

## 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 \$245 million for more than 6,100 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 the SARE Learning Center—a library of practical publications, grantee-produced information products and other educational materials.



**Sustainable Agriculture  
Research & Education**

[www.sare.org](http://www.sare.org)

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

# Maryland

### Project Highlight: *Devising a cleaner, cheaper way to raise oysters*

A Chesapeake Bay company used a 2010 SARE grant to develop a new style of oyster float that solves all the problems they had with conventional floats: It generates less water fouling and is much less labor intensive, leading to a cleaner, more profitable system.

David Chamberlain, of Great Eastern Shellfish Company in Berlin, calculated that his labor cost was nearly cut in half by using the new style of float, largely because it did not produce as much fouling, which is time consuming to clean.

The new float, called a Big Flip Float (BFF), is designed to be flipped at regular intervals, whereas conventional floats are not. The regular flipping prevents “fouling,” or marine biomass from collecting on the underside of oyster cages and bags. Fouling is not only hard

to remove and a water quality hazard, it also inhibits water flow through the oysters, leading to diminished yields.

In his SARE trial, Chamberlain found that BFF-raised oysters were slightly shorter but much fatter than ones he raised conventionally. Plus, they had less muck on their shells, meaning it was easier to ready them for market.

Although it costs more to construct a BFF than a standard float, Chamberlain, whose company sells up to 250,000 oysters every one to two years, estimated that the savings in labor makes the BFF cost effective starting in its second year of use. At the end of the SARE project, he was planning to switch over entirely to the BFF model.

For more information on this project, see [www.sare.org/projects](http://www.sare.org/projects), and search for project number FNE10-682.

## SARE in Maryland

[www.nesare.org/maryland](http://www.nesare.org/maryland)

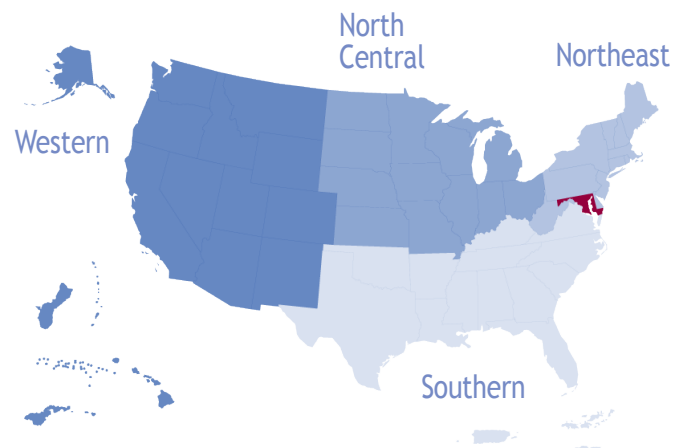
**\$4.1 million in total funding**

**107 grant projects**

(since 1988)

For a complete list of grant projects state by state, go to

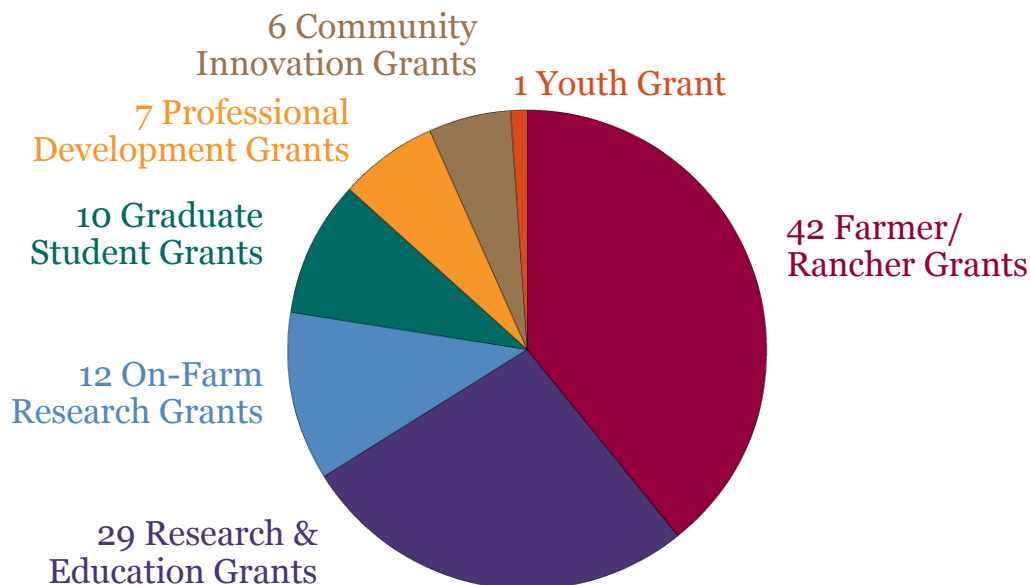
[www.sare.org/state-summaries](http://www.sare.org/state-summaries)



SARE's four regional programs and outreach office work to advance sustainable innovations to the whole of American agriculture.

# SARE Grants in Maryland

SARE has awarded a total of **107 grants** in Maryland since 1988



## 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.

## 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 [www.nesare.org/maryland](http://www.nesare.org/maryland) to learn more.

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For detailed information on SARE projects, go to

[www.SARE.org](http://www.SARE.org)