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 $410 million to more than 8,827 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.

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, and search for project number OW18-029.

SARE in Alaska

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
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/

Photo credit: Louise Heite

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/ to learn more.

Casey Matney
University of Alaska Fairbanks
9079072623443
camatney@alaska.edu

For detailed information on SARE projects, go to www.SARE.org

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.
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

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

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

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

**ON FARM RESEARCH/PARTNERSHIP GRANTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project #</th>
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<th>Project Leaders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OW18-031</td>
<td>The use of modified insect traps to attract essential native pollinators into greenhouses and increase pollination success</td>
<td>$49,177</td>
<td>Aleya Brinkman Fairbanks Soil and Water Conservation District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Number</td>
<td>Project Title</td>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>Principal Investigator(s)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 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                                             |

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

For further information on projects, contact Western SARE at (406) 994-4785 or wsare@montana.edu.  
Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) is funded by USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA).