

## 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 \$406 million to more than 8,803 initiatives.

### 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.



[www.sare.org](http://www.sare.org)

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

**Project Highlight:** *Appropriate Technology and Cooperative Marketing to Increase Root Crop Production on Alaska's Kenai Peninsula*

The Kenai Peninsula is the fastest-growing agricultural region in Alaska, with the number of farms increasing at nearly three times the rate of the rest of the state. But most of those farms are small – less than five acres – and selling direct to consumers at farmers markets or to local restaurants.

The Kenai Soil and Water Conservation District commissioned a study, completed in early 2017, that found for growers there to expand their distribution, they need to increase their production and look at coordinating marketing and distribution. The study also looked at potential cash crops. Potatoes were one of the crops identified.

The problem for small growers, however, isn't how well potatoes grow. It's how much work they are to harvest when you're digging them up by hand with a pitchfork.

So, as a first step to expanding production and exploring cooperative marketing and distribution on the Kenai, the conservation district tested – and now rents out – a single-row potato digger and tub washer at a very reasonable rate.

It's already paying off for the Alaskan farmers, where labor is always in short supply. One grower reduced his harvest and processing time from seven days to less than two. There is a four- to six-week window for harvest that allow the region's growers to share the single machine.

For more information on this project, see [sare.org/projects](http://sare.org/projects), and search for project number [OW18-029](#).

## SARE in Alaska

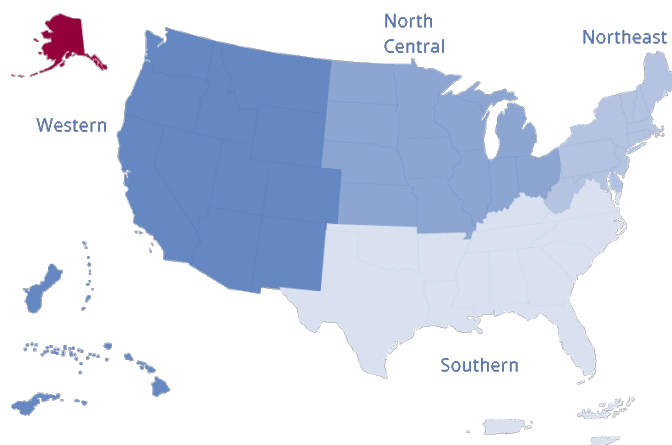
[western.sare.org/state-profiles/alaska/](http://western.sare.org/state-profiles/alaska/)

**\$262,043**  
**in total funding**

**6 grant project**

(since 1988)

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



# SARE in Alaska

## Grants awarded 2019-2024

Total awards: **6 grants**

- 4 Farmer/Rancher
- 1 Research and Education
- 1 Professional Development Program

Total funding: **\$262,043**

\$87,168 Farmer/Rancher  
\$75,000 Research and Education  
\$99,875 Professional Development Program

Find a complete list of projects on page 3.

## Farmer and rancher impacts 2019-2024

SARE grantees have reported the following impacts from their projects:

**1,068 farmers participated in a SARE-funded project**

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

**16 farmers changed a practice**



Learn about local impacts at:  
[western.sare.org/sare-in-your-state/alaska/](https://western.sare.org/sare-in-your-state/alaska/)

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

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

This report includes summaries of competitive grant programs only. Some competitive grant programs that are no longer offered may be included or excluded from the totals in this report depending on the grant program and SARE region.

For detailed information on SARE projects, go to  
**[www.SARE.org](https://www.SARE.org)**



# AGRICULTURE PROJECTS FUNDED IN ALASKA

by USDA's  
Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Program

Alaska has been awarded \$1,090,833 grants to support 33 projects, including but not limited to, 4 research and/or education projects, 3 professional development projects and 18 producer-led projects. Alaska has also received additional SARE support through multi-state projects.

## RESEARCH AND EDUCATION GRANTS

Project #	Project Title	SARE Support	Project Leaders
SW24-002	Increasing forestry awareness while introducing biochar production and application methods to Alaska	\$75,000	DeShana York University of Alaska Fairbanks
SW10-901	Building Alaska Garden Soils from the Ground Up: Local Soils Research and Demonstration Projects	\$48,497	Dr.Stephen Sparrow University of Alaska Fairbanks
SW06-111	Fruit and Berry Tree Crop Trial Program for Native Alaskan Rural Communities in Interior Alaska	\$193,324	Kendra Calhoun Cooperative Extension Service, University of Alaska Fairbanks Robert Wheeler Alaska Cooperative Extension Service Dr.Meriam Karlsson University of Alaska
SW97-012	No-till Forage Establishment to Improve Soil and Water Conservation and Reduce Associated Production Risks	\$99,209	Dr.Stephen Sparrow University of Alaska Fairbanks Raymond Gavlak University of Alaska Fairbanks

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM GRANTS

Project #	Project Title	SARE Support	Project Leaders
WPDP24-023	Bering Strait Ag Leaders' Summit	\$99,875	Iva Karoly-Lister Rural Alaska Community Action Program Emily Becker Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.
EW15-022	High tunnels at High Latitudes: Sustainable Crop Production for Alaska	\$32,315	Dr.Casey Matney University of Alaska Fairbanks
EW10-024	Educating Alaska Agriculture Professionals on Sustainable High Latitude Horticulture Production Practices	\$50,002	Jeff Smeenk University of Alaska Fairbanks Dr.Milan Shipka University of Alaska Fairbanks

## FARMER/RANCHER GRANTS

Project #	Project Title	SARE Support	Project Leaders
FW23-432	Viability of all-season Greenhouses for Interior Alaska Using Geodesic Domes and Vertical Hydroponics	\$25,000	Michael Harrington The Magic Gardenbus LLC
FW23-415	Determining the Productivity Benefits of Two Novel Kelp Farming Systems	\$24,868	Melissa Skye Steritz Noble Ocean Farms
FW23-410	Using Flowering Cover Crops to Attract Natural Predators of Floriculture Pests	\$25,000	Meridith Rooney Brown Dog Farm
FW20-361	Alaska vegetable production using a high residue cover crop system to reduce erosion and decrease weeds	\$12,300	Jeff Smeenk Alaska Specialty Crops
FW17-026	Grafted Watermelon Production in Southcentral Alaska	\$19,999	Robert Brown Robert Brown
FW13-149	Selection and Propagation of Bog Blueberry Plants for Alaskan Food Security	\$14,688	Charles Knight Knight Farms
FW12-046	Monitoring Impacts of High Tunnels on Growing Conditions and Season Extension in Southcentral Alaska	\$19,615	Rachel Lord Alaska Stems (formerly Harambee Gardens)
FW10-007	Using high tunnels to provide peony with a longer growing season to increase productivity in northern latitudes and cold soils	\$14,751	Jan Hanscom Polar Peonies, LLC
FW08-017	Weed Management and Soil Fertility on a Sub-Arctic Farm	\$14,803	Michael Emers Rosie Creek Farm
FW04-103	Kuskokwim Native Association Farm Vegetable Marketing Project	\$3,750	Diana Lehman Kuskokwim Native Association
FW02-004	Sub-Arctic Top-Bar-Hive Beekeeping and Natural Honeycomb Production Combined with the Introduction of New Winter Hardy Red Raspberry Cultivars	\$3,129	Lance Gillette
FW02-045	Propagation of Alaska Native Plants for Landscape and Restoration Use	\$7,500	Michael Emers Rosie Creek Farm

FW00-050	Propagation of Alaska Native Plants for Restoration and Landscape Use	\$5,000	Michael Emers Rosie Creek Farm
FW99-021	Development of Late Blight Forecasting Model	\$6,078	Bob Boyd
FW98-064	Propagation of Indigenous Lingonberry Species for Sustainable Development	\$5,000	Vickie Talbot
FW97-026	Growing American and Korean Ginseng in Alaska	\$5,000	David C. Smith
FW96-082	Establish More Efficient and Biological Practice for Bringing Forest Land into Agricultural Use through Sustainable Development Using Indigenous Species for Alaska	\$3,000	Vickie Talbot
FW95-111	Establish More Efficient and Biological Practice for Bringing Forest Land into Agricultural Use Through Sustainable Development Using Indigenous Species in Alaska	\$5,000	Vickie Talbot

#### GRADUATE STUDENT GRANTS

Project #	Project Title	SARE Support	Project Leaders
GW15-005	Sustainable Livestock Production on the Frontier: Plant and Soil Responses to Simulated Managed Grazing in Sub-Arctic Alaska	\$24,329	Dr. Janice Rowell University of Alaska Fairbanks Laura Starr SNRES - UAF
GW15-015	Exploring the Importance of Locally Sourced Food in Remote Regions: insights from community supported agriculture in the Tanana Valley of Alaska	\$24,970	Joseph Little UAF Anastasia Thayer University of Alaska Fairbanks
GW07-013	Community Supported Gardening and Food Security in Rural Alaska	\$10,347	S. Craig Gerlach University of Alaska Fairbanks Philip Loring University of Alaska Fairbanks

#### ON FARM RESEARCH/PARTNERSHIP GRANTS

Project #	Project Title	SARE Support	Project Leaders
OW18-031	The use of modified insect traps to attract essential native pollinators into greenhouses and increase pollination success	\$49,177	Aleya Brinkman Fairbanks Soil and Water Conservation District

OW18-029	Appropriate Technology and Cooperative Marketing to Increase Root Crop Production on Alaska's Kenai Peninsula	\$21,631	Heidi Chay Kenai Soil and Water Conservation District
OW16-031	Building Leadership Capacity with Rural Alaskan Youth	\$49,355	Greg Finstad University of Alaska Fairbanks
OW15-030	Insect IPM Protocols for Fresh Cut Peonies: Protecting a New Alaskan Export Crop	\$48,872	Gino Graziano University of Alaska Fairbanks, Cooperative Extension Service
OW14-040	Interior Alaska Hay Field Renovation Project	\$49,449	Brian Atkinson Fairbanks Soil & Water Conservation District Jessica Guritz Fairbanks Soil and Water Conservation District

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**Total funding from the USDA SARE program to  
Alaska  
\$1,090,833**

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For further information on projects, contact Western SARE at (406) 994-4785 or [wsare@montana.edu](mailto:wsare@montana.edu).

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