

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

# South Dakota

### Project Highlight: *Teaching teens livestock handling skills*

**H**undreds of South Dakota youths are working with top animal production specialists to improve their livestock handling skills, thanks to the development of a robust Livestock Skill-a-thon program in the state.

Skill-a-thons, organized through state 4-H and Extension programs, are common around the country. But South Dakota did not have one for livestock until recently, when South Dakota State University Extension educators used funding from a multi-year SARE grant to organize it.

Organizers involved 300 teens at 10 Skill-a-thons through 2013, with more events planned. Events took place in 27 of South Dakota's 66 counties, making it a widespread effort. At a Skill-a-thon event, teens go to a series of stations and

work with livestock specialists on various hands-on skills. Events bring together volunteer veterinarians, farm supply owners, livestock producers and Extension specialists to work with youths.

The skills they are learning—from safety to production to marketing—can make them more valuable assets on their parents' farms and equip them to be South Dakota's farmers of tomorrow.

Along with making teens more excited this agricultural topic, outreach connected to the livestock Skill-a-thon program has increased public awareness in South Dakota that youths working with animals are learning and following proper animal management practices.

For more information on this project, see [www.sare.org/projects](http://www.sare.org/projects), and search for project number YENC12-041.

### SARE in South Dakota

[www.northcentralsare.org/south-dakota](http://www.northcentralsare.org/south-dakota)

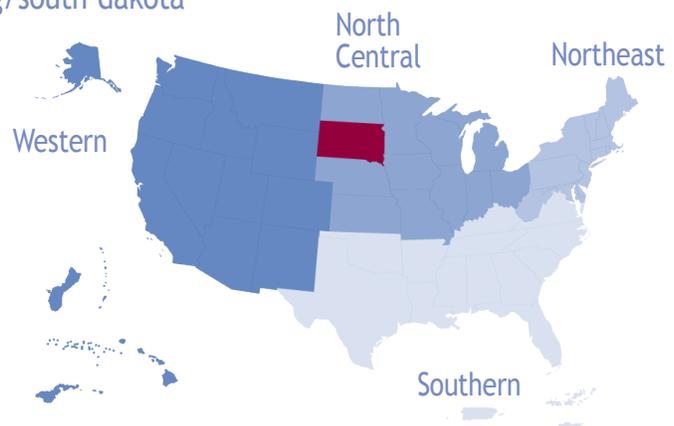
**\$2.9 million in total funding**

**95 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.

### 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

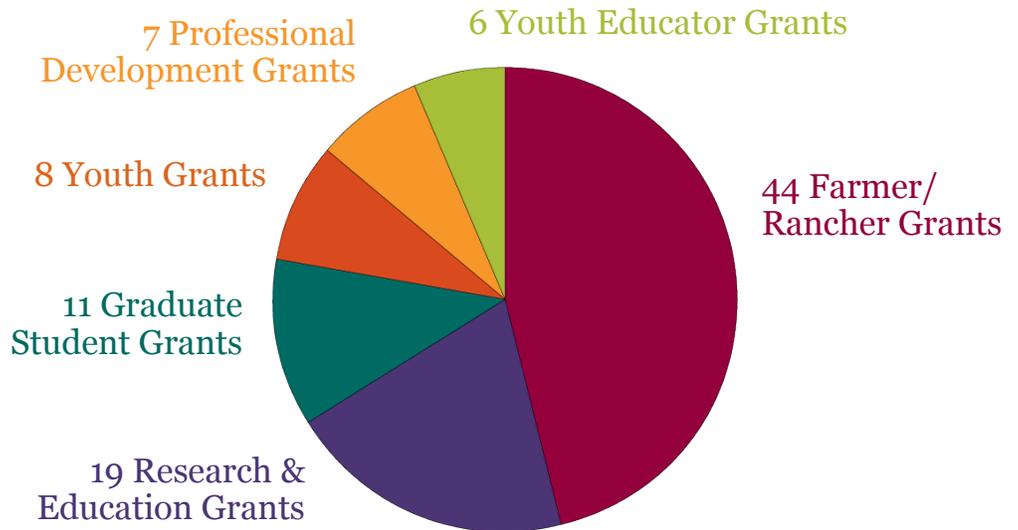
SARE shares project results by requiring grantees to conduct outreach and grower engagement; and by maintaining the SARE Learning Center—a library of practical publications, grantee-produced information products and other educational materials.



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

# SARE Grants in South Dakota

SARE has awarded a total of **95 grants** in South Dakota 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.northcentralsare.org/south-dakota](http://www.northcentralsare.org/south-dakota) to learn more.

Alexander "Sandy" Smart  
South Dakota State Univ.  
(605) 688-4017  
[alexander.smart@sdstate.edu](mailto:alexander.smart@sdstate.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](http://www.SARE.org)