



Sustainable Agriculture  
Research & Education

# Farmer Grants



The Northeast SARE region includes:  
Connecticut,  
Delaware,  
Massachusetts,  
Maryland,  
Maine,  
New Hampshire,  
New Jersey,  
New York,  
Pennsylvania,  
Rhode Island,  
Vermont,  
West Virginia,  
and  
Washington, D.C.

## About Northeast SARE's Farmer Grants

Farmer Grants provide research funds for commercial producers to explore new ideas in almost any aspect of production, marketing or other topics that influence successful farming in the region. Reviewers look for innovation, potential for improved sustainability and results that will be useful to other farmers. Projects should be technically sound and explore ways to boost profits, improve farm stewardship, and have a positive impact on the farm community.

## Who can apply for a Farmer Grant?

You must be a farm business owner or manager in the Northeast SARE region. It is not necessary that you farm full time, but the primary activity of your farm must be to produce and sell agricultural products.

There is a limit of one application per farm per year.

## What is the size of a Farmer Grant?

The cap on any single Farmer Grant is \$15,000. Each year, SARE awards about \$250,000 for up to 30 Farmer Grants. Awards range from \$2,500 to the \$15,000 maximum.

## What can Farmer Grant funds be used for?

Grant funds may be used to pay for your time and time that your employees work directly on the project, materials specific to the project, project-related services like testing and consulting, project-related travel, outreach expenses, equipment rental, and other direct costs.

## Are there things Farmer Grant funds can't be used for?

Grant funds cannot be used to pay for normal operating expenses—costs that would be there in the absence of the project—or for capital expenses like the cost of buying land, tractors, livestock, machinery, or long-term improvements like barns, high tunnels, or greenhouses.





Examples of funded project topics include production and marketing, farm succession, soil and pest management, season extension, diversification, tools and prototypes, and on-farm energy and resource management.

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.

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## How does the program work?

Farmer Grants are competitive—only ideas that are clearly presented and have a good plan for verifying results or demonstrating a new practice will be funded.

Proposals are submitted online. The deadline is typically in late fall with projects starting the following growing season.

Applications are reviewed by a team of farmers, researchers, extension educators, and other agricultural service providers who select the best projects for funding. Successful proposals explore new paths to sustainable agriculture; reviewers don't fund projects that merely subsidize the adoption of practices we already know will work.

Applicants must have a technical advisor—typically someone from Cooperative Extension, NRCS, a certified crop advisor, veterinarian, or some other service provider. Your advisor should review your proposal for feasibility and good design.

## May I see examples of past projects?

Descriptions of and results from all past projects can be found on SARE's national database at: [projects.sare.org/search-projects](https://projects.sare.org/search-projects). Select the "Search Project Reports" link and customize your search by region, project type, and other parameters of interest.

## Where can I get more information about applying?

Detailed instructions are posted in advance of the application deadline on the Northeast SARE website at [www.northeastsare.org](http://www.northeastsare.org). Follow the "Get a Grant" link to "Farmer Grants." Follow-up questions may be e-mailed to Carol. Delaney@uvm.edu or you can call 802-651-8335, ext. 555.

Each state also has a Northeast SARE coordinator who can answer questions. Find contact information for your state coordinator on our website under "State Programs."

[www.northeastsare.org](http://www.northeastsare.org)