

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

# Kentucky

## 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)

## Project Highlight: *The lucrative sweet potato takes root*

Small-scale tobacco farmers looking for alternatives are discovering that an easy, often profitable transition lies in sweet potatoes. With relatively low input and capital costs, and a short learning curve, they can earn gross returns of up to \$7,000 per acre, mostly through local sales.

“Sweet potatoes are a pretty good alternative, because a lot of the equipment they used for tobacco can be used for sweet potatoes, particularly the transplanters. So they don’t have to buy a lot of new equipment,” says University of Kentucky Extension Vegetable Specialist Tim Coolong. “Economically, it’s been very good for them.”

Coolong used a 2009 SARE grant to research and demonstrate sweet po-

tato growing on several farms and has helped about 15 farmers—most, but not all former tobacco producers—grow the highly nutritious vegetable. It needs little to no fertilizers and pesticides, and no irrigation except during drought.

“There are a lot of nuances with sweet-potato production that this grant really allowed us to look at,” says Coolong, whose work translated into a detailed handbook and the formation of a regional grower’s association.

One area that needs more work is the production of slips—the sprouts that come off a potato and turn into new plants. Slips are not locally available.

For more information on this project, see [www.sare.org/projects](http://www.sare.org/projects), and search for project number OS09-047.

## SARE in Kentucky

[www.southernsare.org/kentucky](http://www.southernsare.org/kentucky)

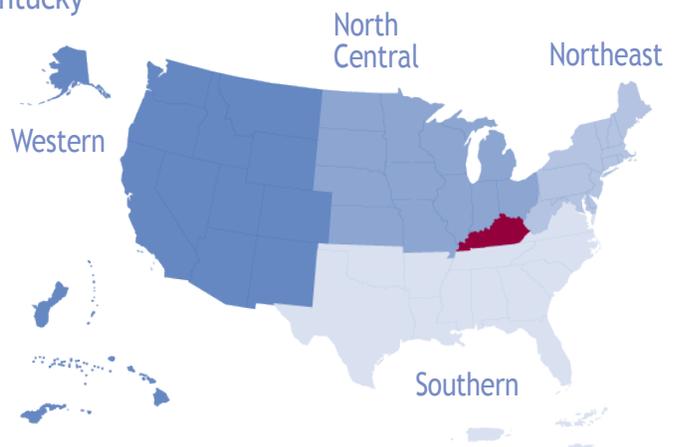
**\$3.6 million in total funding**

**76 grant projects**

(since 1988)

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

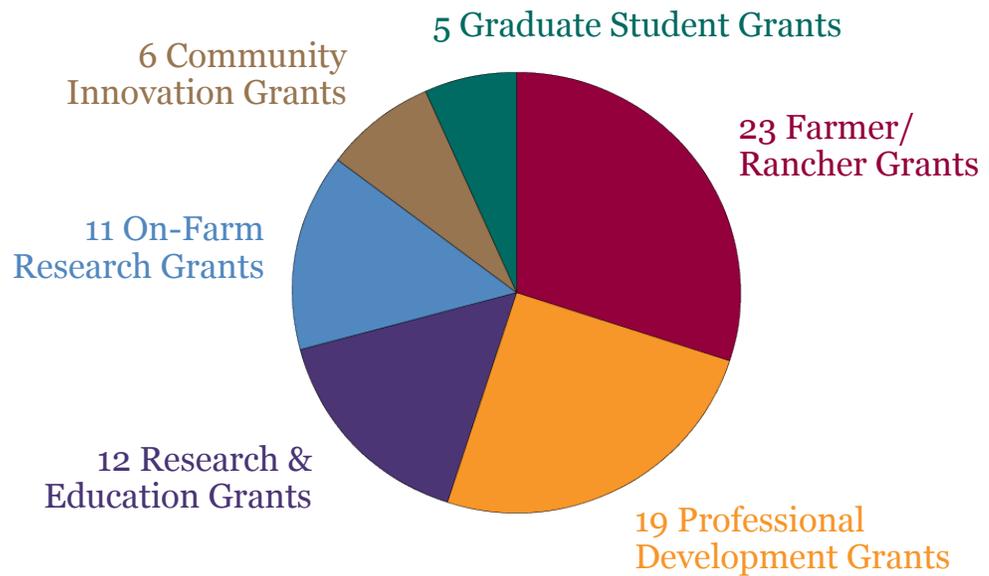
[www.sare.org/state-summaries](http://www.sare.org/state-summaries)



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

# SARE Grants in Kentucky

SARE has  
awarded a  
total of  
**76 grants**  
in Kentucky  
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.southernsare.org/kentucky](http://www.southernsare.org/kentucky) to learn more.

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For detailed information on SARE projects, go to

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