Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education

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 $3.0 million to more than 55 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...

Rhode Island

Project Highlight: Evaluation of Microclover Black Beauty as a Semi-Permanent Cover Crop and Living Mulch in Organic Tomato Production

Sodco, a Rhode Island turf farm, is making strides towards improving productivity on their farm by testing the effects of using Microclover Black Beauty sod as a living mulch and cover crop. Many farmers use cover crops between production crops to replenish soil nutrients and biological activity. However, this can be challenging on small-scale farms like Sodco where land is scarce, making it difficult to fit cover crops into profitable vegetable crop rotation. To address this, John Eidson, the farm manager at Sodco, led a research project to see if planting Microclover Black Beauty could increase crop productivity while improving soil health.

With the help of a SARE grant, Eidson and his team planted organic tomato crops in three Microclover Black Beauty treatment areas to see how it would impact fruit yield and soil nutrient status. The results did not show a noticeable difference in nutrient status or yield between experiment and control groups; however, the use of the treatment had multiple other benefits. The research showed that Microclover Black Beauty promotes better rainfall filtration, soil structure and organic matter accumulation. Microclover Black Beauty is also a more cost effective fertilizer option that naturally suppresses weeds between the rows, sparing farmers the labor and cost to mulch or cultivate the weeds by other means. Overall, the use of Microclover Black Beauty has potential to improve soil health and reduce input costs, making it a potentially viable option for improving profitability.

For more information on this project, see sare.org/projects and search for project number FNE19-927.

SARE in Rhode Island

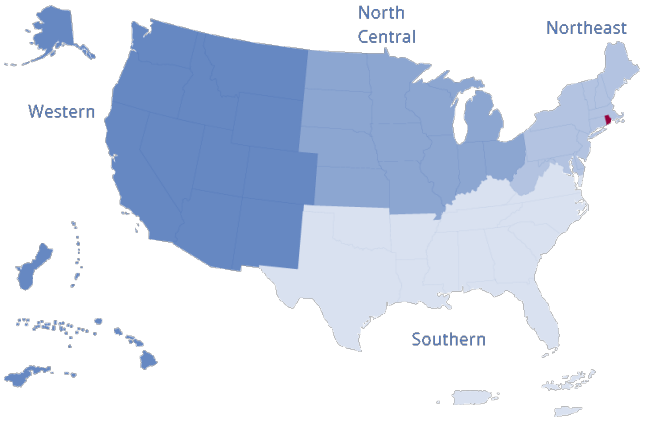
northeast.sare.org/state-profiles/rhode-island/

$3,028,674 in total funding

55 grant projects

(since 1988 [1])

For a complete list of Rhode Island grant projects, 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 Rhode Island, 2021–2026

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 Rhode Island visit projects.sare.org/state-fact-sheets/.

Grants awarded

Total awards: **14 grants**

4	Farmer/Rancher
1	Research and Education
1	Professional Development Program
2	On Farm Research/Partnership
3	Graduate Student
2	PDP State Program [2]
1	Farming Community

Total funding: **$995,175**

$78,971	Farmer/Rancher
$318,874	Research and Education
$149,565	Professional Development Program
$59,457	On Farm Research/Partnership
$44,679	Graduate Student
$183,000	PDP State Program [2]
$160,630	Farming Community

[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 Rhode Island awards, visit: projects.sare.org/state-fact-sheets/

Farmer and rancher impacts

SARE grantees have reported the following impacts from their projects:

1,532 farmers participated in a SARE-funded project

414 farmers changed a practice



Learn about local impacts at: northeast.sare.org/sare-in-your-state/rhode-island/

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 northeast.sare.org/state-profiles/rhode-island/ to learn more.

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SARE Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education

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