

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 \$8.8 million to more than 326 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...

Missouri

Project Highlight: *Urban Farmers Adopt More Efficient Soil Management Practices*

When it comes to keeping their soils healthy and productive, most farmers willingly put in the work. For urban growers like Adam and Melissa Millsap, who operate Urban Roots Farm, an intensive production system on less than one acre near downtown Springfield, Missouri, soil management can come with unique challenges. Managing nutrients while maximizing crop output was time-consuming and led to soil degradation, as they had to remove crop residue and rely on tillage, which caused weed issues and poor soil structure.

Interested in ways they could maintain sustainability while improving their efficiency, the Millsaps received a SARE grant to try a completely new approach. They had read about it in a book, but nobody in their area was testing it. After harvest, the first step is to pulverize crop residue with a flail mower and leave it on the bed. Then, cover the bed with an opaque plastic sheet for one to three weeks, which creates a warm, dark and moist environment. During this time, the residue decomposition speeds up, and weed seeds germinate, then die due to a lack of light. Lastly, remove the sheet and plant the next crop.

Over two years, they compared this method with their traditional practices and used reduced tillage for planting, resulting in less soil disturbance. The new approach proved so effective that they adopted it across their farm, aside from a control plot, before completing the trial.

For more information on this project, see sare.org/projects, and search for project number [FNC15-1006](#).

SARE in Missouri

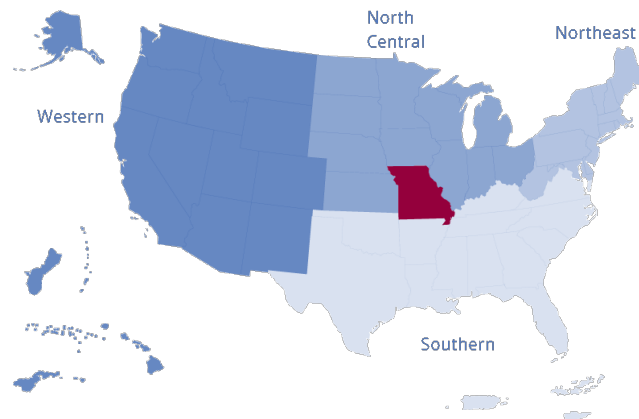
northcentral.sare.org/state-profiles/missouri/

\$8,818,599
in total funding

326 grant projects

(since 1988 [1])

For a complete list of grant projects state by state, 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 Missouri, 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. For a list of all projects in this state visit projects.sare.org/state-fact-sheets/.

Grants awarded

Total awards: **67 grants**

- 37 Farmer/Rancher
- 6 Research and Education
- 4 Professional Development Program
- 4 On Farm Research/Partnership
- 5 Graduate Student
- 6 Youth Educator
- 4 PDP State Program [2]
- 1 Community Foods Project

Total funding: **\$3,709,451**

- \$573,198 Farmer/Rancher
- \$1,492,327 Research and Education
- \$388,024 Professional Development Program
- \$186,252 On Farm Research/Partnership
- \$79,596 Graduate Student
- \$29,157 Youth Educator
- \$569,989 PDP State Program [2]
- \$390,908 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/

Farmer and rancher impacts

SARE grantees have reported the following impacts from their projects:

7,216 farmers participated in a SARE-funded project

668 farmers reported a change in knowledge, awareness, skills or attitude

287 farmers changed a practice



Photo credit: Heather Friedrich, University of Arkansas

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

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/missouri/ to learn more.

Dan Downing
University of Missouri Extension
(573) 882-0085
downingd@missouri.edu

Touria Eaton
Lincoln University of Missouri
(413) 687-1044
eatont@lincolnu.edu



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