SARE
Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education

www.sare.org

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 $12.0 million to more than 283 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...

Iowa

Project Highlight: *Iowa Farmer Promotes Cover Crops Adoption*

Bob Recker, of Cedar Valley Innovation LLC in Iowa, received a $28,870 SARE Farmer Rancher grant to encourage local farmers to use cover crops and improve soil health. Building on his past work with wide-row corn and cover crops, Recker's project focused on real-world, on-farm trials on grower-owned plots. By comparing traditional farming practices with new techniques, he has been demonstrating how these practices can improve water runoff, soil health, and crop yields.

Recker partnered with local farmers Michael Cook, Graham Thompson, and Loran Steinlage to implement wide-row corn plots with aggressive multi-species cover crops. His previous research had already shown a significant reduction in water runoff—by 56%—with cleaner runoff water when using 90-inch twin-row corn with cover crops. This new project expanded on those findings, testing various cover crop treatments in real-world grower fields. Using small equipment for quick, efficient seeding, Recker's research demonstrated that cover crops not only reduced soil erosion but also enhanced nutrient retention and increased soil organic matter, resulting in healthier, more productive soil.

Beyond just research, Recker engaged the farming community through extensive outreach, including consultations, on-farm demonstrations, tours, webinars, and field day workshops. His efforts directly led to 10 farmers adopting new, more sustainable practices and four new collaborations between growers. Farmers who participated in the project noticed tangible benefits, such as improved soil structure, making fields easier to work in future seasons. One grower who began using cover crops for the first time even reported improved crop yields, especially during drought conditions, showing how these practices can help farmers thrive in challenging environments.

For more information on this project, see sare.org/projects and search for project number FNC22-1348.

SARE in Iowa

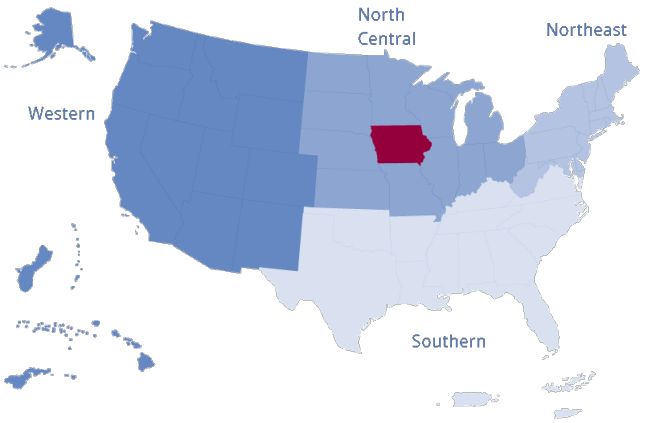
northcentral.sare.org/state-profiles/iowa/

$12,001,112 in total funding

283 grant projects

(since 1988 [1])

For a complete list of Iowa grant projects, go to 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 Iowa, 2021–2026

This is a summary of recent SARE-funded activities and impacts in the state. To search all SARE projects visit projects.sare.org. For a list of all projects in Iowa visit projects.sare.org/state-fact-sheets/.

Grants awarded

Total awards: **60 grants**

14	Farmer/Rancher
7	Research and Education
2	Professional Development Program
20	On Farm Research/Partnership
8	Graduate Student
3	PDP State Program [2]
6	Youth Educator

Total funding: **$3,586,831**

$241,591	Farmer/Rancher
$1,677,385	Research and Education
$209,794	Professional Development Program
$876,555	On Farm Research/Partnership
$128,158	Graduate Student
$420,000	PDP State Program [2]
$33,348	Youth Educator

[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 Iowa awards, visit:
projects.sare.org/state-fact-sheets/

Farmer and rancher impacts

SARE grantees have reported the following impacts from their projects:

13,139 farmers participated in a SARE-funded project

645 farmers changed a practice



Learn about local impacts at:
northcentral.sare.org/state-programs/iowa/

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/iowa/ to learn more.

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