

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

# Minnesota

## Project Highlight: *Spilling the Beans on Organic Pulses*

**P**ulses (grain legumes) are gluten free, low in fat, and high in fiber and protein, and they play an important role in crop diversification. But with almost 14 percent of the U.S. eating dry edible beans daily, there is a lack of locally produced pulses to supply domestic demand. “Currently, the market for organic edible beans is often supplied by imports from other countries, despite the fact that Minnesota and North Dakota are leading edible-bean-producing areas in the U.S.,” explained Craig Sheaffer, an agronomist at University of Minnesota. “This signals a market opportunity for locally grown organic legumes in the upper Midwest.”

With that in mind, Sheaffer procured a SARE grant to bring more agronomic and marketing resources to organic, edible legumes to stimulate

both the production and consumption of grain legumes. Sheaffer and his team worked with local growers to examine the performance of several edible bean varieties, compare the agroecological value of edible beans and peas grown in rotation with other crops, and evaluate the effect of winter cover crops on yield and weed control in field beans. Their findings show that there is great promise and potential profitability for Minnesotan farmers in growing and selling organic dry beans, including heirloom varieties for market differentiation. The team also looked into optimal crop rotations and developed an “Organic Dry Bean Enterprise Budget,” a tool for producers that is available online.

For more information on this project, see [www.sare.org/projects](http://www.sare.org/projects), and search for project number LNC11-336.

## SARE in Minnesota

[www.northcentralsare.org/minnesota](http://www.northcentralsare.org/minnesota)

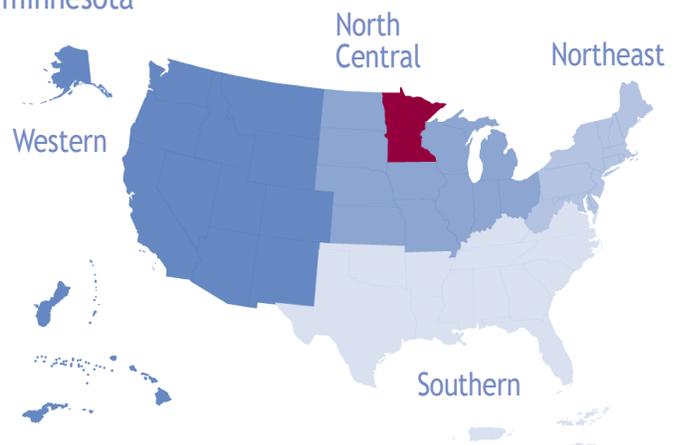
**\$12.1 million in total funding**

**300 grant projects**

(since 1988)

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

[www.sare.org/state-summaries](http://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 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.

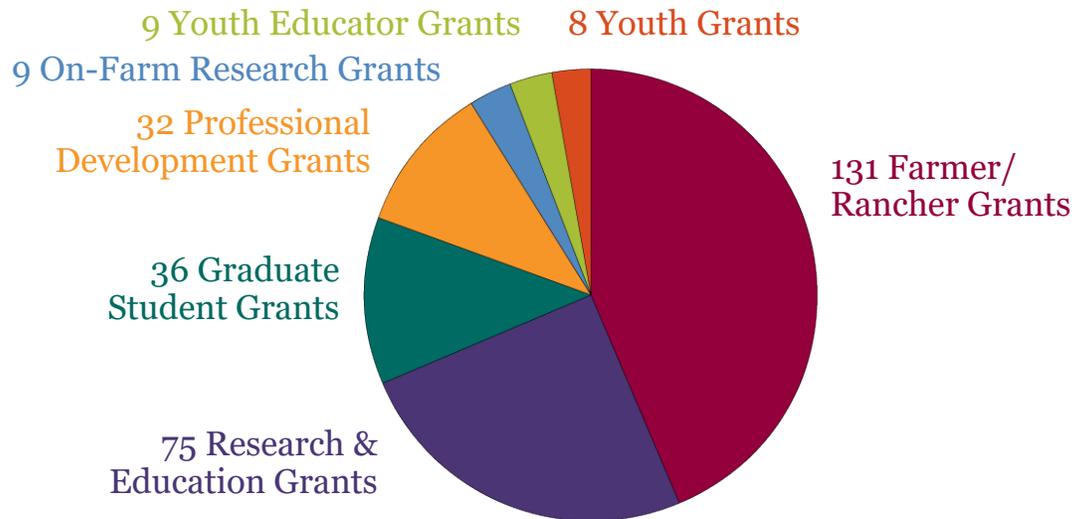


**Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education**

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

# SARE Grants in Minnesota

SARE has awarded a total of **300 grants** in Minnesota 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.northcentralsare.org/minnesota](http://www.northcentralsare.org/minnesota) to learn more.

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SARE is funded by the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA).

For detailed information on SARE projects, go to

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