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 $310 million to more than 7,433 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, grantee-produced information products and other educational materials.

SARE
Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education

www.sare.org

SARE: Advancing the Frontier of Sustainable Agriculture in...

U.S. Virgin Islands

Project Highlight: *Cover Crops Can Thrive in the Tropics*

When you live on an island perpetually faced with high import costs and limited resources, producing food in sustainable systems that rely little on off-farm inputs is more a necessity than a choice. But even then, sustainable production for growers in the U.S. Virgin Islands comes with its own challenges, as the tropical climate fuels an endless onslaught of weeds, pests, diseases and low soil fertility.

“Anything we can do to help our farmers sustainably manage these burdens and become more successful is important to us,” said Stuart Weiss, an agroecologist with University of Virgin Islands Extension. This need has prompted Weiss to explore the use of cover crops as a means to tackle issues with soil fertility and pests. Using two SARE grants, he has led efforts to find cover crops, many of them legumes, that could thrive in tropical conditions and bring the most benefit to farmers, and to identify effective ways to manage them in no-till systems.

The researchers demonstrated the value of cover crops enough that 18 small-scale farms began using them during the course of the projects. Sunn hemp showed the most promise. Requiring no external inputs to grow, it provided excellent weed suppression and contributed more to soil fertility than other cover crop species.

For more information on these projects, see sare.org/projects, and search for project numbers OS11-062 and LS12-252.

SARE in U.S. Virgin Islands

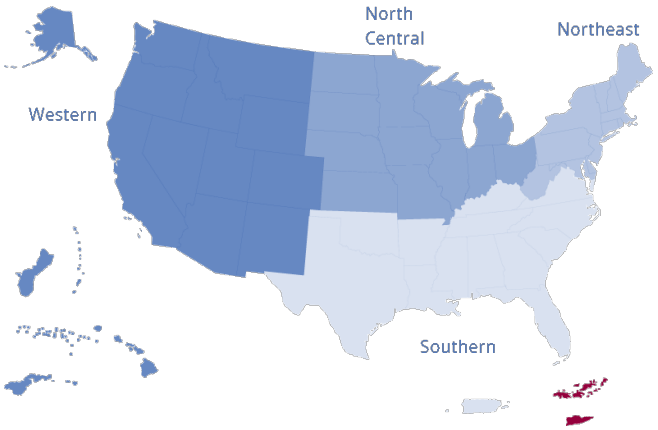
southern.sare.org/sare-in-your-state/u-s-virgin-islands

$1,016,302 in total funding

9 grant projects

(since 1988)

For a complete list of grant projects state by state, go to www.sare.org/state-summaries



SARE Grants in
U.S. Virgin Islands

Total awards: 9 grants

2 Farmer/Rancher
1 On Farm Research/Partnership
1 Professional Development Program
5 Research and Education

Total funding: $1,016,302

$21,089 Farmer/Rancher
$14,957 On Farm Research/Partnership
$87,833 Professional Development Program
$892,423 Research and Education

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/u-s-virgin-islands

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/u.s. virgin islands to learn more.

Louis Petersen
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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 offrered may be included or excluded from the totals in this report depending on the grant program and SARE region.

AGRICULTURE PROJECTS FUNDED IN U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

by USDA's
Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Program

U.S. Virgin Islands has been awarded $1,026,302 grants to support 10 projects, including but not limited to, 5 research and/or education projects, 1 professional development project and 2 producer-led projects. U.S. Virgin Islands has also received additional SARE support through multi-state projects.

RESEARCH AND EDUCATION GRANTS

Project #	Project Title	SARE Support	Project Leaders
LS12-252	Developing Sustainable Tropical Leguminous Cover Crop and Green Manure Mulch Systems for Low-External-Input crop Production in the U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and Florida	$223,000	Dr.Stuart Weiss University of the Virgin Islands Agricultural Experiment Station
LS04-163	Trade, tenure and tourism in the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico: Understanding the Policy Frameworks that will increase success for an Organics Agriculture	$280,000	Janie Hipp CSREES, USDA Eric Wailes University of Arkansas Louis Petersen University of the Virgin Islands
LS00-112	Greenwater Tank Culture of Tilapia with the Effluent Used as a Source of Water and Nutrients for Terrestrial Crops	$135,484	Donald Bailey Univ of the Virgin Islands
LS99-107	Ecological, Sustainable and Economic Impact of Legume-based Pasture Systems for Limited-Resource Small Ruminant Farmers in the Virgin Islands	$110,410	Elide Valencia University of the Virgin Islands
LS96-075	Developing Sustainable Crop Management Systems for Improving Production of Culinary Herbs in the Virgin Islands	$143,529	Manuel C. Palada University of the Virgin Islands

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM GRANTS

Project #	Project Title	SARE Support	Project Leaders
ES20-157	Advancing Professional Development in the U.S. Virgin Islands About the Cooperative Business Model: A Training and Mentorship Program	$87,833	Louis Petersen University of the Virgin Islands

FARMER/RANCHER GRANTS

Project #	Project Title	SARE Support	Project Leaders
FS20-327	Testing Vegetable Varieties in Tropical Conditions on St. Croix, USVI for Farm to School Crop Production	$12,480	Faye Petree Virgin Islands Farmers Alliance
FS19-316	Lemon Grass (Cymbopogon citratus) of the Two Main Strands East Indian Lemon Grass (Cymbopogon flexuosus) or West Indian Lemon Grass (Cymbopogon citratus): Which one yields the greatest amount of essential oil	$8,609	Benita Martin

ON FARM RESEARCH/PARTNERSHIP GRANTS

Project #	Project Title	SARE Support	Project Leaders
OS11-062	Promoting Tropical Cover Crop Mulch Systems for Minimum-Till Crop Production in the U.S. Virgin Islands	$14,957	Dr.Stuart Weiss University of the Virgin Islands Agricultural Experiment Station

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY INNOVATION GRANTS

Project #	Project Title	SARE Support	Project Leaders
CS07-053	Youth and Agriculture: a Bridge to the Future (YABF) for From Tree to Table (FTT)	$10,000	Latoya Mitchell Virgin Islands Farmers Cooperative, Inc. Yvette Brown Virgin Islands Farmers' Cooperative, Inc.

Total funding from the USDA SARE program to U.S. Virgin Islands $1,026,302

For further information on projects, contact Candace Pollock, Southern SARE public relations coordinator, at (770) 412-4786 or cpollock@uga.edu.
Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) is funded by USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA).