

## 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 \$14.5 million to more than 225 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...

# Oregon

Project Highlight: *No/Low-till Practices as a Water Conservation tool on Small-scale Vegetable Farms East of the Cascades*

Farmers in Oregon's drier areas have been impacted by drought. Many work creatively to conserve water, and for some, it's a mandate when irrigation is cut off. Katie Swanson, Sweet Union Farm which grows vegetables on seven acres in Klamath Falls in south central Oregon, explored with five other farmers how no or low-till practices can increase drought resilience on small-scale farms east of the Cascades.

Each farmer prepared one control plot and two test plots using the low-till or no-till practices of their choice. Farmers selected which annual vegetable or herb they wanted to study, but each of their plots had to contain the same crop and receive the same amount of water. Throughout the season they measured how much water was available to their crops using water-tension sensors installed at different depths in the soil.

In general, plots prepared without tilling held the most moisture. The study also suggested that no-till farming is more feasible for single-season crops rather than those that require many quick successions.

One finding was especially surprising: Water tension readings were remarkably low across the board until August. This provided a realization that crops don't need as much irrigation earlier in the season as the farmers thought.

Water sensors can also provide farmers more peace of mind late in the season when irrigation is limited or completely shut off.

Katie is hopeful this new network of small farmers can support each other as well as farmers throughout the West.

For more information on this project, see [sare.org/projects](http://sare.org/projects), and search for project number FW22-405.

## SARE in Oregon

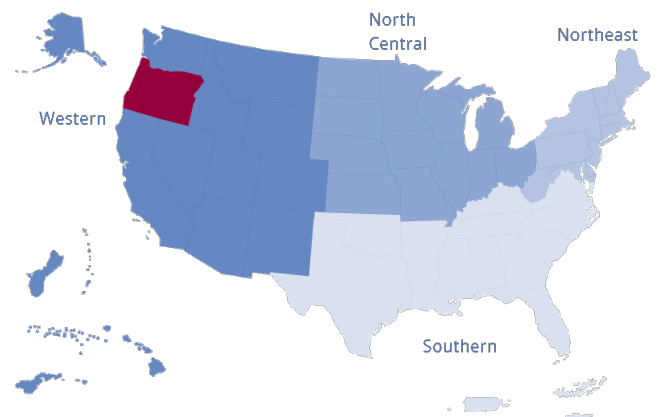
[western.sare.org/state-profiles/oregon/](http://western.sare.org/state-profiles/oregon/)

**\$14,464,435**  
in total funding

**225 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 Oregon, 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: **57 grants**

- 14 Farmer/Rancher
- 5 Research and Education
- 10 Professional Development Program
- 13 On Farm Research/Partnership
- 10 Graduate Student
- 2 Local Ed & Demo (formerly RGR)
- 3 PDP State Program [2]

Total funding: **\$4,562,689**

- \$337,281 Farmer/Rancher
- \$1,709,602 Research and Education
- \$957,598 Professional Development Program
- \$932,685 On Farm Research/Partnership
- \$292,614 Graduate Student
- \$168,387 Local Ed & Demo (formerly RGR)
- \$164,522 PDP State Program [2]

[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:

**9,814 farmers participated in a SARE-funded project**

**2,867 farmers reported a change in knowledge, awareness, skills or attitude**

**340 farmers changed a practice**



Photo credit: Lucas Nebert

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

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

Shayan Ghajar  
Oregon State University  
(541) 737-6131  
[shayan.ghajar@oregonstate.edu](mailto:shayan.ghajar@oregonstate.edu)

Maud Powell  
Oregon State University  
(541) 776-7371  
[maud.powell@oregonstate.edu](mailto:maud.powell@oregonstate.edu)



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