

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

# Oregon

## 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: *Calculating cover crops' economic benefit*

**S**kyrocketing fertilizer prices are encouraging farmers to seek alternative nitrogen sources and recent studies have shown that planting cover crops can both supply much-needed nutrients and improve soil quality. But before they risk adopting a new practice, most farmers prefer to calculate the costs.

To help them compare different nutrient management methods and quantify the benefits of cover crops, Oregon State University researchers used SARE funding to create the OSU Organic Fertilizer and Cover Crop Calculator.

In its first two years, the calculator was used by 620 Northwestern producers, who farm a combined 52,000 acres. Researchers estimate that if just a quarter of these users save \$50 per acre per year, then the annual economic impact

of this calculator would exceed more than \$650,000.

Farmers can use the calculator to compare the amount and cost of the nitrogen added to the soil by cover crops and organic fertilizers. It was created based on two years of field trials on six intensive vegetable farms. Researchers found that, compared to fallow plots, cover crops increased dry biomass by two to four times; absorbed two to seven times more nitrogen; and provided two to 13 times more plant-available nitrogen. Even when farmers had less time to grow cover crops than is ideal, they still saw more benefits after using cover crops as compared to other fertilizers.

For more information on this project, see [www.sare.org/projects](http://www.sare.org/projects), and search for project number FW09-328.

## SARE in Oregon

[www.westernsare.org/oregon](http://www.westernsare.org/oregon)

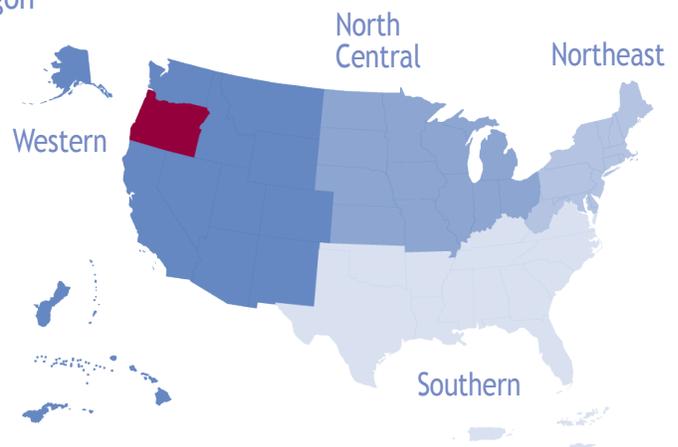
**\$8.2 million in total funding**

**138 grant projects**

(since 1988)

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

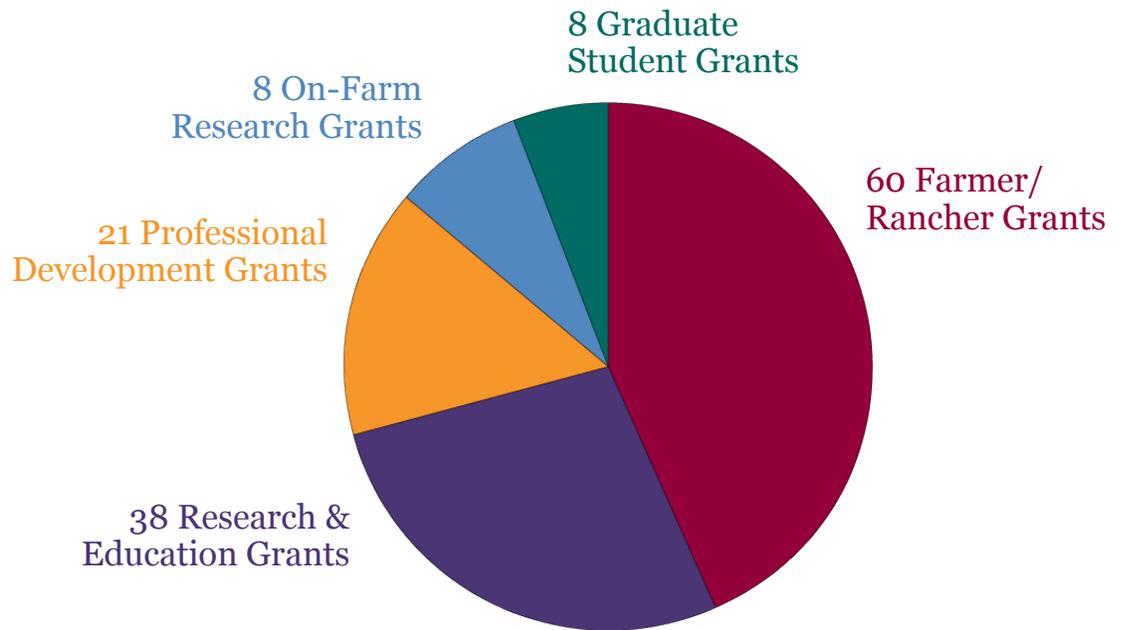
[www.sare.org/state-summaries](http://www.sare.org/state-summaries)



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

# SARE Grants in Oregon

SARE has  
awarded a  
total of  
**138 grants**  
in Oregon  
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.westernsare.org/oregon](http://www.westernsare.org/oregon) to learn more.

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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)