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 $12.9 million to more than 362 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...

Michigan

Project Highlight: *Innovating No-Till Planting for Small Farms*

Phillip Swartz, along with Chanterelle and Sureau Vogtmann in Michigan, has been working to develop an affordable no-till planting system for small farms. With support from a $17,965 NCR-SARE Farmer Rancher grant, they have been designing a system compatible with the BCS two-wheeled tractor to help small-scale vegetable growers adopt sustainable practices without needing expensive, large-scale equipment.

While large farms benefit from advanced machinery and smaller garden plots rely on hand tools, small farms often face challenges due to limited equipment. Their solution aims to make no-till planting more accessible and efficient for small growers, particularly for crops like tomatoes and winter squash. The team's project focused on creating a roller-crimper and no-till planting system for small farms that integrates cover cropping.

Field trials showed that tomatoes yielded better with conventional tillage but benefited from the no-till system's ability to reduce disease pressure. Winter squash thrived with the no-till system, thanks to effective weed suppression and improved fruit quality. Soil health also improved, with organic matter increasing from 2.3% to 3.2%. The team plans to share their findings through how-to guides and fabrication plans, making their no-till system a practical option for small-scale vegetable growers.

"We believe that if a roller crimper and no-till planting system for the BCS two-wheeled tractor were readily available to small-scale vegetable growers, they would utilize those tools and there would be an increase in adoption of cover cropping and no-till practices on vegetable farms," said Swartz.

For more information on this project, see sare.org/projects and search for project number FNC23-1397.

SARE in Michigan

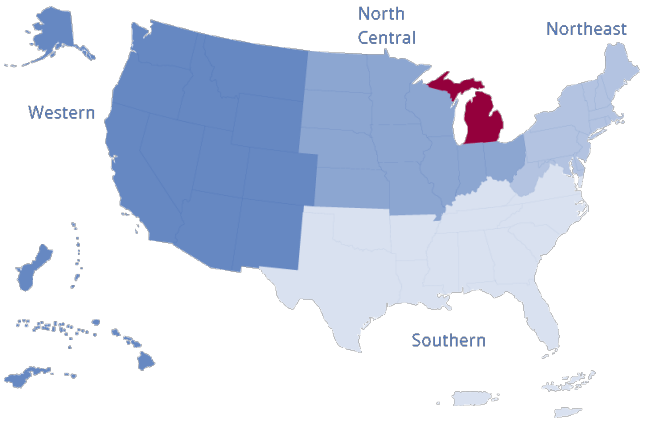
northcentral.sare.org/state-profiles/michigan/

$12,917,456 in total funding

362 grant projects

(since 1988 [1])

For a complete list of Michigan 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 Michigan, 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 Michigan visit projects.sare.org/state-fact-sheets/.

Grants awarded

Total awards: **85 grants**

24	Farmer/Rancher
11	Research and Education
6	Professional Development Program
12	On Farm Research/Partnership
16	Graduate Student
3	PDP State Program [2]
13	Youth Educator

Total funding: **$4,827,850**

$365,828	Farmer/Rancher
$2,449,014	Research and Education
$688,448	Professional Development Program
$568,596	On Farm Research/Partnership
$260,956	Graduate Student
$419,940	PDP State Program [2]
$75,068	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 Michigan awards, visit:
projects.sare.org/state-fact-sheets/

Farmer and rancher impacts

SARE grantees have reported the following impacts from their projects:

13,558 farmers participated in a SARE-funded project

214 farmers changed a practice



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

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/michigan/ to learn more.

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SARE Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education

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