be available to beginning farmer-training courses throughout the North Central region.

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“SFA’s New Farm Reality Check™ is not a new beginning farmer education program. It is a curriculum to be used by current or future beginning farmer educational programs, and it is also a stand-alone half-day workshop that will present findings and suggest ways to avoid pitfalls/plan for success,” said John Mesko, Executive Director of SFA.

The work is still underway, but so far SFA has conducted 232 surveys of farmers who had struggled in the beginning of their farming careers or had exited. These surveys and interviews have been the basis for the educational modules they are developing. Evaluations from conference presentations have informed another round of revisions to the educational modules, which will be available later in 2015.

