

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

Alabama

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 over \$287 million to more than 7,000 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

Project Highlight: *Physical Pest Exclusion with Shade Cloth*

Insect pressure is one of the major challenges of vegetable production in the Deep South, where the weather is warm and humid. Repeated applications of pesticides are expensive and time consuming for the farmer, unappealing to many consumers and potentially harmful to the environment. Yet pest damage significantly lowers the value of fresh market produce, presenting growers with a difficult problem to solve.

Seeking a good alternative to repeated pesticide applications, Fairhope, Ala., farmer Will Mastin used a SARE grant to experiment with physical pest exclusion inside an existing high tunnel. Working with an Alabama Extension entomologist, Mastin outfitted a high tunnel with a woven mesh fabric and compared tomato production inside the tunnel to the open field. In one season,

the result was impressive: In the tunnel, only 10-20 percent of tomatoes were lost to pests, whereas in the field losses were 80-100 percent.

Pest exclusion with shade cloth holds promise for Alabama growers as Mastin has identified areas to continue exploring. Air temperature is one issue, because it gets hot inside the tunnel when airflow is diminished. Another is the most effective way of including beneficial insects, since they cannot get into the tunnel on their own.

For more information on this project, see www.sare.org/projects, and search for project number FS13-275.

SARE in Alabama

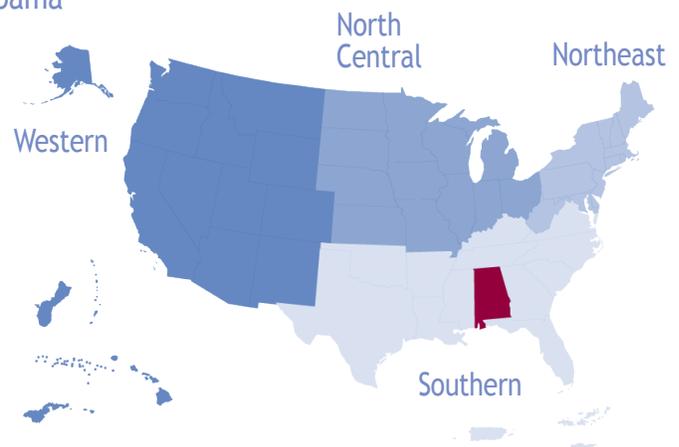
www.southernsare.org/alabama

\$3.9 million in total funding

79 grant projects

(since 1988)

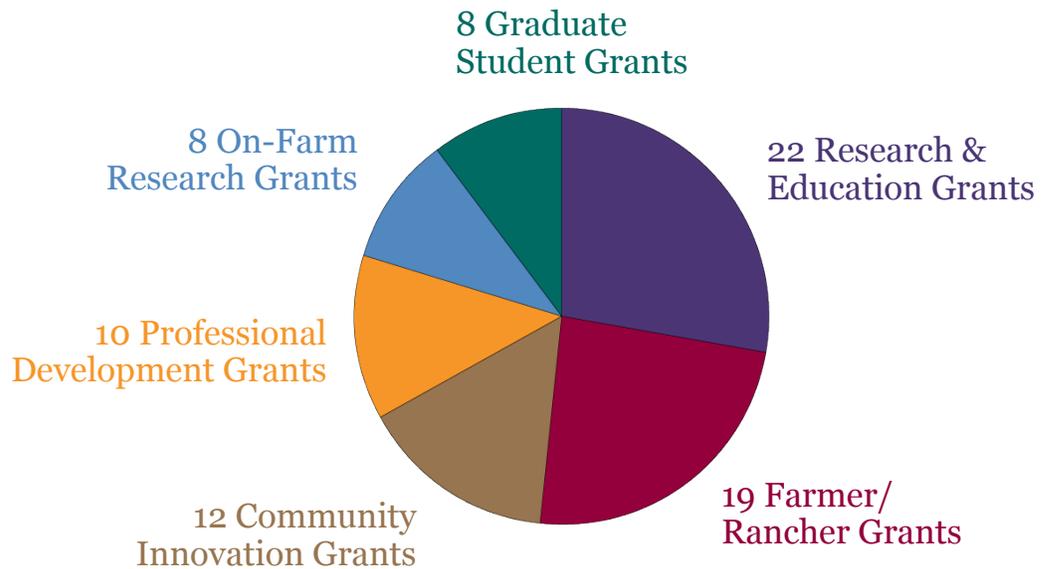
For a complete list of grant projects state by state, go to www.sare.org/state-summaries



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

SARE Grants in Alabama

SARE has
awarded a
total of
79 grants
in Alabama
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.southernsare.org/alabama to learn more.

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