



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 \$9.0 million to more than 210 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...

# Nebraska

Project Highlight: *Replacing Summer Fallow with Grain-type Field Peas in Semiarid Cropping Systems*

As farmers in western Nebraska face higher cash rents and property taxes, many want a more profitable, sustainable alternative to fallow for crop rotation. Strahinja Stepanovic, a University of Nebraska Lincoln Extension educator, received a SARE grant to find suitable crops for the mix.

Some farmers in the High Plains have begun to use spring-planted pulse crops as an alternative to summer fallow. Pulse crops are legumes harvested for their beans and include chickpeas, lentils, and field peas. Replacing fallow with a pulse crop can help farmers cope with the weather- and market-related fluctuations by improving soil health and diversifying the crop mix. However, while many farmers in Nebraska are interested in pulse crops, they have been reluctant to adopt them due to a lack of local markets and research-based information on growing pulses in local conditions.

With support from SARE, University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) Extension educator Strahinja Stepanovic organized a team of researchers and farmers to develop agronomic best practices for growing field peas and spur farmer adoption. Stepanovic notes that before 2013, farmers raised only 10,000–20,000 acres of field peas in the Nebraska Panhandle. Between 2014 and 2018, as farmers became familiar with peas through research and outreach efforts by Stepanovic and others, acreage grew to 70,000 and spread into central and eastern Nebraska. Production is slated to continue to expand.

Depending on the year, farmers may report gains of \$50 per acre. That is a significant improvement compared to \$40–\$90 per-acre expenses associated with spraying herbicides to control weeds in fallow. There are three pea processors in Nebraska and about eight seed companies, so getting good quality seed and marketing is much easier now.

For more information on this project, see [sare.org/projects](http://sare.org/projects), and search for project number **ONC16-021**.

## SARE in Nebraska

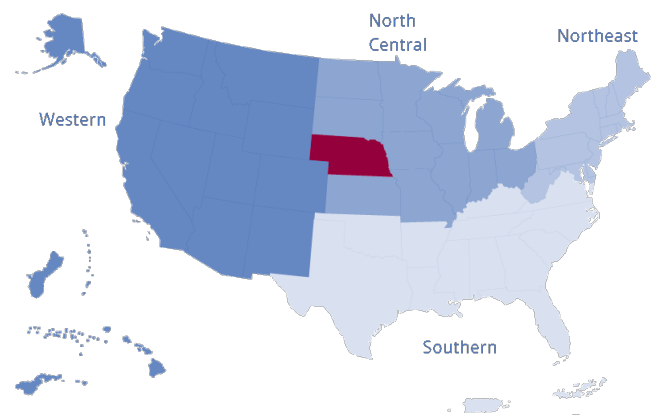
[northcentral.sare.org/state-profiles/nebraska/](http://northcentral.sare.org/state-profiles/nebraska/)

**\$8,960,806**  
**in total funding**

**210 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 Nebraska, 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: **35 grants**

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

Total funding: **\$2,398,004**

\$153,075	Farmer/Rancher
\$1,313,128	Research and Education
\$142,000	Professional Development Program
\$251,956	On Farm Research/Partnership
\$121,972	Graduate Student
\$410,000	PDP State Program [2]
\$5,873	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 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:

**5,922 farmers participated in a SARE-funded project**

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

**229 farmers changed a practice**



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

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

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