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 $359 million to more than 8,107 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, granteeproduced 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 crops 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, and search for project number FS13-271.

SARE in Puerto Rico

southern.sare.org/sare-in-your-state/puerto-rico

$1,383,563 in total funding

30 grant projects

(since 1988)

For a complete list of grant projects state by state, go to www.sare.org/state-summaries
**SARE Grants in Puerto Rico**

**Total awards:** 30 grants
- 1 Sustainable Community Innovation
- 5 Professional Development Program
- 10 Farmer/Rancher
- 1 Graduate Student
- 10 Research and Education
- 3 On Farm Research/Partnership

**Total funding:** $1,383,563
- $10,000 Sustainable Community Innovation
- $218,683 Professional Development Program
- $98,518 Farmer/Rancher
- $10,000 Graduate Student
- $1,003,889 Research and Education
- $42,473 On Farm Research/Partnership

Find a complete list of projects on page 3.

**SARE's Impact**

53 percent of producers report using a new production technique after reading a SARE publication.

79 percent of producers said they improved soil quality through their SARE project.

64 percent of producers said their SARE project helped them achieve higher sales.

Learn about local impacts at: 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-pages/puerto-rico to learn more.

Nicolas Cartagena
University of Puerto Rico
(787) 752-0065
nicolas.cartagena@upr.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.
Puerto Rico has been awarded $1,383,563 grants to support 30 projects, including but not limited to, 10 research and/or education projects, 5 professional development projects and 10 producer-led projects. Puerto Rico 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>
</table>
| LS22-385   | An Agro-Ecological Incubator and Educational Programs for Beginner Farmers in Western Puerto Rico                                                                                                              | $50,000      | Rebekah Sanchez Cruz  
Plentitud PR  
Dr.Bryan Brunner  
Agricultural Experiment Station  
Paula Paoli Garrido  
Plentitud PR                                                                                      |
| LS21-350   | Puerto Rico Goat and Sheep Educational Program Initiative (PR-GOSHEPI)                                                                                                                                       | $48,036      | Abner Rodriguez  
University of Puerto Rico  
Dr.John Fernandez  
University of Puerto Rico                                                                                             |
| LS20-329   | Agroecosystem Sustainable Guides                                                                                                                                                                                 | $41,040      | Silmarie Crespo  
ECO-Services  
Gabriela Medina  
Finca La Jiba                                                                                                           |
| LS20-330   | Agro-Ecological Education for New Farmers in the Central Western Region of Puerto Rico                                                                                                                     | $49,992      | Paula Paoli Garrido  
Plentitud PR  
Bryan Brunner Montes  
University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez  
Owen Ingly  
Plentitud PR  
Samantha Lopez  
Plentitud PR  
Gina Malley Campos  
Plentitud PR  
Rebekah Sanchez Cruz  
Plentitud PR                                                                 |
| LS14-263   | Multisectoral and Transdisciplinary Coalition to Spearhead the Development of a Cohesive Network of Local Limited-resources Urban Community Farmers for Sustainable Agriculture Using the Capital City of Puerto Rico as Case Study | $250,000     | Dr.Maria Calixta Ortiz  
Universidad Ana G. Méndez                                                                                             |
| LS10-231   | Weed management alternatives for organic coffee agroforestry systems of Puerto Rico                                                                                                                            | $150,000     | Mariangie Ramos  
University of Puerto Rico at Utuado                                                                                   |
| LS08-212   | Integrating tropical legumes with condensed tannins into ruminant grass-based diets for sustainable production                                                                                              | $100,000     | Dr.Elide Valencia  
University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez                                                                                   |
| LS04-162   | Developing legume shade trees for Sustainable coffee production in Puerto Rico                                                                                                                                 | $195,298     | Eduardo Schröder  
University of Puerto Rico                                                                                             |
| LS00-111   | Structures of Sustainability: A Regenerative Model for Community Agriculture Development                                                                                                                     | $19,678      | Vivian Carro-Figueroa  
University of Puerto Rico Agric. Experiment Sta.                                                                   |
**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM GRANTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project #</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| SPDP22-14 | Learning to Teach Farmers about Agricultural Interpretation to Foster Sustainability and Food Security | $59,999      | Camille Collazo Ortiz  
|           |                                                                                |              | Yes  
|           |                                                                                |              | Dr. Robinson Rodriguez  
|           |                                                                                |              | University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez Campus, School of Agriculture |
| ES20-152  | Soil Nutrient Management in Tropical Soils                                      | $69,353      | Dr. Daniel Bair  
|           |                                                                                |              | University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez  
|           |                                                                                |              | Dr. Miguel Muñoz  
|           |                                                                                |              | University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez  
|           |                                                                                |              | Mario Rodriguez  
|           |                                                                                |              | USDA-NRCS Caribbean Area |
|           |                                                                                |              | University of Puerto Rico at Utuado |
| ES97-035  | Integrated Strategic Plan for Sustainable Agriculture                          | $25,740      | Hipólito O’Farrill-Nieves  
|           |                                                                                |              | University of Puerto Rico Agric. Ext. Service |
| ES97-033  | Alternative Sustainable Practices for Selected Crops in Puerto Rico            | $10,000      | Miguel F. Monroig  
|           |                                                                                |              | University of Puerto Rico |

**FARMER/RANCHER GRANTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
</table>
| FS21-334  | Case Study for American Heritage Hogs in Puerto Rico                           | $14,885      | Julie North  
|           |                                                                                |              | N/A |
| FS20-324  | Building Soil and Plant Health with Compost and Compost Teas                   | $12,443      | Gabriela Medina  
|           |                                                                                |              | Finca La Jiba |
| FS17-298  | Weed Suppression by Compost Mulch in Plantains                                 | $8,436       | Reed Hepperly  
|           |                                                                                |              | Hepperly Enterprises |
| FS13-271  | Cover Crops for Improving Recalcitrant Soil Organic Matter and Soil Biota Management in Plantain Production Systems in Puerto Rico | $10,000      | Duamed Colon-Carrion  
|           |                                                                                |              | Agro Tropical, Inc. |
| FS07-213  | Recycling Mushroom Spent Compost                                               | $8,027       | Reed Hepperly  
|           |                                                                                |              | Hepperly Enterprises |
| FS05-193  | Organic Farming in the Tropics with Legume Groundcover                         | $8,107       | Luis Miguel Rico |
| FS03-172  | Puerto Rico Shade Grown Coffee Project                                         | $9,956       | Luis Miguel Rico |
| FS99-098  | Demonstrating the Benefits of Agroforestry Practices on Family Farms           | $6,704       | Andre Sanfiorenzo |
| FS99-095  | Breaking the Herbicide Habit: Integrating Cover Crops with Herbicide Application | $9,960       | Rebecca Perez-Rossello |
### GRADUATE STUDENT GRANTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GS08-070</td>
<td>The fate of the finca: Smallholders in the Hispanic Caribbean</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>Gregory Knapp&lt;br&gt;University of Texas at Austin&lt;br&gt;Katia R. Aviles-Vazquez&lt;br&gt;The University of Texas at Austin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ON FARM RESEARCH/PARTNERSHIP GRANTS

<table>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OS20-134</td>
<td>Case study for Heritage American Guinea Hogs in Puerto Rico</td>
<td>$12,549</td>
<td>Julie North&lt;br&gt;N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OS07-033</td>
<td>Precious Indigenous Woods For Coffee Shade</td>
<td>$14,967</td>
<td>Jose Aponte&lt;br&gt;El Caribe RC&amp;D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OS05-027</td>
<td>Coffee Seedlings in Forestry Tubes</td>
<td>$14,957</td>
<td>Steven Welker&lt;br&gt;USDA NRCS - El Atlantico RC&amp;D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY INNOVATION GRANTS

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CS05-038</td>
<td>Puerto Rico PIG Project</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>Steven Welker&lt;br&gt;USDA NRCS - El Atlantico RC&amp;D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total funding from the USDA SARE program to Puerto Rico $1,383,563

For further information on projects, contact 770-412-4787 or ssare@uga.edu.

Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) is funded by USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA).