

## 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 \$2.2 million to more than 43 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...

# Puerto Rico

Project Highlight: *Cover Crops Improve Soil in Plantain Crops*

Cover crops bring many benefits to farming systems, from protecting the soil against erosion to suppressing weeds to improving yields and profitability through healthier soil. In Puerto Rico, a team of researchers, educators and service providers used a SARE grant to start bringing these benefits to one of the island's main crops, the plantain.

Starting In 2013, the research team conducted on-farm experiments to identify cover crop species that could be intercropped with plantains to improve soil health. They focused on jack beans, sunnhemp and sorghum, planted as cover crops both individually and as mixes. The team collected soil samples to measure soil fertility, microbial activity and other indicators of soil health, and they made some important discoveries that should help Puerto Rico farmers make informed decisions about using cover crops. Jack beans established most successfully and showed the most promise overall, whereas rodents and heavy rains impacted the sorghum, and the sunnhemp performed well but was more susceptible to weather conditions than the jack beans.

Most importantly, the cover crop trials revealed an economic benefit. To achieve yields of high-quality plantains by market standards, no nematicides were needed and fungicide applications were reduced 78 percent—representing a cost savings to the farmer.

For more information on this project, see [sare.org/projects](http://sare.org/projects), and search for project number FS13-271.

## SARE in Puerto Rico

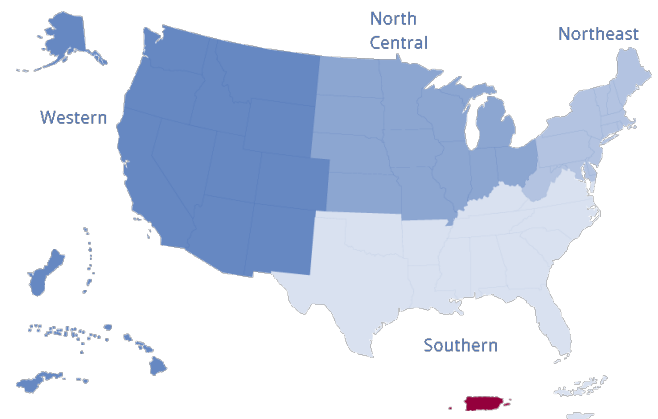
[southern.sare.org/state-profiles/puerto-rico/](http://southern.sare.org/state-profiles/puerto-rico/)

**\$2,233,671**  
in total funding

**43 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 Puerto Rico, 2019–2024

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: **23 grants**

- 3 Farmer/Rancher
- 3 Professional Development Program
- 1 On Farm Research/Partnership
- 2 Graduate Student
- 8 Education Only
- 5 PDP State Program [2]
- 1 Community Foods Project

Total funding: **\$1,261,996**

- \$45,339 Farmer/Rancher
- \$182,943 Professional Development Program
- \$12,549 On Farm Research/Partnership
- \$38,491 Graduate Student
- \$340,126 Education Only
- \$143,000 PDP State Program [2]
- \$499,548 Community Foods Project

[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:

**2,625 farmers participated in a SARE-funded project**

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

**193 farmers changed a practice**



Learn about local impacts at: [southern.sare.org/sare-in-your-state/puerto-rico/](https://southern.sare.org/sare-in-your-state/puerto-rico/)

## 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 [southern.sare.org/state-profiles/puerto-rico/](https://southern.sare.org/state-profiles/puerto-rico/) to learn more.

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