

Western SARE Professional Development Program

Research to Grass Roots (R2GR) Grants

2020 Call for Proposals

Due at 12:00 p.m. MST, NOON, November 20, 2019
Results announced mid-March, 2020



If you have questions
Contact us at:
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Host Institution:
Montana State University
PDP Institution:
University of Wyoming

SARE is a USDA competitive grants program that supports agricultural systems that are economically viable, environmentally sound and socially responsible.

Alaska, American Samoa, Arizona, California, Colorado, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Micronesia, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Northern Mariana Islands, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming

The Administrative Council of the Western Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program announces the call for proposals for Research to Grass Roots Grants for 2020.

Research to Grass Roots Grants are aimed at helping agricultural professionals, farmers, ranchers and others in the Western Region increase their understanding and proficiency in sustainable agriculture.

Proposals are evaluated by a Review Panel against the criteria outlined in this call and in comparison with other grant proposals. The Western SARE Administrative Council – a board of agricultural producers, scientists, educators and business leaders – will then make the final selections of projects to fund. The council typically selects proposals diverse in subject matter and geography and that demonstrate outcomes farmers and ranchers in the region can successfully adopt.

Important note: Congress mandates that the SARE grant program depart from “business as usual.” To that end, the Administrative Council requires that agricultural producers be involved from start to finish in the planning, design, implementation and educational outreach of any SARE-funded project.

These SARE projects should:

- Increase sustainable agriculture knowledge, skills and action.
- Have outreach plans that demonstrate how the project will effectively deliver this knowledge.
- Funding limit \$75,000 per project.

Sustainable Agriculture:

Congress has defined sustainable agriculture as an integrated system of plant and animal production practices having a site-specific application that will over the long-term:

- Satisfy human food and fiber needs
- Enhance environmental quality and the natural resource base upon which the agriculture economy depends
- Make the most efficient use of nonrenewable resources and on-farm resources and integrate, where appropriate, natural biological cycles and controls
- Sustain the economic viability of farm operations
- Enhance the quality of life for farmers and society as a whole.

-- U.S. Code Title 7, Section 3103

Research to Grass Roots Grant Information

- Deadline for submitting Professional Development Program grant proposals:
**12:00 NOON MST
November 20, 2019**
- Technical Review Panel selects proposals for grant funding in January 2020.
- Western SARE Administrative Council makes final selections in March 2020. Principal investigators of funded grants are informed by April 1, 2020.
- Funds for selected projects disbursed summer/fall 2020.

Background and Purpose

Research to Grass Roots Grants (R2GR) are built on the SARE concept that results of applied research are used to train agricultural professionals and farmers/ranchers in the latest principles of sustainable agriculture. Successful R2GR projects will take the research results from [previously funded SARE](#) projects and bring those results out into the field through education to ag professionals and producers. These R2GR proposals should focus on a topic that has been researched by SARE. Results from the previous SARE-funded research must be the basis of the project, and the connection to the previous research must be documented in the proposal. Examples of possible educational projects under R2GR grants would include, but it are not restricted to, local demonstrations, trainings, focus groups, and application of research results by farmers or ranchers on their own operations. Funds may be used to support salary and/or travel for qualified individuals to come to the location(s) of the R2GR project and assist with education or demonstration efforts to apply the underlying SARE research project to the underserved location.

Each R2GR proposal must include a team made up of producers, ag professionals, and possibly researchers. Representatives from land grants, NGO's, agency employees or producers may lead the project. The team must have a structured plan indicating activities such as meetings, trainings, outreach, and/or demonstrations. The role of each team member should be well explained in the proposal.

Proposal Review

Project proposals are evaluated by a panel of educators, scientists, producers, and others with expertise in sustainable agriculture. The Western SARE Administrative Council, a board of representatives with strong knowledge and interest in sustainable agriculture, makes the final selection regarding which projects receive funding.

The criteria required in the proposal provide the basis for reviewer evaluation. These criteria should be incorporated into items A-E in the proposal format on page 6-8. The six items below are the content, and content is the most important aspect of your proposal. Proposal format items on pages 6-8 are the structure, and the application system will ensure that you follow the structure. The criteria are:

- 1) Sustainable Agriculture Relevance (20%):** All SARE proposals should focus on issues that relate directly to sustainable agriculture goals listed on page 5 of this CFP. Research to Grass Roots proposals must target critical issues that have a high likelihood of impacting the sustainability of agriculture in our region. Topics should be carefully selected to ensure that they address a current need.
- 2) Collaborative Involvement (10%):** Proposals should illustrate the meaningful involvement of agricultural producers, personnel from land grant universities, nonprofit organizations, and/or other entities in the project's development, implementation, and outcomes
- 3) Appropriate Objectives (20%):** The objectives should be specific, measurable, achievable and realistic. Please do NOT confuse objectives (e.g., to increase knowledge, skills or technical capacity of ag professionals and producers.) with activities (e.g., to develop and conduct a workshop.)
- 4) Appropriate Methods and timeline (20%):** The activities and methods described must be appropriate for meeting project objectives and outcomes. This includes having the proper expertise

and organizations involved. The timeline for achieving the objectives should be clear and reasonable.

- 5) **Feasibility and Evaluation of Project Outcomes (20%)**: Proposals must address the desired outcomes in each of the following areas, describing how they will be assessed, measured, and documented:
 - A. Improving the knowledge base of project participants and/or others in a sustainable agriculture topic or area.
 - B. Increasing the likelihood that project participants will use what they learn (intention).
 - C. For multi-year projects, demonstrating the extent to which participants used new knowledge and skills in subsequent educational activities in sustainable agriculture or in farm or ranch operations.
- 6) **Budget: (10%)** A reasonable budget and justification are necessary. Please ensure the narrative explains line items so they may be fully understood.

Key Points to Consider in Project Development and Implementation

- 1) **Collaborative participation:** A goal of the program is to foster the development of a broad-based team to address one or more key issues in sustaining agriculture. Multidisciplinary and multi-state efforts that include private or public entities are encouraged. A leader/PI of a previous SARE project, agricultural producers, NGO reps, agency people and community leaders as well land grant personnel should preferably all be included as part of the planning/trainer/educator team.
- 2) **Integrated training and education:** SARE encourages applications that integrate multiple aspects of sustainable agricultural production, marketing/economics, families, rural communities, and quality of life.
- 3) **Training and educational methodology:** Projects must demonstrate enhanced knowledge and skills of participants, and trainer/educator teams are encouraged to develop new and innovative ways for learning to take place. Projects that create electronic or written educational products (e.g. manuals, web-based tutorial or databases, podcasts, videos, etc.) should have an accompanying training component for use of that product, such as training sessions or tutorials.
- 4) **Impacts and outcomes assessment:** It is important to provide evidence that educational objectives have been fulfilled, with desired outcomes clearly defined, evaluated and documented. Grantees should build in a reasonable timeline and approach to properly complete evaluation of project impacts. **Please use the WSARE PDP logic model as a reference point as you develop your proposal.** The Western SARE PDP logic model can be found under “Proposal Preparation Documents” on the Western SARE web site at <https://www.westernsare.org/Grants/Proposal-Preparation-Documents>
- 5) **Location:** Funds may flow to any entity that is eligible to receive federal funds. Subcontracts to other institutions eligible to receive federal funds are allowed.
- 6) **Letters of support:** Letters of support are not mandatory; however they are encouraged and may be included in the proposal under “Optional – letters of support and references.”

Criteria for 2020 Research to Grass Roots Program Grants

Research to Grass Roots Grants are designed to educate agricultural professionals and producers about critical issues in sustainable agriculture. Projects must be based upon related and previously completed research by the SARE program. The database of funded projects can be found at <https://www.sare.org/Project-Reports>.

Projects must improve the ability of agricultural professionals, farmers, and ranchers to put in place systems or methods that will enhance the sustainability of agriculture.

Approaches may include, among others:

- Workshops
- Conferences
- Development of materials or curricula
- Demonstrations
- Web-based courses, educational activities, and materials (podcasts, videos, self-thought lessons, etc.)
- Tours

Multi-faceted proposals are encouraged. Projects using multiple techniques or methods are preferred, as are efforts whose results can be applied to diverse audiences.

Subject matter can include any sustainable agriculture endeavor, including animal agriculture, agronomic or horticultural crop production, or the effects of sustainable practices on quality of life for producers or rural communities as well as the economic impacts of agricultural practices or changes in practices. Each R2GR project must be based upon previously completed SARE research.

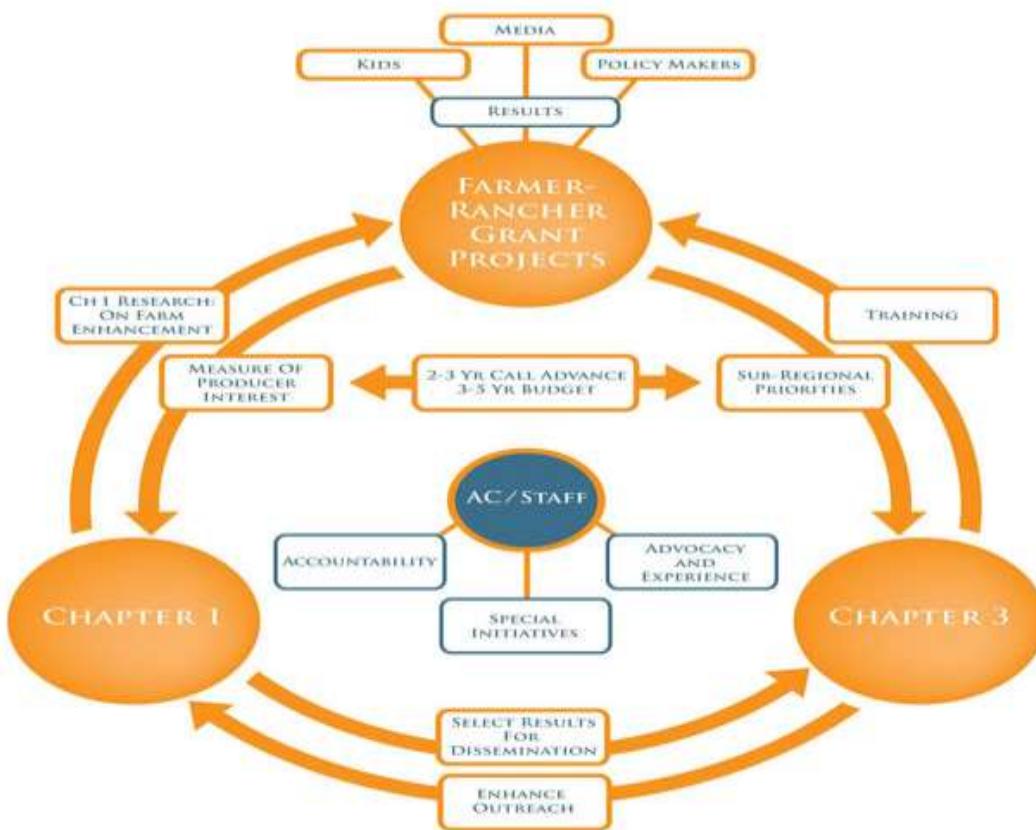
A list of high priorities identified includes, but is not limited to:

- ❖ Ag resiliency and climate change
- ❖ Cover crops and soil health
- ❖ Local food systems
- ❖ Grazing and range issues
- ❖ Integrated crop-livestock operations
- ❖ System and enterprise diversification
- ❖ Water for agriculture
- ❖ Invasive species and integrated pest management
- ❖ The human element of agriculture including families and communities
- ❖ Enhancing the profitability of agriculture

Strong teamwork is critical to the success of these grant applications and selected proposals. Teams should include broad-based and diverse representation. Team members should preferably include farmers, ranchers, NGO representatives, agency personnel, land grant employees and any other relevant contributors. Contact with a the PI or lead researcher of the previous research project is not mandated, but documentation of involvement and support from researchers on related and previously funded SARE research projects will significantly strengthen the application.

Funding is capped at \$75,000 for each Research to Grass Roots project. Projects requesting significantly less than the maximum allowable amount generally have a greater likelihood of being funded.

Funding for Research to Grass Roots Grants is based upon the idea that these grants will “complete the circle” in the following Western SARE strategic plan chart, below. Please review the chart to ensure your project does indeed “connect” Chapter 1 (SARE research grants) to one of the other circles in the chart, and explain how your grant will strengthen the connection between SARE research and the farmers and ranchers, agricultural families, and rural communities SARE strives to serve.



Program Goals for Western SARE Projects

1. Promote good stewardship of the nation's natural resources by providing site-specific, regional, and profitable sustainable farming and ranching methods that strengthen agricultural competitiveness; satisfy human food and fiber needs, maintain and enhance the quality and productivity of soil; conserve soil, water, energy, natural resources and fish and wildlife habitat, and maintain and improve the quality of surface and ground water.
2. Enhance the quality of life of farmers and ranchers and ensure the viability of rural communities, for example, by increasing income and employment, especially profitable self-employment and innovative marketing opportunities in agricultural and rural communities.
3. Protect the health and safety of those involved in food and farm systems by reducing, where feasible and practical, the use of toxic materials in agricultural production, and by optimizing on-farm resources and integrating, where appropriate, biological cycles and controls.
4. Promote crop, livestock and enterprise diversification.

Proposal Format

The online format of the proposal is comprised of a narrative Details section, a Budget section, Project Cooperators, and Supporting Documents. The Details section is constrained by word counts. Documents produced in Microsoft Word or other word processing format will be stripped to bare text when you copy and paste content to the online system. You may wish to avoid spending too much time on document markup (bold, underline, tables, etc.) because those things will be removed when transferred to the online template.

A. Project Basic Information. List the starting and close dates of the proposed project, and the project primary state.

B. Summary: (300 words) A concise summary of the project proposal.

C. Narrative (3,250 words total)

1) Relevance to Western SARE Goals/Sustainable Agriculture: (300 words) How does your proposal directly address the Western SARE goals found on page 5? All goals do not need to be addressed, but all proposals must address at least one goal. Proposals that address multiple goals are usually scored higher by reviewers.

2) Introduction: (500 words) Please describe the context and needs that justify your project.

- An assessment with defined or documented need from the target audience is necessary to effectively justify the proposal.
- Please ensure that your project is based upon previous SARE research and document the completed projects and topics in your justification. This justification is critical in R2GR proposals.
- Describe the factors that influence the implementation and success of the project, including climate, politics, regulations, socio-economic conditions, or market forces.
- At least one in-text citation (e.g., Smith 2007) should appear in your narrative to indicate where each reference was used.
- Please list any related previously funded SARE projects related to your proposal and explain how your project is based upon this previous work. Sources to search include:
 - ✓ National SARE database (<http://www.sare.org/projects>)
 - ✓ National Agricultural Library (<http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic>)
 - ✓ USDA-NIFA-CRIS Research (<https://nifa.usda.gov/tool/cris>)

3) Objectives: (300 words): The objectives should be specific, measurable, achievable and realistic. Please do NOT confuse objectives (e.g., to increase knowledge, skills or technical capacity of ag professionals) with activities (e.g., to develop and conduct a workshop.)

4) Team Members and Roles: (200 Words) Please list the members of your team, their roles and affiliations in the project using short descriptions. Each team must have producers and ag professionals meaningfully involved to receive funding.

5) Methods and Timeline: (1000 words)

- List and explain the principles, assumptions and beliefs you have about the project, the way you expect the project to operate and what it will achieve. (Faulty assumptions may scuttle expected outcomes.)
- Describe the resources, contributions and investments (inputs) that will be used in the project. Resources can be financial (requested funds), human (volunteers, partnerships, contributions of farmers, ranchers and other practitioners) and physical (technology, equipment, etc.).

- Describe your methodology and activities, and provide a timeline of these activities.
- 6) Products/Outputs:** **(250 words)** What will the project produce? Products may include educational materials, workshops, conferences, demonstrations, tours, curricula and partnerships.
- 7) Outcomes:** **(400 words)** These are the results and benefits for individuals, groups, communities and systems. Outcomes should include increased awareness, knowledge and capacity of participants to provide educational programs and evidence of changed intention or behavior of project participants.
- 8) Evaluation:** **(300 words)** Show how you intend to measure outcomes stated in your proposal. What outcome indicators will be measured, who will conduct the evaluation, how will the evaluation be done, what will it cost and at what time intervals during the project will evaluation take place?

Also include in the proposal:

D. Budget and Budget Justification (10% of review criteria)

Provide a detailed budget and budget justification that are appropriate to the proposed project using the *Western SARE Budget Worksheet* found on the online application, budget section. Applicants MUST use this document for budget submission; no other document will be accepted. **NOTE:** you are still required to enter the TOTAL funds requested; this amount must match the total funds indicated on the *Western SARE Budget Worksheet* document.

If your institution will be issuing subawards to other institutions/organizations as a part of your proposed project, you are required to provide a detailed budget and justification for each. Subaward budgets MUST be submitted on the *Western SARE Budget Worksheet for Subawards*. You may ask the subaward recipient(s) to fill out the *Western SARE Budget Worksheet for Subawards* or you may fill it out on their behalf using details they have provided to you. Be sure to include brief details and budget amounts for each subaward, by year, on your *Western SARE Budget Worksheet*. As the primary applicant, you must upload both your *Western SARE Budget Worksheet* and those of any subawards to be issued.

Professional Development Program Grant funds must be budgeted in the following categories

- Salaries and Benefits: compensating yourself and/or employees (including students) of your institution for performing work directly related to the project. Provide base salary, FTEs, fringe benefit rates, and salary/benefits amounts requested.
- Subawards: paying project collaborators who are not at your institution and/or to cover costs associated with the subrecipient's portion of the proposed project.
- Contracted Services: includes paying for professional services (e.g., testing and analysis services, survey development and administration, computational services, website development or maintenance, professional production services (e.g., videographer to produce educational electronic media), consultants, honoraria, speaker fees, producer labor, etc.
- Supplies: Includes basic supplies and materials needed to carry out the project. Examples include: agricultural supplies (fencing, seeds, plants, fertilizer), field and lab supplies, minor equipment and tools (individual

items that cost less than \$5,000), paper/envelopes, in-house photocopying of materials for workshops/meetings, software, books, shipping materials, etc. Any shipping costs associated with the purchase of supplies/materials should be included as supply costs. The purchase of food/refreshments for meetings/field days (**must** be necessary to maintain the continuity of a project activity/meeting) is also considered a supply cost.

- Communication: includes postage and mailing expenses (including shipping samples for analysis), printed materials (flyers, brochures, posters). This category also includes expenses for publishing articles in scientific journals or other types of field/program publications, or for commercial photocopying (Note: in-house photocopying falls under supplies)
- Travel: includes estimated mileage reimbursement, airfare, lodging, meal per diem; car rentals, taxi, bus, shuttle expenses and parking; conference fees and registrations, etc. [Please note, travel per diems and mileage need to correlate with your organization's approved rates. If no rate is available, please use the Federal Government rate listed on the [U.S. General Services Administration website](#). **NOTE**: foreign travel is typically NOT allowed under the SARE program except in cases where sufficient justification has been provided and requires Western SARE approval. All foreign travel must be directly related to the project, must be essential for project completion, and well justified (e.g., explain why this activity cannot be done in the USA, relevance to Western agriculture sustainability, provide foreign institution and colleagues qualifications, etc.).]
- Rent: includes fees associated with renting equipment, land, facilities (e.g., meeting rooms, lab space) and user fees.
- Participant / Trainee Support: Participant Support costs are associated with conference, workshop, or symposium attendees who are not employees of the applicant or a subaward recipient institution(s). Trainee Support costs are associated with educational projects that support trainees. Participants/Trainees can receive a set amount for participation in the above-stated functions. If participant/trainee travel expenses will be itemized (not a lump sum payment), include those expenses in the Travel budget category.
- Facilities and Administrative (F&A) Costs, also referred to as Indirect Costs (IDCs): Under the SARE program, NIFA states IDCs may not exceed 10% of the Total Federal Funds Awarded (TFFA); this calculates to roughly 11.111% of Total Direct Costs (TDC). Note: the 10% limit is a cap on the portion of an applicant's budget that may be requested for IDCs; it is not an IDC rate. Additionally, some institutions may not be eligible to request IDCs or may be limited to the 10% de minimis. You must indicate the rate you are using on the *Western SARE Budget Worksheet*. Detailed information about [Indirect Costs](#) rates and calculations can be found on the Western SARE [website](#).

More information about each budget category is provided on the *Budget Categories and Guidance* tab found on the *Western SARE Budget Worksheet*. Please note, however, there are some restrictions for what *Professional Development Program* grant funds may be used. See below.

Professional Development Program Grant funds may NOT be used for the following purposes

- Capital Equipment purchases – Defined as a single, autonomous piece of equipment that costs \$5,000 or more and has a useful life of more than one year. Minor equipment under \$5,000 is allowed – please include as a supply cost.
- Starting or expanding a farm or farm operation.
- Major renovations/permanent improvements to a farm or ranch, such as constructing or remodeling a building.
- Repair and maintenance of existing equipment/infrastructure.
- Providing meals during events that are not necessary to maintain the continuity of a scheduled meeting; breakfasts and dinners typically do not qualify.
- Testing of commercial products.
- Student tuition and fees

Additionally, matching funds are not required or requested of Western SARE grant recipients. Please do NOT include matching funds in your budget or justification

E. Supporting Documents

- 1) **Signature Page:** Signatures from all relevant parties (e.g., PI, Co-PIs) are required. You should print the *Signature Page* provided here, at the end of this CFP, or from the online application site. Have all relevant parties sign the signature page, scan (as a PDF) and upload it into the Supporting Documents section of the online application.
- 2) **Vitae:** A brief vita (brief resume) is required for the Principal Investigator and each major participant. The limit is three pages for each. Attach each vita as a PDF document into the Supporting Documents section of the online application.
- 3) **Animal Welfare Assurance Statement:** If the project includes warm-blooded vertebrate, the *Animal Welfare Assurance Statement* must be signed by the PI and an IACUC (Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee) representative or attending veterinarian. If no warm-blooded vertebrate is involved in this project, mark the option Not Apply of the *Animal Welfare Assurance Statement* and have the PI sign it. You should print the *Animal Welfare Assurance Statement* document provided here, at the end of this CFP, or from the online application site. The signed document should be attached in the Supporting Documents section of the online application.

Funds are expected to be available no later than October, 2020.

For more information about this call for proposals or for hard copies: Contact Jim Freeburn or Jill West at (307) 532-2436 or e-mail – freeburn@uwyo.edu . You may also contact Al Kurki at (406) 494-8655 or e-mail – akurki@ncat.org.

About Western SARE: Information can be found at the Western SARE website, <https://www.westernsare.org> , or by emailing wsare@msu.edu.

Submission and Funding: Go to <http://projects.sare.org> and apply.

Please remember that the proposal form is character sensitive. Be careful if you are cutting and pasting. Visually review your proposal before hitting the submit button.

Hard copies of this CFP are available by contacting the Western SARE PDP office.

Proposals must be received by 12:00 pm, NOON MST, November 20, 2019.

All Western SARE calls for proposals (Research & Education, Farmer/Rancher, Ag Professional + Producer and Professional Development Program) are listed on the website, as are previously funded proposals.

The Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program (SARE) is funded through the USDA Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREES) under Chapter 1 of Title XVI of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 and extended by the 1995 Farm Bill reauthorization. The purpose of the subtitle is to encourage research with education and on-farm demonstration projects designed to increase the producer knowledge base and assist in the adoption of sustainable practices on the land. Ideally, projects will integrate research, education and on-farm demonstrations within whole-farm sustainable agricultural systems involving plants and animals, demonstrating tangible outcomes and addressing Western SARE goals.

RESOURCES

Information on sustainable agriculture can be found at the National SARE website, www.sare.org (the database of nationwide SARE projects can be searched under “Project Reports”).

Another source of information on sustainable agriculture is the Alternative Farming Systems Information Center (AFSIC), funded in part by SARE. AFSIC specializes in locating, collecting and providing information about alternative systems, crops and production systems. Information specialists can answer questions, provide access to materials, provide references to individuals or organizations; identify researchers and research projects within USDA and furnish free bibliographies and reference briefs. Contact AFSIC at (301)504-6559 or afsic@nal.usda.edu.

The following are listed under “Proposal Preparation Documents” on the Western SARE website at <https://www.westernsare.org/Grants/Proposal-Preparation-Documents>

Special Notes Regarding Western SARE and USDA Policies and Requirements

- Western SARE PDP Logic Model
- Required Budget Details

Research to Grass Roots
Signature Page



Jim Freeburn
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Torrington, WY 82240
307-532-2436
freeburn@uwyo.edu

Please print this document, obtain **BOTH** required signatures and upload into the Supporting Documents section of your online grant application.

Project Title:

Total Funds Requested: _____

Requested Project Period:

Start Date (MM/DD/YYYY): _____ End date (MM/DD/YYYY): _____

Principal Investigator

USDA defines a Principal Investigator as one who has the authority to write and submit a proposal and carry out its contractual provisions.

As the project PI, I affirm I am responsible for all expenditures and achieving the stated research and education objectives of the proposal.

Signature: Principal Investigator

Date

Printed Name: _____

Authorized Organizational Representative

USDA defines the Authorized Organizational Representative as one who has authority to enter into contractual agreements with the Western SARE Host Institution, Montana State University.

As the AOR for the institution/organization project of the PI submitting this proposal, I affirm that [enter institution/organization name here] has authority to enter into a contractual agreement with Montana State University.

Signature: Authorized Organizational Representative

Date

Printed Name and Title: _____

Research to Grass Roots

Animal Welfare Statement



Jim Freeburn
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Torrington, WY 82240
307-532-2436
freeburn@uwyo.edu

The applicant acknowledges that work may require Institutional Animal Care and Use Oversight and that Montana State University (MSU), and thus Western SARE, is subject to the Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching. This includes, but is not limited to: beef, swine, poultry, etc. If awarded the applicant acknowledges that it is his/her responsibility to ensure that a USDA-acknowledged IACUC reviews, approves, and oversees the animal welfare issues of the project.

Date: _____

Signature: Applicant

NOTE: If animal welfare is NOT applicable, check and sign below:

Not Applicable [] _____ Date: _____
Signature: Applicant