**2021 Northeast SARE Farmer Grant Program Proposal Worksheet**

*This Word document is provided as a courtesy to help you develop your proposal content offline, ensuring it is accurate and complies with the word limits before copying and pasting into the online grant management system.* ***It is NOT intended as a substitute for the application itself*** *as you are required to provide more information in the proposal than what is provided here. Be sure to refer to the Call for Proposals—posted at* [***www.northeastsare.org/FarmerGrant***](http://www.northeastsare.org/FarmerGrant)*—for complete descriptions of proposal sections and review criteria.*

**Proposal Summary (250-word limit).** This is a standalone summary of the project. It should briefly describe the issue, the objective(s), key components of your plan of work, and outreach strategy. Since the summary is the first thing reviewers will see, take some time to make it clear and compelling. You may want to compose the summary after you have written the rest of your proposal.

**What resources, experience, skills and capacity do you bring to the project? (300-word limit).**

Describe the farm operations and your farming experience to give reviewers a picture of your capabilities and insight into the problem to be addressed. Specifically, let reviewers know how long you’ve been involved in agriculture and the background of the farm, providing a description of the production enterprises (e.g., acres, livestock numbers, etc.) and types of market outlets (wholesale, retail, farm stand, CSA), whether you farm full- or part-time, gross sales, and other key information about the enterprise. If farm resources will be dedicated to this project, describe them here. For example, you may already have access to an essential piece of specialized equipment or may have received other funding to cover related expenses not funded by SARE.

**Introduction:**

**Problem and Solution (750-word limit).** What is the problem or opportunity, why is it important, and what is your proposed solution? Briefly state the problem, issue or opportunity and explain why it matters. Convey how addressing this problem will improve the sustainability of farmers like yourself and extent of the impact (for example, the Rhode Island Seafood Marketing Collaborative or maple sugar producers in the Northeast; adding known numbers of farms in these groups is helpful). If possible, state how and when farmers, farm groups, or others in the field have expressed interest or need for this type of investigation. Then, state your proposed solution or approach, and how it addresses the above need. Be clear about the expected impact of the solution as relates to at least one of the following aspects of sustainable agriculture: reduction of environmental and/or health risks in agriculture; improved productivity, reduction of costs and/or increase of net farm income; conservation of soil, improvement of water quality, and protection of natural resources; enhancement of employment in farm communities; and improvement of quality of life for farmers, their employees, and the farming community. If you reference a study or article, add the full citation in the Citation List.

**What efforts have been made by others to solve the problem or take advantage of this opportunity? (750-word limit).** Describe the current knowledge and practice on this topic to show your familiarity with what has been tried and how your project builds on existing efforts. If the practice is known but has not been applied in your community, explain why the project is relevant or will be impactful in our region.

**Citation List (750-word limit).** Cite up to four studies or articles to demonstrate your knowledge of related previous work and/or data. While you can include SARE studies, it is best not to rely solely on the SARE reporting database. Provide a list of citations referenced here and elsewhere in your proposal.

**Plan of Work:**

**What is/are your project’s objective(s)? (200-word limit).** State your project’s objective(s) starting with the phrase, “This project seeks to…” or “The question we will answer is ...” List specific objectives by number and include what you will compare, study or accomplish. Include what information you hope to uncover or demonstrate, how it will be useful to other farmers, and what improvement you foresee happening if the project is successful.

**Materials and Methods (1,200-word limit).** What are your project’s planned methods and measurements? For each objective, describe what you will do and how you will do it. Be very specific in describing the testing, sampling, training, treatments, surveying, etc. you will use. For example, if you plan to compare weed pressure between a control and a treatment, describe how you will count and identify weeds, weigh weeds, and measure weeding time, how often and at what stage of crop growth. Saying only that you will compare the amount of weed growth is not sufficient; you need to be specific as to how you will compare treatments. As another example, if you plan to compare the impact of an organized employee communication system on job satisfaction, specify the survey questions you will ask workers and how/when you will implement the survey.

Inserting URLs of websites into the methods section is ill-advised since reviewers may not have time to investigate all of them; as an alternative, refer to them and place them in your citation list. While statistical analysis is not required for this grant program, if you do plan to use a statistical model, state the design.

**Outreach (250-word limit).** What is the outreach plan for the project? Describe how other farmers and other key audiences (eg., agricultural service providers, etc.) will learn about your results.

List specific planned events, media efforts, social media channels (estimated number reached, etc.) and the scope (e.g. number of subscribers) and/or region. Outreach may take place anytime during the project but the final results and lessons learned must be publicized in some way before your project has concluded to reach farmers who could potentially benefit from the results of your project.

**Timeline (500-word limit).** Outline the project activities in a chronological timeline that state the steps you will take, including planned outreach activities. Starting with the project start date, specify in a month/year format (e.g., March 2021) when key activities and events happen. Include how long each step will take and who will do them. Keep in mind that SARE funds will not cover any work or expenses incurred prior to March 1, 2021 and that the timeline should align with your budget justification spreadsheet in terms of personnel time, testing, etc.