

## 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 \$5.9 million to more than 195 initiatives [1].

### 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 an online library of practical publications, grantee-produced information products and other educational materials.

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

# Illinois

Project Highlight: *Bringing Fresh Foods to Illinois Schools and Institutions*

While fresh, local foods have become very popular in grocery stores, restaurants, and farmers' markets, "institutionalized food is the forgotten part of the food revolution," says Ann Swanson, the farm director at Hendrick House. This private business offers housing, catering, and dining hall services for the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. The institutions that provide dining services for grade schools and higher education tend to favor pre-packaged, processed foods over fresh, homemade foods because they are cheaper to source and nutritional guidelines are easier to track. Also, food service employees often lack the training to prepare fresh foods. To ensure the Hendrick House Farm's long-term survival and create new opportunities for other local farmers, Swanson set out to bring the local food revolution to her company and schools in her community.

Supported by a three-year SARE Farmer/Rancher grant, Swanson launched a series of educational activities for multiple audiences based out of Hendrick House's kitchens and at its 10-acre farm, which includes a one-acre demonstration area. She created a guidebook and held workshops for food service staff on storage and preparation of fresh foods, and worked with chefs on how to plan for and procure local, seasonal produce.

Swanson also teamed up with area nonprofits and schools to bring youths to her demonstration farm so they could see where food comes from and learn how to make healthy food choices. She hosted a range of groups, including kindergarteners, middle and high schoolers, STEM classes, and a group of at-risk boys. During the project, her outreach grew to include the Illinois Master Gardeners and Parkland College, which held horticulture and culinary classes on the farm.

"This project has changed our company immensely over the last two years," says Swanson, citing positive results of new partnerships with area schools and nonprofits.

For more information on this project, see [sare.org/projects](http://sare.org/projects), and search for project number **FNC17-1101**.

## SARE in Illinois

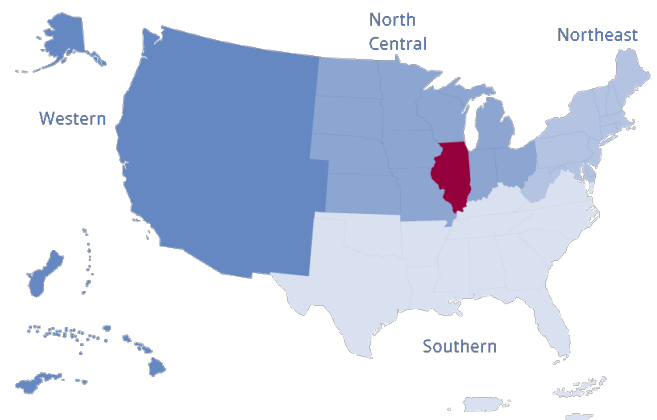
[northcentral.sare.org/state-profiles/illinois/](http://northcentral.sare.org/state-profiles/illinois/)

**\$5,931,747**  
**in total funding**

**195 grant projects**

(since 1988 [1])

For a complete list of grant projects state by state, go to [projects.sare.org/state-fact-sheets/](http://projects.sare.org/state-fact-sheets/)



[1] These totals reflect available data; complete information may not be available for all grant programs prior to 2016.

# SARE in Illinois, 2020-2025

This is a summary of recent SARE-funded activities and impacts in the state. To search all SARE projects visit [projects.sare.org](https://projects.sare.org). For a list of all projects in this state visit [projects.sare.org/state-fact-sheets/](https://projects.sare.org/state-fact-sheets/).

## Grants awarded

Total awards: **60 grants**

- 16 Farmer/Rancher
- 3 Research and Education
- 6 Professional Development Program
- 8 On Farm Research/Partnership
- 10 Graduate Student
- 14 Youth Educator
- 2 PDP State Program [2]
- 1 Community Foods Project

Total funding: **\$2,511,644**

- \$214,600 Farmer/Rancher
- \$642,948 Research and Education
- \$389,894 Professional Development Program
- \$361,077 On Farm Research/Partnership
- \$149,369 Graduate Student
- \$68,570 Youth Educator
- \$269,994 PDP State Program [2]
- \$415,192 Community Foods Project

[2] The Professional Development Program (PDP) State Program is a non-competitive award that funds the activities of the state coordinator(s). See more below.

For a complete list of awards by state, visit: [projects.sare.org/state-fact-sheets/](https://projects.sare.org/state-fact-sheets/)

## Farmer and rancher impacts

SARE grantees have reported the following impacts from their projects:

**5,598 farmers participated in a SARE-funded project**

**1,252 farmers reported a change in knowledge, awareness, skills or attitude**

**888 farmers changed a practice**



Learn about local impacts at: [northcentral.sare.org/state-programs/illinois/](https://northcentral.sare.org/state-programs/illinois/)

## 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 [northcentral.sare.org/state-profiles/illinois/](https://northcentral.sare.org/state-profiles/illinois/) to learn more.

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