



Research and Education Grant 2019 Full Proposal Instructions

Important Dates

The online system will open for submissions:

October 1, 2018

Proposal submissions are due no later than:

October 30, 2018, 11:59 p.m. ET

Full proposal applications are submitted online at: www.ciids.org/nesare/re/

Questions?

Visit our website at: www.northeastsare.org/RandE.

Contact the Northeast SARE office at northeastsare@uvm.edu or 802/651-8335.

About Northeast SARE

The Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Program offers competitive grants to farmers, educators, service providers, researchers, and graduate students to address key issues affecting the sustainability of agriculture throughout our region. With funding from the USDA, Northeast SARE is one of four regional SARE programs that aims to improve farm profits, stewardship, and quality of life for farmers.

The program—including funding decisions—is driven by the Northeast SARE **outcome statement**:

Agriculture in the Northeast will be diversified and profitable, providing healthful products to its customers; it will be conducted by farmers who manage resources wisely, who are satisfied with their lifestyles, and have a positive influence on their communities and the environment.



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

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Northeast SARE, one of four regional SARE programs, is hosted by the University of Vermont and is funded by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Northeast SARE 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.

About Northeast SARE Research and Education Grants

Overview

The Northeast SARE Research and Education Grant program funds projects that teach farmers new knowledge and skills, that are then applied to make verifiable (measurable) changes in behavior. The targeted changes should lead to a more sustainable agriculture within the Northeast region as described in the Northeast SARE outcome statement (see page 1). Projects may be submitted with or without an applied research component, but all projects must have an outcome-based education program for farmers.

Outcome Funding

Research and Education Grants must use an outcome funding approach that directly connects project activities to measurable changes in behavior or practices that lead to improved economic, environmental and quality of life conditions for farmers. Central to this approach for Northeast SARE grants is the performance target, a statement that describes the changes in behavior among project beneficiaries (in this case, farmers) expected to result from the proposed project and the measurable benefits that result from those changes. To learn more about outcome funding, see our *“Guide to Outcome Funding”* at: www.northeastsare.org/RandE.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are those who submitted a preproposal and were notified by Northeast SARE that they were approved to submit a full proposal to the Research and Education Grant program. A project leader may submit only one full proposal per year, selecting just one of Northeast SARE’s major grant programs (Research and Education, Research for Novel Approaches, or Professional Development), even if more than one preproposal was invited to submit a full proposal.

Changes to an Approved Preproposal

Minor revisions to the approved preproposal, such as refinements to the project title, performance target, milestones, or key individuals are acceptable especially if such changes were suggested by preproposal reviewers. Reviewers will not accept a full proposal that differs significantly from the preproposal unless the changes made were those suggested by preproposal reviewers. Full proposal reviewers will have your preproposal and the suggestions and comments sent from the preproposal review team, so please be sure that the content of the full proposal answers any questions and concerns that were raised.

Project Duration

Typical project length is 2 to 3 years. The maximum project length allowed is 3.5 years.

Funding Available

The funding request should fall within the budget range requested in the preproposal, or as otherwise requested by the preproposal review team.

Use of Funds

SARE funding must comply with USDA guidelines and, therefore, there are certain allowable and ineligible expenses for this grant program, listed below.

Funds may be used for expenses specific to the project:

- Labor, including wages or salary and benefits, for individuals working on the project;
- Supplies, including copies, research supplies, outreach materials, and software;
- Farm equipment rental or operating charges;
- Travel and per diem necessary for the project;
- Journal publication fees so long as they are incurred during the contract period; and
- Indirect costs up to 10 percent of total grant request.

Funds may NOT be used for:

- Incentive offers and promotional items, including items of clothing, swag, giveaways, subsidies, raffles, and gift cards;
- Expenses for enduring and non-project specific items such as land purchases, general farm improvements, and construction of buildings, greenhouses, and laboratories;
- Travel to scholarly meetings unless essential to the project, such as presentation of project results;
- International travel unless integral to the project’s success and described in the budget justification (Note: There are certain restrictions on costs and carriers.);
- Purchase of motorized vehicles and equipment;
- Cell phone charges; and
- Food expenses unless necessary for the continuity of a training event or project meeting. (Note: When SARE funds are used for meals, USDA employees should note this on their expense reports and deduct meal costs from any per diem reimbursements.)

It is expected that costs for copiers, cameras, computers, video equipment, and other items that have a wide range of uses beyond the boundaries of the project be provided by the institution and covered as indirect costs. To be considered as a direct cost, the item must be clearly essential to the particular project and applicants must provide clear justification, making sure that these requests are reasonable and defensible.

Conflict of Interest

Members of the Northeast SARE Administrative Council are not permitted to apply for or receive funding from SARE grants. Members of proposal review teams are not permitted to discuss or vote on proposals that involve institutions they work for, organizations for which they serve as board member or adviser, former graduate student advisees, or close personal friends.

Public Domain

While applications and reviews will remain confidential, Northeast SARE considers funded projects, subsequent reports, and related information to be in the public domain.

Grant Timeline

Online application system opens for submissions	October 1, 2018
Proposal submission deadline	October 30, 2018
Electronic copy of proposal with signed cover page deadline.....	November 14, 2018
Applicants notified of Administrative Council fund decisions.....	February 22, 2019
Earliest start date for projects.....	March 1, 2019
Pre-award grant management conference calls with Northeast SARE staff.....	March 2019
Contracts from UVM after pre-award conference calls.....	March 2019

Preparing Your Application

Online Submission System

To access the online application system, go to: www.ciids.org/nesare/re. If you do not already have one, the system will prompt you to set up an account and log you into the application site. It will be open for submissions from October 1 to 11:59 p.m. ET on October 30, 2018. It is highly advisable that you avoid waiting until the last minute to submit your application in case of power failures, websites going down, browser incompatibilities, bad weather, and other unexpected calamities. Staff support to answer questions or deal with technical submission issues will be available until 5:00 p.m. ET on the due date. Applications submitted after 11:59 p.m. on October 30 will not be accepted.

Text Limits, Formatting, and Writing Suggestions

There are word limits for most sections of the application. It is highly advisable to use a word processing program to develop the proposal content offline, ensuring it is accurate and complies with the word limits.

Do not use special formatting or symbols. These will be lost when you paste the text into the online application template. Use only the keyboard symbols.

Keep the writing clear and simple. Avoid jargon and write for a mixed audience that includes farmers, researchers, extension staff, and other agricultural service providers. You can assume grant reviewers have agricultural knowledge, but may not necessarily have deep expertise in your subject area.

Examples for each section of the proposal are included in the appendix.

Advanced Planning

Please prepare your application well in advance of the deadline. Most sponsored programs or grants offices need two to four two weeks to review and approve applications, so confirm the policies at your institution and plan accordingly.

After submitting your proposal online, you'll be able to print it out with a cover page to be officiated by your institution. If you notice an error after you submit, you will need to submit the corrected proposal in the submission system, but you may do so only up to the October 30 deadline.

Send a copy of the full proposal with all required signatures as an email attachment to Northeast SARE at northeastsare@uvm.edu no later than **November 14, 2018**. Without this documentation, the proposal cannot move forward through the review process.

Full Proposal Outline / Checklist

Components of the full proposal and their word limits appear below, listed in the order they appear in the online application system. You may use the outline as a checklist to ensure that your application is complete before submitting.

- Project Title (120 characters, including spaces)
- Application Cover Page (form generated by the submission system)
- Abstract (450 words)
- Performance Target (50 words)
- Milestones for Beneficiary Learning (400 words)
- Description of Problem (400 words)
- Solution and Benefits (400 words)
- Beneficiaries and their Interest (250 words)
- Research Hypothesis or Question (for projects that include a research component, 100 words)
- Research Description (for projects that include a research component, 1200 words)
- Education Plan (500 words)
- Verification Plan (300 words)
- Key Individuals (400 words)
- Project Advisory Committee (350 words)
- Literature Review (1800 words)
- Citation List (no fixed word limit)
- Budget
- References

Attachments:

- Budget Justification and Narrative Template (Excel spreadsheet called “budget”)
- The following supporting documents (saved as a single PDF document called “supportdocs”):
 - Research plot plan or experiment diagram (if conducting research),
 - Draft performance target verification questions, and
 - Letters of commitment from key individuals (other than the project leader)

Step by Step Instructions

Note that grant review criteria appear next to related sections. All proposals are evaluated using these criteria and they must be adequately addressed for an application to be funded.

Refer to the appendix for examples of each section of the proposal. All the content and survey results from the sample proposal are fictional.

Project Title (limited to 120 characters including spaces)

Use a clear, succinct title of under 120 characters, including spaces, that captures the essence of the project’s intent. Avoid acronyms, jargon, or unnecessary words.

Application Cover Page

Fill in the start date, end date, and project duration in number of years. Projects should not start before March 1, 2019. You will be asked to select from a category of practices and production commodities the

project will address. Also, enter the project leader's name and institution, and collaborating institutions. The online system will prompt you to define whether or not collaborating institutions/organizations are receiving funding as sub-awards.

The cover page is generated automatically by the online submission system. You will be able to see a PDF copy of this content and the full proposal text at the final entry screen before you submit.

Abstract (450 words)

This is a standalone summary of the project; the abstract should not refer to subsequent parts of the proposal by using language like, "This will be described later."

The abstract should comprise three subsections, as follows. Include the subheadings in the text you enter to identify each element.

Problem and Justification: A brief description of the problem or opportunity to be addressed, the target farmer audience affected, and justification for the project's need from the perspective of farmer beneficiaries.

Solution and Approach: The proposed solution to the problem or opportunity and the approach for reaching or carrying out the solution.

Performance Target: The performance target, explained in the next section, is the final portion of the abstract. Enter the same text in the abstract that you enter as the performance target.

Performance Target (50 words)

The performance target is the core statement in the proposal that defines the specific, beneficial, and verifiable actions farmers take as a result of the project and the measurable benefits derived from these actions. The target is a project's measurable goal, not a guarantee.

The performance target has three required components:

- 1) **A specific, verifiable practice or strategy that beneficiaries (farmers) will adopt by the end of the project as a result of their participation.** These may include adoption a new or improved crop or livestock production practice; system for food safety, sanitation, product processing or storage; approach to business management, marketing, or value-added enterprise; plan for intergenerational farm transfer, human resource management, etc.
- 2) **The number (not an undefined percentage) of farmers who will adopt the practice or strategy and the extent of their adoption expressed in measurable units.** The extent of adoption statements may include measurements like the total number of acres or animal units switched to a new practice; new markets, products or enterprises developed; new plans created or farm management strategies implemented; employees, farm families or markets affected by new plan, practice or strategy; etc. Strong engagement and input from farmer beneficiaries during proposal planning are essential for establishing realistic numbers of farmers and the extent of their adoption.
- 3) **The measurable benefit(s) that result from the farmers adopting the new practice or strategy.** These benefits must be able to be measured directly or extrapolated, calculated from

Review criteria:

The performance target describes adoption of a beneficial new practice, strategy, or behavior by farmer beneficiaries, and it describes the extent of that adoption and the benefits resulting from the adoption. The performance target is specific, numerical (not given in percentages) and measurable; it is ambitious but achievable in the timeframe of the project.

values already established in the literature. Resulting measurable benefits may include environmental, financial and social factors. Some examples used in past projects include: Pounds of excess nutrients removed from livestock diet and waste products resulting from adoption of recommended practices to improve nutrient balance of feed rations; Input costs (expressed in dollars) reduced from adopting recommended pest control strategies; Increased sales (expressed in dollars) resulting from planting acres to a new crop, adopting a new marketing strategy, or developing a new enterprise; Farmer-reported improvements in quality of life, such as increase in personal satisfaction, increased number of vacation days, or improvements in farm efficiency resulting from adoption of project recommendations; etc.

Note: The performance target must not be dependent on research results, but should be based on proven beneficial practices related to the research topic. The proposed research should complement the learning participants will engage in as they progress to the performance target, but the level to which participants achieve the performance target should not depend on the findings of the research program.

Farmers' participation in project research and education activities should not be included as the performance target. The learning farmers experience as they participate is the means to the end goal of new practice adoption, but the performance target must focus on what farmers do by the end of the project, as a result of their participation.

Milestones for Beneficiary Learning (400 words)

Milestones list logically connected learning or action steps that farmers will accomplish, in sequence, as they participate in activities outlined in the education and verification plan, and (sometimes) research activities (described later): They describe and quantify what specific numbers of farmers will experience as they interact with the project team throughout the project, in sequence.

Milestones must describe interactions for: 1) Recruitment to participate, 2) Pre-training engagement, 3) Learning through the education program, 4) Support to take follow-up action, and 5) Verification of actions and resulting benefits.

If funded, the project's milestones will become the benchmarks for required progress reports, and must be verifiable (measurable).

Milestones are written in terms of what the farmer beneficiaries will do and learn, rather than as a plan of work or list of activities that the project team will perform.

Each milestone is written as a statement with three components:

- 1) A realistic number of farmer beneficiaries who participate;
- 2) The project interactions or educational experiences in which the farmers participate; and

Review criteria:

The milestones describe a sequence of knowledge and skills acquisition by farmers, and the changes they make or steps they take that lead – logically and realistically – to the performance target. The milestones describe how project personnel and beneficiaries interact for:

- 1) Recruitment to participate,
- 2) Pre-training engagement,
- 3) Learning during an education program,
- 4) Support to take follow-up action and
- 5) Verification of actions and resulting benefits.

- 3) The specific knowledge or skills they learn or the intermediate action step they complete as a result of participating.

Reviewers look for realistic levels of participation sufficient to accomplish the performance target; there must be a strong, logical relationship between the milestones and performance target and the progression of milestones should prepare beneficiaries to achieve the performance target.

Description of Problem (400 words)

Explain the problem, harm or missed opportunity for farmers that the project will address; the causes (or hypothesized causes) of the problem, and why, in the context of social, economic and/or environmental sustainability for agriculture, it is important to address.

Describe the number, type, and size of farms where the problem or opportunity occurs, and the extent of agricultural production affected.

Provide references and numerical data to justify claims made in the description. Data sources that provide justification may include references in literature, the work of others, farmer surveys, extension surveys, census data, etc.

Solution and Benefits (400 words)

State the project's proposed solution(s) to the farm problem, harm or missed opportunity that will be the focus of the project's educational efforts. Describe the benefits expected for farmers from solving the problem or seizing the opportunity through participation in the project.

Provide evidence that supports how and why the solution is expected to be effective. Claims made about the proposed solution may be justified using the same sources listed in the previous section.

Projects will rely on education about proven beneficial techniques that comprise the solution. This information may include demonstrations of these techniques with collaborating farmers.

For projects with a research component, the solution may also include education about new practices or application strategies under investigation in the project research. Examples include education about the use of known cover crops while studying optimal seeding rates or new cover crop species, or the development of farm transfer plans while evaluating the most effective family goal setting tools.

Review criteria:

The problem or opportunity is clearly described, including the type and scale of agriculture affected. The need to address the problem or opportunity is substantial and is supported by specific evidence (data). Addressing the problem or opportunity has potential to significantly contribute to the sustainability of agriculture in the Northeast.

Review criteria:

The project proposes a feasible and realistic solution capable of leading to the targeted changes and measurable benefits that will improve sustainability; the likelihood of success is supported with data from previous work.

Beneficiaries and their Interest (250 words)

Specify the number and type of farmers you will engage as participants, and the total pool, including geographic range from which you will recruit. These should be farmers who experience the problem and can benefit from the proposed solution.

Describe and quantify the interest these farmers have in trying to solve the problem and their willingness to work with the project leaders towards a solution. Justify statements of interest with numerical data (not expressed as percentages of unknown numbers) from surveys or other inquiries conducted by the applicant (or others) that demonstrate farmer interest in participating in the project to help solve the problem.

Research Hypothesis or Question (100 words)

If the project includes a research component, state the hypothesis(es) or research question(s) to be tested or evaluated. If the project does not include a research component, write “N/A.”

Research Description (1200 words)

If the project includes research, describe the research proposed to test the stated hypothesis or research question.

For field or laboratory research, the description must include the elements listed below (e. is optional). Include the subheadings in the text you enter to identify each element.

- a. Treatments:** Proposed treatments and rationale for their selection.
- b. Methods:** Experimental design, experimental unit size, and treatment application.
- c. Data Collection and Analysis:** Data to be collected, measurement protocols, and statistical methods of analysis.
- d. Farmer Input:** How farmers contributed to development of hypothesis and treatment selection, and the ways they may contribute to conducting the research.
- (optional)* **e. Additional Information:** Other relevant features of the proposed research.

For social science research, the description must include the elements listed below (e. is optional). Include the subheadings in the text you enter to identify each element.

- a. Target Population(s).**
- b. Methods:** Experimental design, methods and instruments to be used.
- c. Data Collection and Analysis:** Data to be collected, measurement protocols, and methods of analysis.

Review criteria:

The beneficiary audience (farmers) is appropriate to this proposal. The proposal shows a strong understanding of the beneficiaries and clearly explains their relationship to the project. The proposal offers evidence (numerical data) of farmer interest to participate in the project.

Review criteria:

The research topic is relevant to the problem and the hypothesis or research question is clearly stated.

Review criteria:

The experimental design, treatments and methods are clearly articulated and well designed to test the hypothesis or research question; there is evidence of farmer engagement in developing research concepts; and the research is likely to yield valid results that provide the basis for farm applications.

d. Farmer Input: How farmers contributed to development of research and its design, and the ways they may contribute to conducting or participating in the research.

(optional) **e. Additional Information:** Other relevant features of the proposed research.

Attachment: Upload a plot or sampling plan, experiment diagram, outline of focus group or interview plan, or other supporting research documentation.

Education Plan (500 words)

Describe the plan for teaching farmers about the problem and proposed solution(s), and helping to facilitate their adoption of the new practice(s) or strategy. The plan must be realistic, describe content and methods appropriate to engaging farmers, and be likely to lead to achievement of the performance target.

The education program should build on research that has already proven useful and suitable for adoption. If the project proposes research, the information gained through that research should be integrated to complement the educational activities based on existing knowledge. Engaging farmers in research activities may be an integral part of the educational approach.

The education plan must include:

- Methods for recruiting and enrolling farmers.
- Concepts and curriculum topics in which farmers will increase knowledge and skills, including known challenges to farmer adoption that will be addressed.
- Methods and sequence for instruction to facilitate learning (workshops, demonstrations, webinars, consultations, etc.).
- Methods for supporting farmers as they learn, plan and take actions (post-training contacts by email, phone, in-person; record keeping tools or templates; fact sheets, videos or other instructive materials).

Verification Plan (300 words)

Describe how and when measurements will be made to verify participants' learning through the milestones and their actions to accomplish the performance target.

The verification plan should include:

- Data collection methods and tools project leaders will use to collect milestone (learning) and performance target (action) data from farmer beneficiaries.
- Timing of when data will be collected and/or reported to you by farmers.
- Supportive guidance and tools you will provide to farmer beneficiaries to inform them of the performance target, help them

Review criteria:

The education plan is clearly described, effective, realistic and achievable; curriculum topics are listed in detail; instruction and support methods are described. If the project includes research, research activities and results are integrated into the project's education plan.

Review criteria:

The verification plan describes specific and effective tools, methods, and questions for verifying the extent to which milestone learning and the performance target actions are achieved; effective verification guidance and tools for beneficiaries are included. The project allows sufficient time for adoption of new practices or techniques prior to verification of the target.

record data about actions and results, if appropriate, and be prepared to respond to your requests for data about their follow-up actions. Some examples of supportive guidance and tools for beneficiaries include the following:

- Project introduction or enrollment forms that explain the project focus, scope, and performance target, and that are used to obtain written commitment to participate.
- Data sheets, templates or checklists where beneficiaries can record data and information about their project activities on paper or online.

Attachment: A draft verification tool is required. Please include questions that beneficiaries will answer to verify the extent to which they have made the change described in the performance target. You may also upload examples of the tools you will provide to beneficiaries.

For guidance on developing your verification plan and tools, please refer to the examples in the appendix and our Project Verification Planning Guide at: www.northeastcare.org/RandE.

Key Individuals (400 words)

Briefly describe team members who will devote significant time to the project, including the project leader (coordinator) and other key individuals (cooperators). Descriptions should demonstrate the ability to manage the project and conduct its activities. Name the individuals, their organizational affiliation, and their primary responsibilities in the project.

If some key individuals have not yet been identified, provide an outline of the potential leadership team. Briefly describe the positions and their duties, without providing names. An acceptable entry might say, “a veterinarian with poultry expertise who works in the target states will assist with curriculum development and instruction on poultry disease prevention and management.”

Also name any other organizations, outside of your own, that will be receiving funds requested from SARE to carry out the project, and/or those contributing significant money, personnel time, facilities, or equipment to the project.

Attachment: Letters of commitment are required from each key individual except the project leader. The letters should indicate that each person understands their role and is ready and willing to participate. Letters should be written by the individual team members, not the project leader.

Do NOT upload any letters of general support from individuals not involved in your project, curricula vitae, or sample promotional materials about your institution.

Review criteria:

The project leader and other key individuals have the capacity and all the necessary skills and experience to conduct the project; the extent of their participation fits the needs of the project.

Project Advisory Committee (350 words)

An advisory committee consisting of at least two farmers and one agricultural service provider (from Extension, NRCS, other federal or state agency, private or non-profit sectors, veterinarian, or other farm advisor) is required. Additional people representing other affiliations, such as researchers, may also be included on the committee.

The project advisory committee is expected to provide input to the researchers during proposal development, and periodically throughout the project, in the assessment of farmer interest, research design and treatment selection, and the educational plans to share project findings. Advisory committee meetings may occur in person or by conference call or webinar.

Provide the names and affiliations of the individuals who will serve on the advisory committee. State how they were engaged for advice during proposal development and how and when you will meet with them throughout the project.

Literature Review (1800 words)

Outline the scientific foundation and merits of your project and identify and explain the references used to understand the problems, challenges, opportunities your project will address, as well as current knowledge associated with the proposed solution. Include only those sources most relevant to your project. This section is the place to convince reviewers that there is a body of knowledge that provides a compelling rationale for the project.

Clearly describe how your project will complement or build upon the results of previous research efforts. Show that you are informed about previous relevant research including grants from SARE if they are relevant to your project. The national SARE database of projects (projects.sare.org/search-projects/) contains projects from all four SARE regions and is searchable by state, type of grant, author, and keyword.

Citation List (no word limit)

Provide a list of full citations referenced in the literature review and elsewhere in your proposal. There is no word count but only list relevant references.

Budget

The budget is an expense plan that provides your best estimate for the expenses you expect to encounter. Itemize all expected expenses and calculate their costs as precisely as possible to show reviewers what funds are needed, and why, to carry out your project.

Even the most persuasive proposal will not be funded if the budget is not clear, is too high or too low for the effort described, or if it includes requests for items not relevant to the proposal narrative, or for items not allowed by SARE.

Review criteria:

Advisory committee members are appropriate to the education and research to be conducted and include at least two farmers and one agricultural service provider. The committee's input into proposal development and plans for engaging committee members during the project are described.

Review criteria:

Previous relevant work, including contributions of project key individuals in this subject area where applicable, is described and connected to the proposed work, with citations provided.

Review criteria:

Citation list provided; relevant references included.

Review criteria:

Budget items reflect the realistic needs of the project; and the total budget request is appropriate in terms of the magnitude of the project's expected results; all expenses are well justified, and the budget contains no errors.

Complete the budget justification and narrative template first before entering the budget summary information in the online system.

Budget Justification and Narrative Template. Use the Northeast SARE budget justification and narrative template (Excel spreadsheet) provided at: www.northeastsare.org/RandE. Be sure to select a template that matches your project length (i.e., two or three years). Complete descriptions for each item; the template will total categories for each year, as well as an overall project summary. The template must itemize the quantity and per-unit cost of each expense, include a narrative description that explains the need for and use of each expense, and calculate the total cost of each item. Round subtotals to the nearest dollar. Budget categories in the spreadsheet are explained in Appendix B.

The competitiveness of applications is undermined by an inadequately justified budget. For example, if a budget shows expenses of \$18,450 for lab tests but provides no number of tests, cost per unit or explanation about these tests (for what purpose, and when and how conducted), the justification is inadequate. If the total of itemized expenses does not sum to the amount requested in the budget, the amount is not properly justified. If an item is requested without any detail as to why it is needed or how it is related to the project, the budget is not properly justified. This level of detail is required by USDA/NIFA and the University of Vermont. It also shows reviewers you have carefully considered the funding needed for your project.

A budget justification and narrative template is required for each institution that will receive funds through a subcontract. The completed template will be uploaded as an Excel file (.xls or .xlsx) to the online submission.

Budget Summary. Once the budget justification and narrative template is complete, enter the summed subtotals for each budget category from the template into the budget summary form on the online submission. Individual line item expenses are not needed in the budget summary. Only include the major categories from the template (personnel salaries and wages, personnel fringe, materials and supplies, travel, printing and publications, other direct costs, and indirect costs if applicable) and make sure that the subtotal costs in the budget summary matches the subtotals in the budget template(s). Round the subtotals to the nearest dollar; the online submission does not accept trailing decimals.

You will be prompted to enter a budget summary for each year of your project if it is multiyear, and for each subcontracting institution if it is a multi-institution project. The number of years selected on the cover page for project duration activates the forms for multiple years; listing collaborating institutions that will be paid via a subcontract activates budget forms for each institution. If there are subcontracting institutions, enter that information first in the online system before entering the lead institution budget.

References

Provide three references of those who know your professional capabilities and work. Include complete contact information. References may be contacted if your proposal is a finalist and the review panel requests this step.

Required Documents

Applications with missing or incomplete required documents will not advance to grant review so be sure they are attached to your application.

Attachments

All proposal components should be entered into the online application system--including the required uploaded attachments listed below--on or before the **October 30, 2018**.

1. **Budget Justification and Narrative Template** (Excel spreadsheet saved as an .xls or .xlsx file, titled "budget")
2. **Supporting Documents** as follows (saved as a single PDF, titled "supportdocs"):
 - Research plot plan or experiment diagram (if conducting research),
 - Draft performance target verification questions, and
 - Letters of commitment from key individuals (other than the project leader)

Proposal with Signed Cover Page

Please send a copy of the proposal that includes the cover page with all required signatures as an e-mail attachment to Northeast SARE at northeastsare@uvm.edu no later than **November 14, 2018**. Without this documentation, the proposal cannot move through the review process.

Selected Applications

If the Northeast SARE Administrative Council selects your project for funding, you may expect the following.

Notification

The Northeast SARE Administrative Council will select applications for funding in late February 2019 and Northeast SARE staff will notify applicants of the status of their applications on February 22, 2019.

Contracting and Disbursement of Funds

The Sponsored Programs Office or Authorized Representative of the grant recipient will receive a Subcontract Agreement from the University of Vermont, the host institution for Northeast SARE. Funds are to be used exclusively for the proposed project, subject to the restrictions outlined in "Use of Funds." Funds are released on a reimbursement basis to the institution in response to invoices from the institution's financial office. Northeast SARE will hold the last 10 percent of the award until the final project report has been received and approved.

IACUC and IRB Documentation

If your project is funded and involves livestock, SARE will require certification of protocol review from your university's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). If your project is funded and involves human research subjects, SARE will need a completed approval document from your institution's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Protection of Human Subjects in Research.

Acknowledging SARE

Grantees are required to acknowledge Northeast SARE as the funding source in all project publications and outreach materials.

Required Reporting

Northeast SARE requires annual progress reports and a comprehensive final report for all projects. All reports will be submitted in our online system using our reporting template. Reports should describe the progress made on the project, detail the findings observed, and document any outputs and impacts. All outreach and educational activities should be reported as well as any measured changes in knowledge or awareness, attitudes and opinions, and/or the adoption of new practices. Products and educational tools should be added to the report as attachments. Reports may also use photographs to help document and promote the project.

Progress reports are due each December 31 and final reports are due within 60 days of the project's end date. The final report should include full, detailed results of project activities that were defined in the application. Also at the close of projects, SARE asks for contact information of 8-12 project participants whom SARE may contact in the future for program evaluation.

To strengthen your proposal and to understand further what you will be asked to report on if you are awarded a grant, please look at the performance indicators in Grantee Reporting and SARE Post-Project Evaluation (appendix B). This table lists information you will be asked to report during the project and items SARE may assess two to four years after the project's completion. To be eligible for funding, it is not necessary that your project include results under all of the performance indicators. For more information on what SARE hopes its project investments will achieve, please review the SARE Logic Models at: www.northeastsare.org/About-Us/SARE-logic-models.

Resources

The following resources may help you as plan and write your application.

- To learn about all projects funded to date by the SARE program, visit the national reporting site at: projects.sare.org/search-projects/. You may search the database by region, state, project type, year, commodities and practices addressed, as well as by keywords.
- The Alternative Farming Systems Information Center (AFSIC) at the National Agricultural Library specializes in identifying resources about sustainable food systems and practices: www.nal.usda.gov/afsic. Information specialists can share resources and search techniques that may be relevant to your application. Contact AFSIC via the web, email at: afsic@nal.usda.gov, or phone: 301-504-6559.

Appendix A: Examples of Proposal Sections

The following examples are meant to be used for illustrative purposes only.

Example of Abstract

Problem and Justification: Despite the well-known potential benefits of cover crops, which include reducing erosion, adding organic matter, suppressing weeds, recycling excess nutrients, and supplying N to subsequent crops; despite significant investments by Cooperative Extension, NRCS, SARE, and others to promote adoption, the use of cover crops by vegetable farmers in New York and Pennsylvania remains limited. In a 2009 survey of 400 NY vegetable farmers, 168 of the 240 respondents were aware of the benefits from cover crops, but did not believe cover crops were feasible for their operations, given their complex rotations; however, 192 farmers rated the ability of legume crops to provide fixed nitrogen for crops as a high-value benefit. Seventy-five percent of the farmers indicated interest to learn more about how to select and integrate cover crops into their vegetable production systems.

Solution and Approach: This project will engage NY and PA vegetable farmers in a comprehensive education program about the multiple valuable functions of cover crops and cover-cropping management and innovations, and research trials investigating legume cover crops and cover-cropping innovations. The education and research components will address management constraints to cover crop usage such as establishment timing and techniques, mowing, killing, and rotations. Trials at research and production farms will investigate new legume cover crops because there are several that are new to growers in the region that have shown promise in filling specific niches in vegetable crop rotations. The documented N supplying capabilities of leguminous cover crops, which can potentially provide 120 lb N/acre to subsequent crops, is potentially of great value to vegetable farmers, especially organic producers. This green manure benefit can provide N fertilizer cost savings of \$60/acre at \$0.50 per lb N to farmers, and farmers surveyed indicated strong interest in learning more about these cover crops. Education will be conducted via workshops and field days at the research sites. All farmer beneficiaries will be recruited to submit cover crop plans for their farms and cooperating farmers will receive project team support and recordkeeping templates for tracking their decisions and actions. We will establish a project blog to share data and video from project trials and provide a discussion and support forum for farmers.

Performance Target: Fifty-five vegetable farmers adopt legume and non-legume cover crops or improved cover crop management practices on a total of 700 acres, reducing historical N applications by 50 lbs. per acre per year without reducing yields.

Examples of Performance Target

Note that these targets each include the four essential elements. They state the number of farmers who act, describe the specific action farmers will make, define the scale or extent of action in terms of specified number of acres, products, animals affected, and they describe the measurable benefit to farmers (and in some cases society) that will result from their actions.

Example 1: For the cover crops project introduced in the abstract above. *Note: this example continues in the remaining sections.* Fifty-five vegetable farmers adopt legume and non-legume cover crops or improved cover crop management practices on a total of 700 acres, reducing historical N applications by 50 lbs. per acre per year without reducing yields.

Example 2: Grass-based dairy project. Twenty-five grass-based organic dairy farms with a total of 1,500 milking cows implement a low-cost feed supplement program that has improved animal health as measured by cull rate; increasing average production per cow by 1,000 lbs. per year (\$220) at an added cost of \$94 per cow.

Example 3: Farm transfer planning project. Fifty farm families from three states with an average of 100 acres of farmland per family develop legally binding, comprehensive farm transfer plans aimed at

keeping their land in farming after the current generation of farmers retires, resulting in 5,000 acres of farmland covered by plans for staying in production.

Example of Milestones for Beneficiary Learning

See the example milestones below leading to a performance target with types of interaction indicated in bold. The interaction types are included here for your guidance and would not be included (not required) in the proposal. *Note: The performance target does not need to be included in the proposal milestones. It is provided here for reference only.

Recruitment to participate	1000 vegetable farmers in NY and PA learn about the cover crop research and education project including the performance target, planned research and education activities and support for cover crop planning through a recruitment announcement that includes an invitation to participate in the project educational and demonstration components and to complete an online survey about current practices. September 2019
Pre-training engagement	200 vegetable farmers return the survey; 180 agree to participate in the education program; 10 agree to host on-farm demonstrations. December 2019
Learning through education program	160 of the 180 farmers attend two of two three-hour workshops (one in each state) where they gain a greater understanding of the project's goals, performance target and upcoming activities and learn about the benefits and optimal management practices of cover crops. March 2020
	150 of these farmers attend an additional half day workshop and field day held at university research farms in each state and learn about new legume cover crops research and performance of existing cover crops. May 2020
	10 farmers plan on-farm demonstration trials with legume cover crops in collaboration with project team. September 2020
	100 of the farmers attend on-farm demonstrations hosted by at least 5 cooperating on-farm demonstrators and learn about cover crop establishment and termination equipment and techniques and cash crop establishment techniques. April 2021
Support to take follow-up action	100 farmers submit cover crop plans for their farms to the project team for review (July 2021) and receive ongoing consultations with project team by phone, e-mail and cover crops blog. The farmers also communicate with other farmers via the cover crops blog. Ongoing to September 2022
Verification of actions or changes	100 farmers respond to verification survey to report on actions taken to adopt legume and/or non-legume cover crops, changes in N fertilization, yields, and successes and/or challenges experienced. September 2022
Performance target*	55 vegetable farmers adopt legume and non-legume cover crops or improved cover crop management practices on a total of 700 acres, reducing historical N applications by 50 lbs. per acre per year without reducing yields.

Example of Description of Problem

Note: The numbers in parentheses point to a specific item in the citation list.

Cover crops offer many potential benefits in vegetable production systems including reducing erosion, adding organic matter that improves soil structure and water holding capacity, weed suppression, recycling or capture of excess nutrients, and supplying symbiotically fixed N to subsequent crops, in the case of legume cover crops (2, 4). Despite these well-known potential benefits, the wide range of cover crop species available, and significant investments by Cooperative Extension, NRCS, SARE, and others to

promote adoption, the use of cover crops by vegetable farmers in New York and Pennsylvania, who produce vegetables on more than 150,000 acres of farmland, remains limited (4, 7, 8).

A 2014 survey (5) of 400 vegetable farmers in NY revealed the problem of limited cover crop adoption has many facets. The survey reported a complex mixture of high awareness about cover crop benefits, high value placed on some potential benefits, lack of knowledge about appropriate cover crops and cover cropping strategies, and underuse of cover crops by farmers. Only 24 of the 240 respondents reported using cover crops routinely on their farms and only 48 farmers indicated that they felt confident or very confident to determine appropriate cover crop choices for their farms. One hundred and sixty-eight of the respondents were aware of the benefits from cover crops, but they did not believe cover crops were feasible for their operations, given their complex cropping patterns and rotations; however, when asked to rate the value they would place on various cover crop benefits for their farms—benefits such as weed suppression, erosion control, addition of organic matter, addition of nitrogen by legumes—192 of the 240 farmers rated the ability of legume crops to provide fixed nitrogen for crop use as a high- or very high-value benefit. Adding organic matter was similarly high, with 184 respondents rating that benefit highly, and 168 rated weed suppression as a valuable benefit. One hundred and sixty-eight farmers indicated an interest in learning more about how to select a cover crop and integrate cover crops into their vegetable production system.

Example of Solution and Benefits

Note: The numbers in parentheses point to a specific item in the citation list.

This project will engage NY and PA vegetable farmers in an education program about cover crops and cover-cropping innovations that will teach the multiple functions of cover crops valuable to farmers and will complete on-farm research trials investigating new and traditional legume cover crops along with cover-cropping innovations. The education and research components will address the top management constraints to cover crop usage such as timing of seeding, establishment, mowing, killing, and rotations.

New legume cover crops have been chosen as the focus of the project's research component because there are several that are new to growers in the region, including mammoth clover, Canada field pea, and cow peas that have shown promise in filling specific niches or timeframes in vegetable crop rotations (4, 6). The green manure aspect of leguminous cover crops is also potentially of great value to vegetable farmers, especially organic producers, because commercial organic sources of N are costly and application of manure-based composts in the amounts necessary to supply adequate N for optimum crop yields can result in excessive amounts of P accumulating in the soil, often in as short a time span as one or two compost applications (12). Leguminous cover crops can provide up to 120 lbs N/acre to the crops that follow them, depending on stand quality and whether the legume is incorporated into the soil or surface-killed (4, 6). This green manure benefit can provide N fertilizer cost savings of \$60/acre at \$0.50 per lb N to farmers.

In addition to the study of legume cover crop species, the research and education program will include other cover cropping innovations such as the use of legume and non-legume cover crop mixtures, no-herbicide and no-till cover crop termination, cover crop interseeding, precision planting, and crop rotations that increase cover crop opportunities.

Example of Beneficiaries and their Interest in the Project

The primary beneficiaries will be 100 commercial vegetable farmers in NY and PA who operate farms from five to 500 acres, as the benefits of cover cropping apply to farms of all scales, and most of the technology employed will be scale-neutral. The 400 NY farmers surveyed previously will be recruited as participants. Additional potential participants include more than 2,000 vegetable farmers in NY and PA that we will reach with advertisements through Extension meetings, newsletters and email networks, and in NY and PA vegetable production publications.

Interest in cover crop education among the region's vegetable farmers is high, as evidenced by a 2009 survey of 400 NY vegetable farmers, which included farms of all sizes. One hundred eighty-eight (or 75 percent) of the 240 farmers who responded expressed an interest in participating in a program to learn more about cover crops and how to integrate cover crops into their vegetable production systems.

(No examples of Research Hypothesis or Question and Research Description are provided.)

For examples, please search the national SARE database of projects at: projects.sare.org/search-projects/ for "Northeast" region and "Research and Education" project type.

Example of Education Plan

Note: For additional guidance on designing and implementing educational programs for farmers and other beneficiaries, please consult our Adult Learning Guide for Educators at: www.northeastsare.org/RandE.

Recruitment. We will send invitations to the 400 farmers who participated in our survey noted in the beneficiary section, and deliver advertisements to 2,000 or more vegetable farmers in NY and PA through extension meetings, newsletters, and e-mail networks, and via NY and PA vegetable production publications. Recruitment materials will include an invitation to complete a brief online survey about current cover cropping practices, knowledge levels and learning needs, and an opportunity to sign up as a demonstration trial host.

Curriculum topics. Topics for the educational program include:

- Cover crop species and benefits from planting them such as weed suppression, nitrogen scavenging, nitrogen fixation, organic matter increase, erosion control.
- Cover crop management considerations such as time of planting, seeding method and equipment, growth rate and habit, competitiveness, winter survivability, timing and effective techniques for termination.
- The project's legume cover crop trials to study growth characteristics and competitiveness, N supplying capabilities, new seeding and termination equipment and techniques.

Instructional methods. This project combines comprehensive education about cover crops and on-farm demonstration trials to explore cover crop innovations. After gauging the current knowledge and practices of the vegetable farmers with the baseline survey, a series of workshops and field days will bring all participants to a common level of understanding about the project goals and cover crops. Ten farmers will be invited to establish on-farm trials to test new and traditional legume cover crops and management strategies on their farms. The on-farm trials will complement the research trials conducted at the university research farm and provide additional opportunities for hands-on education. Field days at both university and collaborating farmers' trials will allow participants to learn results of experiments firsthand, and see multiple cover crops and management practices in various cropping scenarios. This combined educational and on-farm demonstration approach will increase farmers' knowledge about new and traditional cover crops, and build the skills and confidence needed to select appropriate crops and manage them for maximum benefit and optimum crop yield. All farmer beneficiaries will be recruited and encouraged to submit cover crop plans for their farms.

Beneficiary support. The project team will support farmers conducting trials by providing technical assistance for treatment layout, species selection, crop rotations, establishment, fertilization, and termination. The project team will also assist with data collection and yield measurements. The project team will review and provide advice about the cover crop plans submitted by farmers, and all participating farmers will receive project team support and recordkeeping templates for tracking their cover cropping decisions and actions. A project blog will be established to share data and video from project trials and provide a discussion forum for farmers.

Example of Verification Plan

Data collection methods, tools and timing. Beneficiary contact lists will be maintained and updated throughout the project. Beneficiaries will be informed of project goals and the performance target at the beginning and throughout the project. The processes to verify the project's usefulness to them in terms of their learning and new actions will be explained at workshops and field days. Questionnaires will be used at all learning events to assess participant learning and skill development and identify areas where more education and support are desired. Final project verification will be conducted using online and mailed surveys with follow-up e-mails and phone calls to ensure completion. The surveys will be sent to all beneficiaries in the last 3 months of the project to verify their actions regarding cover crop planting and effects on crop yield and nitrogen usage; the results from beneficiaries who implemented cover crop plans on their farms will be collected.

Verification supports for beneficiaries. Beneficiaries will receive a cover crop plan template that will help them map out their cover cropping planting and management schedule. The form will include a checklist and form for recording farmer decisions, actions, observations about cover crop and market crop growth, and crop yield. Offers of support for drafting cover crop plans will be made at 1 and 3 month intervals after final field days via email, conference calls and blog. Requests for updates about follow-up actions and observations will be made at monthly intervals after cover crop plan submission via email and blog discussion forum. Information from the on-farm recording forms will be requested via the final project survey questions, and copies of the record form will also be requested.

Draft questions to verify the performance target (would be uploaded as an attachment)

Note: In this example, possible verification questions are used to verify the following performance target: Ninety vegetable farmers adopt new legume cover crops and/or improved cover crop management practices on a total of 900 acres, reducing their historical N application rate in subsequent vegetable crops by an average of 75 lb/acre/year without reducing yields.

1. Listed below are some of the cover crop techniques recommended through this project.

Please circle the best answer for each recommendation.*

Cover crop species and management recommendation:

Please circle the best answer for each recommendation:

Plant species A	No plans to do	I plan to do this within 6 months	I was doing this before the project	I started this <i>since</i> the project on _____ acres of _____ crop(s)
Plant species mix B, etc.	No plans to do	I plan to do this within 6 months	I was doing this before the project	I started this <i>since</i> the project on _____ acres of _____ crop(s)
Interseeded legume cover crop(s)	No plans to do	I plan to do this within 6 months	I was doing this before the project	I started this <i>since</i> the project on _____ acres of _____ crop(s)
Adjust a crop rotation to increase opportunity for legume cover crop(s)	No plans to do	I plan to do this within 6 months	I was doing this before the project	I started this <i>since</i> the project on _____ acres of _____ crop(s)

2. For fields in which you used a legume cover crop or improved cover management technique within the last year, please provide information requested below. List each field separately. *

Field size (ac)	Cover crop / technique used	Marketable crop grown following cover crop	How did the N application rate change compared to N rate for same crop with no cover crop (actual or historic)	How did marketable crop yield/acre change compared to yield for same crop with no cover crop (actual or historic)
			Increased by _____ lb	Increased by _____ lb
			Decreased by _____ lb	Decreased by _____ lb
			<input type="checkbox"/> No change	<input type="checkbox"/> No change
			Increased by _____ lb	Increased by _____ lb
			Decreased by _____ lb	Decreased by _____ lb
			<input type="checkbox"/> No change	<input type="checkbox"/> No change

3. Did you observe differences in the extent of insect damage or disease between crops grown with or after cover crops vs. those with no cover crops?*

Yes **No**

4. If yes, please describe.*

5. Do you have any thoughts or comments about the benefits and challenges for the use of cover crops that you experienced on your farm?

6. Do you have any thoughts or comments about this project that you wish to share?

**Notes: The information requested in questions 1-4 could also be included in the recordkeeping template provided to farmers, allowing them to gather management and production data and observations in real time. In this case, verification would involve collecting the farmer-recorded information during interim check-in contacts and again when the project activities are over.*

It's useful to include some open-ended questions like numbers 5 and 6, even though they can be difficult to analyze, as they often contain important and even surprising information. If the final evaluation will be conducted by telephone, it is sound methodology to use an interview protocol to ask specific, fixed questions and also give each participant a chance to speak freely about the project. Unexpected outcomes can be interesting and often very gratifying, and the best way to learn of them is to listen actively to unstructured responses. It may sometimes be advisable to have a third party conduct these interviews to avoid bias as much as possible.

For additional examples, tips and Tools for Northeast SARE project verification, please see our Project Verification Planning Guide at: www.northeastsare.org/RandE.

Example of Key Individuals

Project leader. Dr. Selena Garcia is a vegetable specialist and extension educator at PA University with 11 years of experience in sustainable production techniques, including cover crops. She has also led interdisciplinary teams that work directly with farmers on applied research on production and pest management concerns. She will lead the project and do recruitment, follow-up, training, and assessment.

Key individuals. Dr. Darnell Jones is an extension soil fertility specialist at NY University and has 15 years of experience researching cover crops and their implications for soil fertility on research and production farms. He will serve as the NY project co-leader and will assist with recruitment in NY and coordinate research activities in the state.

Greg Hunt is a PA agricultural extension educator and has been involved for the past 13 years in a range of educational efforts related to vegetable production systems. He will serve as the education coordinator of the project, preparing workshop and field day materials and facilitating events in PA with the project leader. Greg will also assist with surveying and follow-up contacts with farmers.

The technical coordinator, to be hired in NY, will assist with the establishment and management of trials in NY, perform data analysis for all the university and on-farm research trials, and help organize educational events in NY. The coordinator will have experience analyzing and presenting data from field trials and will create fact sheets and posters based on the project results.

Appendix B. Explanation of Budget Categories and Items to Include

Personnel Costs

Personnel costs include those for the project leader, student wages, support staff or other hired labor. These must be shown as either an hourly rate multiplied by the anticipated time needed to complete the project or as a percentage of FTE at a given salary. There is also a separate line in the personnel section for fringe benefits.

Only people employed by the recipient organization should be listed in this category. If people outside your institution will be paid to work on the project, they should be listed under “Other Direct Costs” (categorized as “Speaker/Trainer Fees,” “Consultants,” or “Services”) or “Subcontracts/Subawards.”

Non-Personnel Costs

Non-personnel expense categories include: materials and supplies, travel, publications/printing, and other direct costs (communications, photocopying, speaker/trainer fees, consultants, services, conferences/meetings/workshops, trainee support, off-site office rental, purchase of equipment, rental of equipment or land-use charges, and other/miscellaneous). Under each category, name each expense, provide narrative justifications of the expense, and provide information on units, quantities, and per unit costs.

Materials and Supplies

This section is for items that are specific to the project and have a reasonable useful life of less than three years. Supplies can include items such as office supplies, project-specific software, specialized tools, measuring devices, and other materials that will be used and used up during the course of the project. Again, be specific, for example:

Soil test kits to measure soil health before and after treatment. 4 kits x \$22 each = \$88

Mapping software to collect, store and visualize project field data = \$420

Paper for in-house project flyers and workshop handouts. 10 reams x \$2.60 each = \$26

Travel

Specify the purpose of the trip and include who is traveling, the destination, and expenses per trip. When requesting funds for travel by car, use the mileage reimbursement rate set by the institution administering the grant. If you are not associated with an institution, then you may use the rate established by the University of Vermont (host of Northeast SARE); this rate is adjusted each year and is currently \$0.545 per mile. For auto travel, indicate who is traveling, the destination, number of trips, and total anticipated mileage. For lodging, state the room cost and number of nights. Here are some sample budget lines:

Research assistant making 4 trips to cooperating farm, 14 miles each; 56 miles @\$0.545/mile = \$30.52

Project leader making 3 trips to soil lab, 26 miles each; 78 miles @\$0.545/mile = \$42.51

Project leader making 1 trip to growers' meeting; 104 miles @\$0.545/mile = \$56.68

If the budget includes air travel, price your request with the least expensive carrier. Federal regulations require that U.S. carriers be used for international travel. Long-distance trips must clearly be justified as central to the project.

Publications and Printing

This budget category is specific to any publication development costs (editing, design and printing) that the project may incur, including project brochures and educational materials. Include publishing costs for

scientific or technical journal articles here. You may include the cost of developing web-based publications here, but would not include general web hosting or photocopying as these expenses belong in “Other Direct Costs.” Show a per-piece cost for any publications you plan to develop. For example:

24-page resource directory, layout and design at \$30/hour, 15 hours = \$450

Printing at \$1.12 each, 1000 pieces = \$1,120

Other Direct Costs

This budget category includes: communications, photocopying, speaker/trainer fees, consultants, services, conferences/meetings/workshops, trainee support, off-site office rental, purchase of equipment, rental of equipment or land-use charges, and other/miscellaneous.

Communications costs typically include postage, fax and telephone expenses. Please note that charges for cell phones are not allowable.

For example, if you plan to mail 350 flyers to announce a field day, the line item would read:

Postage for 350 field day flyers at \$0.50 each = \$175

If you are planning ongoing long-distance telephone contact with cooperators, it is fine to estimate what these will cost. For example:

10 hours in-state evening long distance phone calls to cooperating farmers = \$ 50

4 hours in-state daytime long distance phone calls to project cooperator = \$ 45

2 conference calls with planning committee @ 1 hour each = \$ 72

Photocopying. If you will make copies over the course of the project, estimate the number of copies needed and the cost per page. You may also estimate your copying costs, based on past experience. For example:

500 copies of the bulletin for distribution at field day @ .05 each = \$25

100 pages a month @ .05 each X 12 months = \$60

Speaker and trainer fees. This section should include the name(s) of speakers and trainers you will use, description of the services they are providing and their fees.

Consultants. If outside entities are hired on a temporary basis to carry out specific tasks, these charges are listed under consultants. Include those receiving stipends or payments for services and their organization or farm, statement of work or description of what will be done to earn the payment, and a breakdown of number of days or hours of service, rate of pay, etc. For example:

John Abrahamson, education consultant, assist in organizing and facilitating 4 meetings at \$325 each = \$1,300

Farmer collaborators are often paid a stipend, while some institutions process payment for such contributors under consultants. Either is acceptable. SARE strongly feels that farmers should be paid for the time they contribute to a project at a reasonable rate; Northeast SARE compensates farmers who serve on its Administrative Council and review teams a rate of \$300 per day. Please note: there is a distinction between paying farmers to contribute to a project (by participating in planning or project evaluation or in the role of a trainer or presenter—these are appropriate and encouraged) versus paying farmers to receive the benefits of training (by attending a workshop or conference as a recipient—here, payment would not be appropriate).

Services. If an outside entity is hired for a specific custom job, it should be listed under services. Provide details of these non-contracted services rendered for the project, including fees or hired payments, purpose and quantities. For example:

Darla Adams, WonderMark, precision spraying, 4 applications of fungicide at \$300 each = \$1,200

Conferences, meetings, and workshops. Costs of holding project conferences, meetings, and workshops are included in this category. Expense examples include the rental of facilities and equipment for the meeting, signage for field days, fees for guest speakers, and travel and per diem for presenters. Details of costs for each conference or meeting should be itemized and provided in the budget narrative.

Meal expenses may be included in the budget only in situations where providing the meal maintains the continuity of a formal group meeting or educational training, and not offering such a meal would impose inappropriate discomfort for the meeting participants. Conversely, meals may not be charged as project costs when individuals decide to go out for breakfast, lunch or dinner together when no need exists for continuity of a meeting; this kind of activity is considered an entertainment cost.

Note: Costs for project personnel to travel conferences should be included under “Travel” and payments made to or for recipients of these trainings should go under “Trainee Support,” see below.

Trainee support. If meals, transportation or lodging are to be paid on behalf of participants who are receiving training as the project beneficiaries, these expenses should be listed as trainee support costs.

Off-site office rental is most often covered under the institution’s indirect costs (see below) and would only be applicable if a remote site was specifically needed to carry out the project.

Purchase of equipment or cost of fabrication. Fabrication of equipment is only appropriate when a project calls for a piece of equipment to be constructed as an integral part of the project.

Rental of equipment or land-use charges. Land-use charges are most typical in field research situations when a rental rate is applied or a research station that has a standard per-acre fee for field plot maintenance.

Other and miscellaneous. If you have a project expense that truly does not fit into any of the above categories, it should be included in this section. Avoid using this budget category for items that really belong somewhere else. Each item must be clearly identified and justified to be allowed. Unidentified, unjustified, and undefined (“etc.” or “contingency expense”) items are not allowed.

Subcontracts or Subawards

If there is a portion of the project that will be subcontracted out to another institution, list it in this section. List the institution, organization or farm. Provide the subaward leader's name and budget amount. For each subaward, you will need to attach a proposed plan of work and include a spreadsheet of budget detail justification/narrative.

Indirect Costs

USDA currently allows indirect costs. Applicants whose institutions have a negotiated federal indirect cost rate may budget the indirect portion to be up to 10 percent of total funds requested. This is the maximum, a cap on indirect set by USDA on SARE grants. This amount can be estimated as 11.11 percent of the total of direct costs, or more accurately by dividing total direct costs by nine. If you calculate a fractional dollar amount, round down so the amount of indirect remains under 10 percent of the overall total. If the negotiated institutional rate is less, then that lower rate limit applies. If your organization has never had a federally negotiated indirect cost rate, you may request a *de minimis* rate of 10% of modified total direct costs.

Appendix C: Northeast SARE Research and Education Program Grantee Reporting and SARE Post-Project Evaluation

Logic Model Category	Performance Indicators <i>(When you report, you will receive prompts for these indicators.)</i>	Who Collects/When Reported	
		Grantee Collects/ Reports by End of Project	SARE Collects/ Post Project
Participants	Number of farmers participating in research	✓	
	Number of farmers participating in education/outreach activities	✓	
	Number of agricultural service providers participating in education/outreach activities <i>(optional)</i>		
Outputs: – Activities – Information – Products	Research activities conducted	✓	
	Research results of the project	✓	
	Number and type of education/outreach activities conducted	✓	
	Number journal articles in press or published <i>(if produced)</i>	✓	✓
	Number and type of other, non-refereed outreach publications/products <i>(if produced)</i>	✓	✓
Learning Outcomes	Number of farmers that report changes in KASA <i>(knowledge, attitudes, skills, awareness)</i> as a result of participating in project	✓	
Action Outcomes	Number of farmers who use information learned to adopt a practice, approach, technology <i>(including what is adopted)</i>	✓	✓
	Number of acres, animals, or other production units affected by adoption <i>(as an indicator of scale of adoption)</i>	✓	✓
	New professional collaborations as a result of project <i>(if occurred)</i>	✓	✓
	Number of citations of project results <i>(if occurred)</i>	✓	✓
	SARE grant leveraged another grant <i>(if occurred)</i>	✓	✓
Condition Outcomes	Economic, environmental, social benefit(s) for farmers from adopting practice, approach, technology on farm	✓	✓