

SARE: Advancing the Frontier of Sustainable Agriculture in...

Maine

Project Highlight: *Research to feed a growing organic dairy industry*

Fueled by strong consumer demand, the organic dairy industry in Maine is booming: More than 60 dairies have transitioned to organic in the last 10 years. But organic grain's high cost—sometimes three times that of conventional feed—presents a major challenge.

That is why University of Maine researchers and farmers, supported by SARE grants, are improving on-farm organic feed production, by testing innovative strategies and amassing critical production data.

In a 2006-2009 SARE project, University of Maine and University of Vermont Extension specialists helped expand organic grain production in the two states from 1,900 acres to more than 5,000 acres. They collected valuable data on planting schedules, and weed and fertility management, which

they shared with hundreds of farmers.

Three organic dairy farmers in the state have used separate SARE grants to evaluate alternative feed options, including buckwheat hay, winter spelt and sunflower, which is being used in Vermont as both a feed and a biofuel.

Achieving quality control through on-farm grain production can be as important as any cost advantage. The Maine Organic Milk Producers used a 2005 SARE grant to survey samples of feed produced on farm and bought through suppliers, and found nutritional content was more consistent with the on-farm feeds.

For more information on this research, see www.sare.org/projects, and search for project numbers FNE10-698, FNE08-643, LNE06-240, FNE06-587 and FNE05-557.

SARE in Maine

www.nesare.org/maine

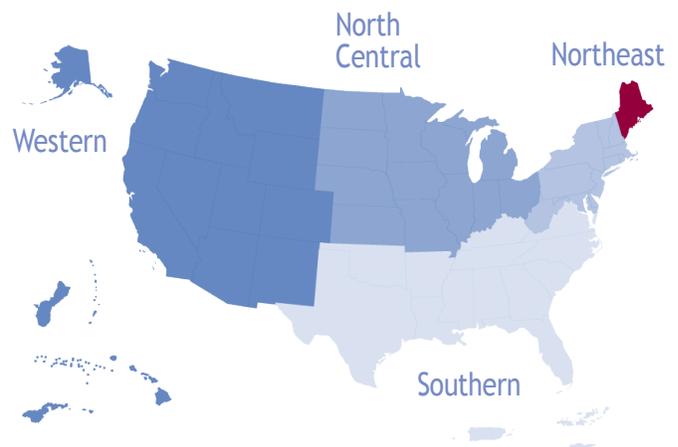
\$5 million in total funding

184 grant projects

(since 1988)

For a complete list of grant projects state by state, go to

www.sare.org/state-summaries



SARE's four regional programs and outreach office work to advance sustainable innovations to the whole of American agriculture.

What is SARE?

Since 1988, the Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education (SARE) program has been the go-to USDA grants and outreach program for farmers, ranchers, researchers and educators who want to develop innovations that improve farm profitability, protect water and land, and revitalize communities. To date, SARE has awarded \$245 million for more than 6,100 initiatives.

SARE is grassroots with far-reaching impact

Four regional councils of expert practitioners set priorities and make grants in every state and island protectorate.

SARE communicates results

SARE shares project results by requiring grantees to conduct outreach and grower engagement; and by maintaining the SARE Learning Center—a library of practical publications, grantee-produced information products and other educational materials.

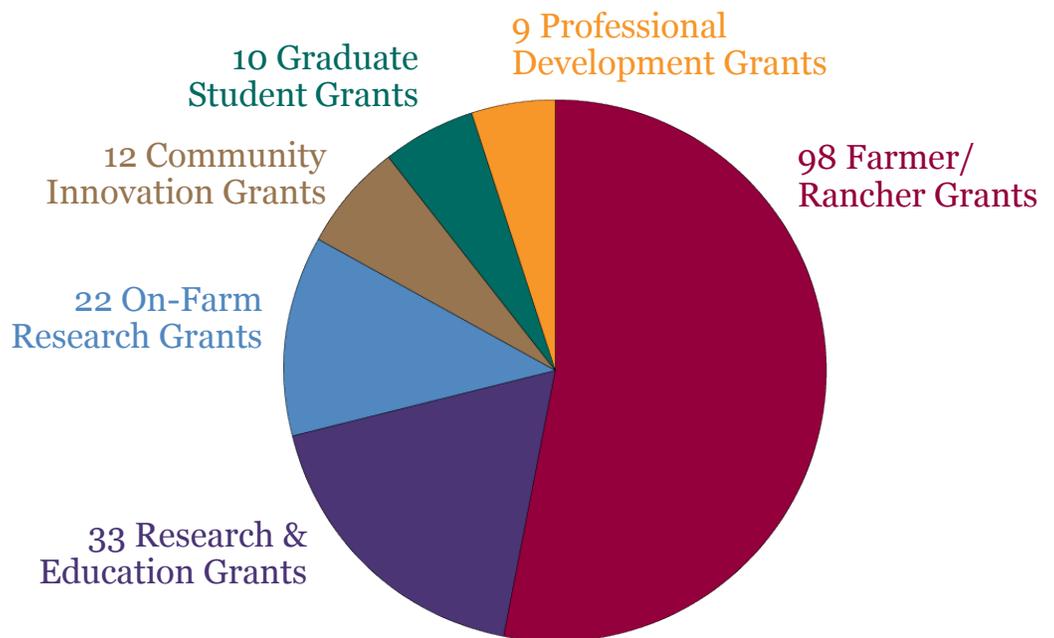


Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education

www.sare.org

SARE Grants in Maine

SARE has
awarded a
total of
184 grants
in Maine
since 1988



SARE's Impact



53 percent of producers report using a new production technique after reading a SARE publication.

79 percent of producers said they improved soil quality through their SARE project.

64 percent of producers said their SARE project helped them achieve higher sales.

Contact Your SARE State Coordinator

SARE sustainable ag coordinators run state-level educational programs for Extension and other ag professionals, and many help grant applicants and recipients with planning and outreach. Visit www.nesare.org/maine to learn more.

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For detailed information on SARE projects, go to
www.SARE.org