

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 \$7.6 million to more than 159 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...

Virginia

Project Highlight: *Fighting Downy Mildew with Better Crop Selection*

Seed crop growers of cucumbers, squash, melons, gourds and watermelons have faced severe losses in Virginia from downy mildew. To stem these losses and to reduce the economic impact, seed grower Edmund Frost used a SARE grant to find varieties of melons, cucumbers and winter squash able to withstand downy mildew. By finding such varieties, he could share results with other seed growers and gather information needed to make progress with seed production and breeding of the resistant varieties.

Frost conducted trials that identified 15 cucumber varieties with the ability to produce twice as much as standard varieties labeled “resistant,” 20 winter squash and tropical pumpkin varieties with better downy mildew resistance than other varieties, and several varieties that produce good-quality melons in areas with high downy mildew pressure.

While the identified pumpkin varieties showed downy mildew resistance, there were quality problems that Frost looked at in a second SARE-funded project. Frost made significant progress with three pumpkin varieties and shared the results with growers at two conferences. One of the seeds bred during the project, F6 Seminole-Waltham seed, is now being sold to growers.

For more information on these projects, see sare.org/projects, and search for project numbers [FS13-273](#) and [FS16-291](#).

SARE in Virginia

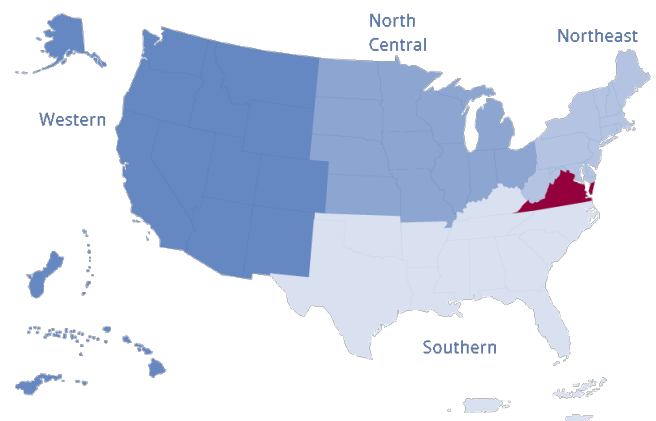
southern.sare.org/state-profiles/virginia/

\$7,647,423
in total funding

159 grant projects

(since 1988 [1])

For a complete list of grant projects state by state, go to 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 Virginia, 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. For a list of all projects in this state visit projects.sare.org/state-fact-sheets/.

Grants awarded

Total awards: **44 grants**

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

Total funding: **\$2,482,048**

- \$149,767 Farmer/Rancher
- \$950,013 Research and Education
- \$224,982 Professional Development Program
- \$114,376 On Farm Research/Partnership
- \$161,111 Graduate Student
- \$149,885 Education Only
- \$231,999 PDP State Program [2]
- \$499,915 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/

Farmer and rancher impacts

SARE grantees have reported the following impacts from their projects:

7,257 farmers participated in a SARE-funded project

1,324 farmers reported a change in knowledge, awareness, skills or attitude

232 farmers changed a practice



Learn about local impacts at: southern.sare.org/sare-in-your-state/virginia/

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/virginia/ to learn more.

Eric Bendfeldt
Virginia Tech
(540) 232-6006
ebendfel@vt.edu

Peter Coffey
Virginia State University
(804) 524-5480
plcoffey@vsu.edu

Marian Dalke
Virginia Tech
(540) 232-6010

Marian Dalke
Virginia Cooperative
Extension
(540) 232-6010
mdalke@vt.edu

Sanjun Gu
Virginia State University
(804) 524-5480
sgu@vsu.edu



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