

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 \$406 million to more than 8,802 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.



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

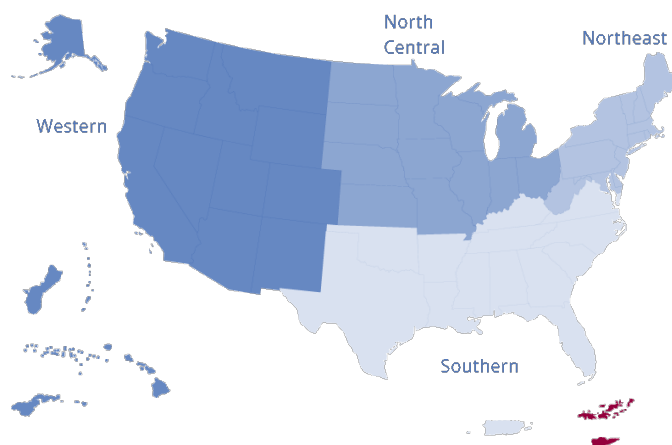
southern.sare.org/state-profiles/u-s-virgin-islands/

\$278,077
in total funding

8 grant project

(since 1988)

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



SARE in U.S. Virgin Islands

Grants awarded 2019-2024

Total awards: **8 grants**

- 3 Farmer/Rancher
- 1 Professional Development Program
- 2 On Farm Research/Partnership
- 2 Education Only

Total funding: **\$278,077**

\$41,019	Farmer/Rancher
\$87,833	Professional Development Program
\$49,226	On Farm Research/Partnership
\$99,999	Education Only

Find a complete list of projects on page 3.

Farmer and rancher impacts 2019-2024

SARE grantees have reported the following impacts from their projects:

171 farmers participated in a SARE-funded project

35 farmers reported a change in knowledge, awareness, skills or attitude

19 farmers changed a practice



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-profiles/u-s-virgin-islands/ to learn more.

Louis Petersen
University of the Virgin Islands
(340) 693-1083
lpeters@uvi.edu



SARE is funded by the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA).

For detailed information on SARE projects, go to
www.SARE.org

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.



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 \$1,195,457 grants to support 15 projects, including but not limited to, 5 research and/or education projects, 1 professional development project and 3 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 Tarleton State University
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, Jr. 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, Jr. University of the Virgin Islands

FARMER/RANCHER GRANTS

Project #	Project Title	SARE Support	Project Leaders
FS23-354	Impact of Landscape Fabric on Selected Cultivars Suitability to a Subtropical Climate for the USVI Farm to School Program	\$19,930	Dr.Nate Olive Virgin Islands Farmer Alliance
FS20-327	Testing Vegetable Varieties in Tropical Conditions on St. Croix, USVI for Farm to School Crop Production	\$12,480	Dr.Nate Olive Virgin Islands Farmer 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 Meder Mogzit family farm and educational center

ON FARM RESEARCH/PARTNERSHIP GRANTS

Project #	Project Title	SARE Support	Project Leaders
OS24-175	Assessing arsenic and soil salinization risk of Sargassum used in crop growth, agricultural compost, and upland waste piles in the US Virgin Islands	\$29,990	David Hensley University of the Virgin Islands
OS22-151	Potential Grasses as Alternative Forage Crops for the Virgin Islands	\$19,236	Dr.Worku Burayu University of the Virgin Islands
OS11-062	Promoting Tropical Cover Crop Mulch Systems for Minimum-Till Crop Production in the U.S. Virgin Islands	\$14,957	Dr.Stuart Weiss Tarleton State University

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.

EDUCATION ONLY GRANTS

Project #	Project Title	SARE Support	Project Leaders
EDS24-069	The use of Vetiver Grass to improve sustainable agriculture in the Virgin Islands	\$49,999	Dr.Laura Martin Paradise Farm Monica Prosper Prosper Foundation

EDS22-33 Launching Virtual and Live
Youth Sustainable Educational
Agriculture Program

\$50,000

Sandra Cannon
The Center for Educational Growth
Sansara Cannon
The Center for Educational Growth
Shanika DeWindt
CaneCuttaz, Inc.
Vanessa Forbes
University of the Virgin Islands
Lisa Petersen
CFEG and UVI

**Total funding from the USDA SARE program to
U.S. Virgin Islands
\$1,195,457**



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).