

Beginning Farmer Webinar Series

SARE Grants and Grant Writing

Dean Baas

MSUE Educator and SARE State Coordinator

March 21, 2018



Presentation outline

- **General grant information**
- **Where to find grants**
- **Grant writing tips**
- **SARE grants**
 - **General information**
 - **Farmer Rancher Grant Program**
 - **SARE grant writing tips**





Sustainable Agriculture
Research & Education

NCR-SARE offices:

University of Minnesota
University of Missouri
Lincoln University in
Missouri



Photo credit: Abram Kaplan

What is SARE?



Grants and outreach to
advance sustainable
innovations to
the whole of American
agriculture.



Photo credit: Sean McGovern

Something New and Different

SARE was started in 1988,
conceived as a
decentralized, *science-based*,
grassroots, practical,
problem-solving,
and *inclusive*
competitive grant-making and
outreach program.

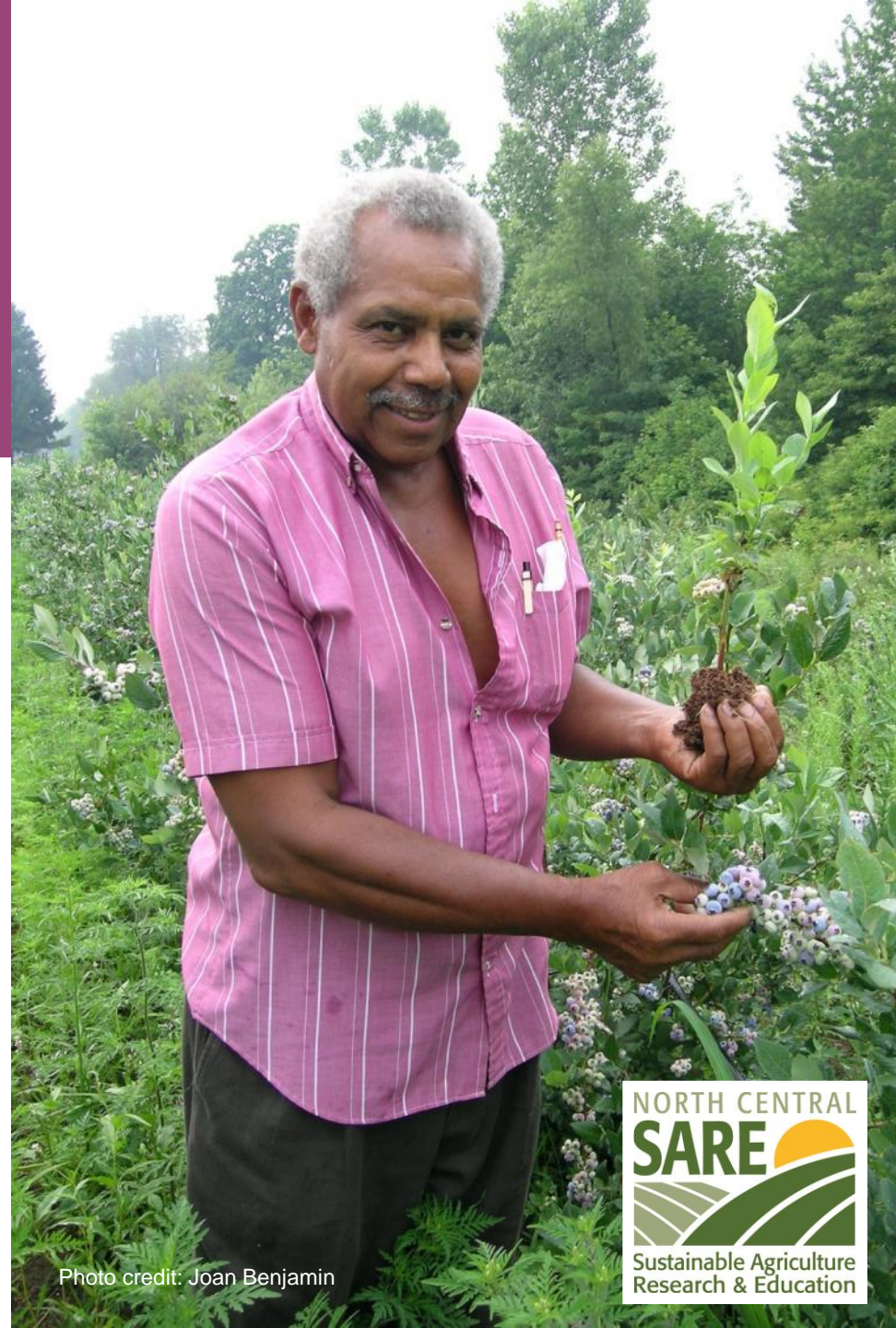


Photo credit: Joan Benjamin



The SARE Model

- USDA-NIFA supports SARE
- SARE Outreach produces practical information

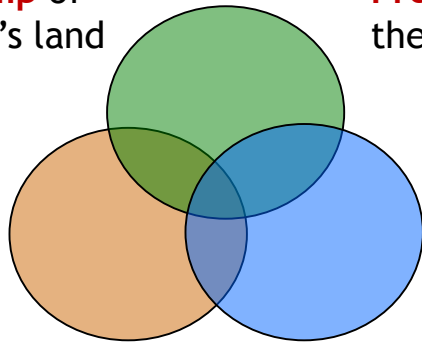


Photo credit: David Baltensperger

The SARE Model

Successful SARE grantees are engaged in projects that are guided by the 3 principals of sustainability...

Stewardship of our nation's land and water



Profit over the long term

Quality of Life for farmers, ranchers, and their communities



photo credit: Ken Schneider



Stakeholder Involvement

- Problem identified by farmer/rancher and researcher
- Farmers/ranchers involved in research and outreach



Photo credit: Beth Nelson

NCR-SARE Grant Types

North Central SARE grant programs are:

- Research & Education
- Professional Development
- Graduate Student
- Farmer/Rancher
- Youth Educator
- Partnership



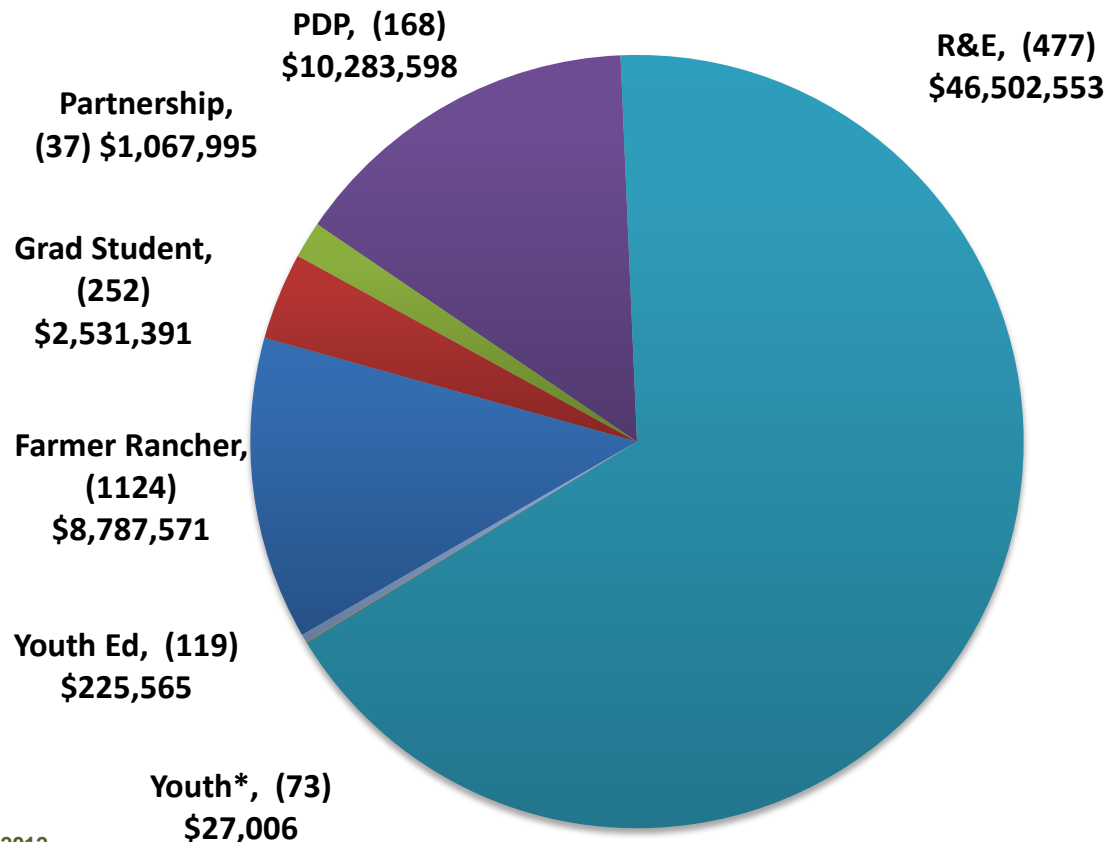
Visit www.sare.org or

www.northcentralsare.org

Photo credit: Carol Flaherty

NCR-SARE Grants Funded 1988-2017

\$69,425,678 awarded from 1988-2017



* Discontinued in 2012

NCR-SARE Grant Types

North Central SARE grant programs are:

- Research & Education
- Professional Development
- Graduate Student
- Farmer/Rancher
- Youth Educator
- Partnership



Visit www.sare.org or
www.northcentralsare.org

Photo credit: Carol Flaherty

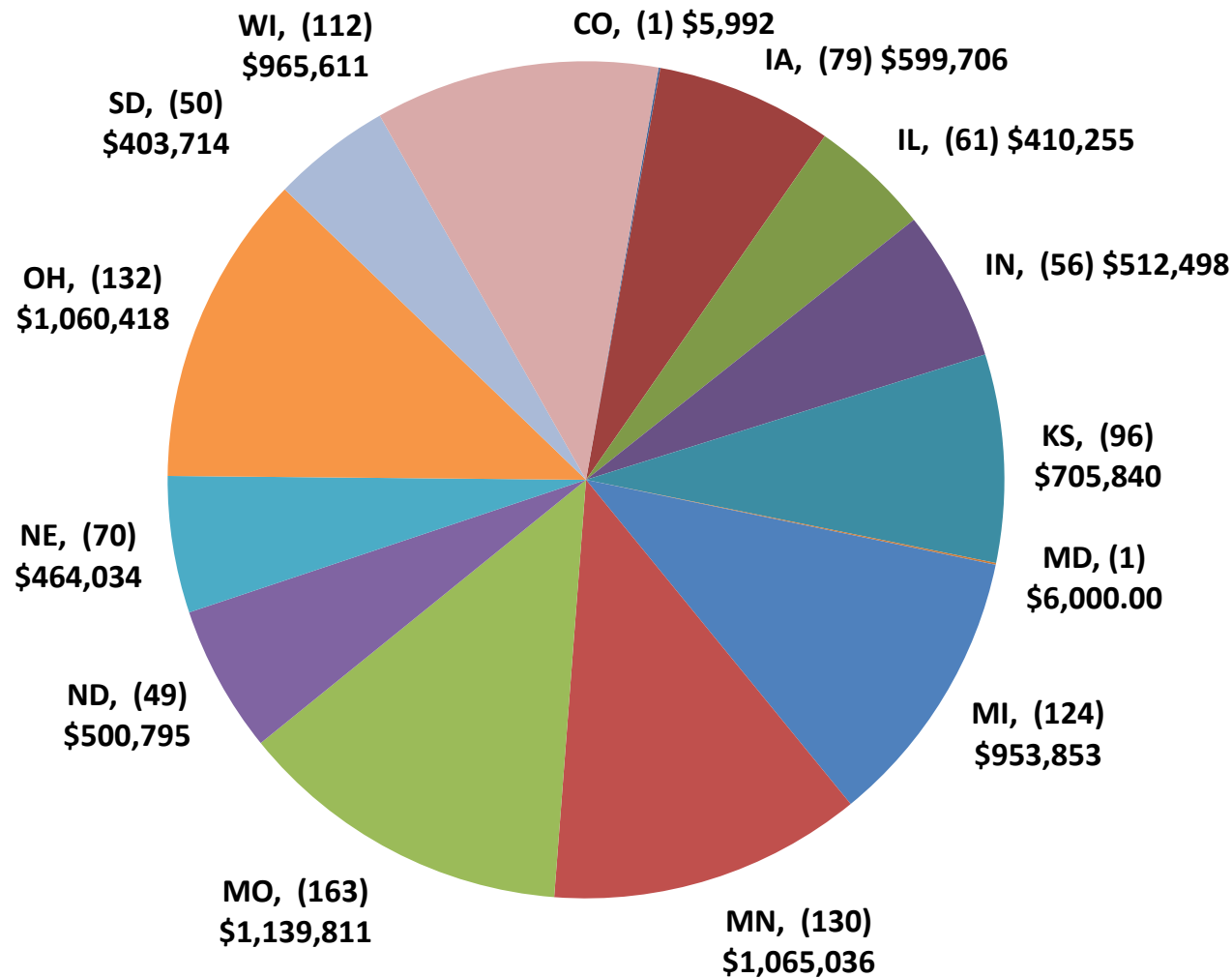
Farmer Rancher Grant Program

- Grants directly fund farmers and ranchers to explore new production methods or marketing approaches for their farm
- Up to \$7,500 for individual farm, \$15,000 for teams of two, and \$22,500 for groups of 3 or more
- Encouraged to link with university or non-profit partners
- 40 projects funded per year
- Coordinated by Joan Benjamin

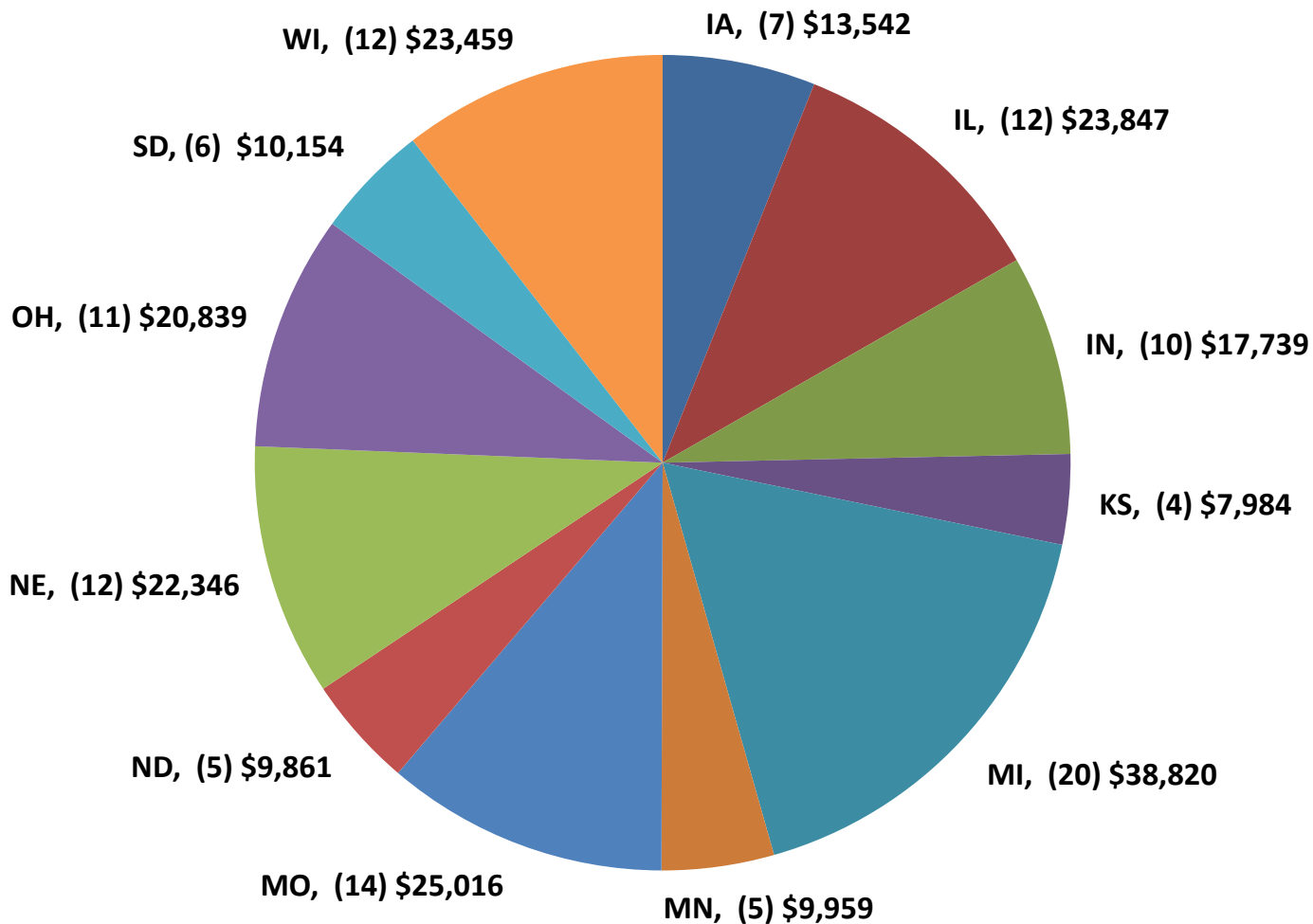


photo credit: Joan Benjamin

Farmer Rancher Grants Funded 1988-2017



Youth Educator Grants Funded 2008-2017



SARE Outreach

- A library of practical, how-to books and bulletins (in print or free download)
- Media outreach
- A portfolio of in-depth reports on current topics
- Conference sponsorships
- Countless online resources, including project reports



For more information about NCR-SARE:

by phone: (612) 626-3113

by email: ncrsare@umn.edu

www.northcentralsare.org

Follow us on:



photo credit: Joan Benjamin

General grant information



- Contrary to popular belief, **most, if not all, funders do not give you money to spend on whatever you want or need**
- Grant programs have specific objectives for distributing money
 - Government funds - often dictated by law
 - Private funds - by mission statements or by-laws
- Grant administrators are bound by these constraints and can't change it for you
- **Make sure what YOU WANT MONEY FOR is something THEY GIVE MONEY FOR!**

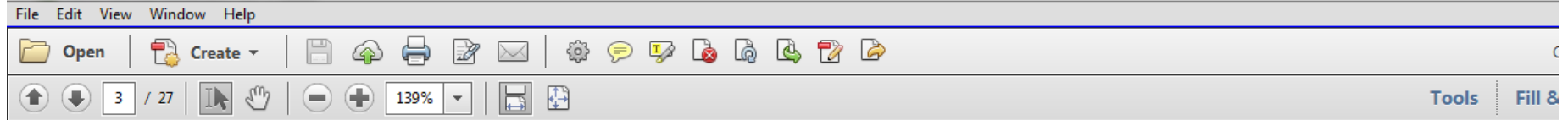


General grant information

- Example – NCR-SARE



2017_FRG_CFP_PDF (3).pdf - Adobe Acrobat Pro



Farmer/Rancher Grants are for innovative sustainable agriculture research, demonstration, and education projects; they are NOT for everyday farming expenses, other than those directly related to the grant project. For example, purchasing fencing or livestock to expand your herd would not be allowed. Fencing or livestock needed as part of a research project to explore how different cover crops work in rotational grazing would be allowed, but only for the land and animals involved in the research.

- Applicants must identify specific problems and potential solutions to those problems.
- Maximum duration for grant projects is 23 months.
- Projects that involve whole farm systems and/or a youth component are encouraged.
- Livestock projects need to comply with reasonable animal care requirements to insure that animals are properly cared for. See the Livestock Care form on pages 23 - 25.



General grant information



- Not everyone qualifies for every grant program
- Grant programs have targeted audiences that can meet their objectives
- Some grant programs only fund in certain geographic or demographic areas
- **Make sure YOU QUALIFY TO RECEIVE THE MONEY you are applying for!**



General grant information

- Example – MDARD



ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS INCLUDE –

- Individuals
- Organizations
- Businesses
- Local Units of Government (county, city, township, village, school district; any authority composed of counties, cities, townships, villages and school districts or combination of these entities)
- Federally Recognized Tribes
- Educational Institutions

ELIGIBLE COUNTIES MAP:

- Projects in the following counties are eligible rural (60,000 population or less), or Micropolitan statistical areas:
- Note: Per the Rural Development Fund Act criteria, preference must be given to projects in the region in which revenues are generated and include the following counties: Marquette; Alger; Delta; Menominee; Dickinson; Iron; and Baraga.
- Applicants must be located in an eligible county in order to be eligible to apply. Applicants not located in an eligible county will not be considered for funding.



General grant information



- Most grant programs **don't just send you a check**
- Some grant programs require you to spend your own money, then you get reimbursed for allowable project expenses
- Most grant programs require some sort of reporting, which may be tied to getting some or all of your funding
- **Investigate how you will receive funds before applying!**



General grant information

- There may be tax liabilities that result from receiving a grant
- **Talk with a TAX CONSULTANT if you have questions!**



General grant information

- Where do you find this information?
- **Request/call for proposal (RFP/CFP)**



NCR-SARE Minnesota Office
120 DAB | University of Minnesota | 1590 Eckles Ave. S. Paul, MN 55108 | ph: 612-626-3113
www.sare.org ncrare@u.umn.edu

NCR-SARE Farmer Rancher Grant and Youth Educator Grant Office
Lincoln University | 9001 Eckles Blvd, Rm. 101 | Jefferson City, MO 65101
ph: 373-681-3315 or 800-520-1340 fax: 373-681-5531

NCR-SARE Farmer Rancher Grant Program 2017 Call for Proposals Farmer Rancher Sustainable Agriculture Grants

Farmer Rancher Grants are for farmers and ranchers who want to carry out Sustainable Agriculture research, demonstration, and education projects on their farms/ranches. The Farmer Rancher Grant call is released in August and proposals are due in December. A total of approximately \$400,000 is available for this program. Grant recipients have 23 months to complete their projects.

TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL, go to <http://www.ciids.org/nesare/fr>

The online submission system will open on August 15, 2016.

Proposals are due by 4:00 p.m. CST, Thursday, December 8, 2016.

If you are unable to use the online system you may submit a proposal by mail or e-mail.

Proposals sent by Fax will NOT be accepted. Mail and e-mail submissions must be received by 4 p.m. CST on Thursday, December 8, 2016.

The online application has strict word limits, and we strongly suggest you prepare your proposal using a word processing program, edit each response to comply with the word limits, and then copy and paste your proposal section by section into the online template, saving as you go.

This call for proposals is available on the North Central SARE web site at www.northcentralsare.org

If you need a printed application, call 612-626-3113.



General grant information

- Where do you find this information?
- **Read the RFP/CFP thoroughly**
- **Don't guess, call the contact if you have questions, it's their job to help you**



Help with Grant Writing and Information Sources

For assistance in preparing your proposal, contact your NCR-SARE State Coordinator (see the list on pg 11 or see: <http://www.northcentralsare.org/State-Programs>). You may also want to contact the NCR-SARE office, the national SARE office, a sister organizations of SARE: ATTRA, your Extension office, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D), local soil and water conservation district, or local sustainable agriculture group.

- Contact NCR-SARE for information on Farmer Rancher Grants and the SARE program:
Joan Benjamin
NCR-SARE Associate Regional Coordinator
Lincoln University
900 Leslie Blvd, Room 101
Jefferson City, MO 65101
573-681-5545 or 800-529-1342
benjaminj@lincolnu.edu
<http://www.northcentralsare.org/>

Where to find grants



- Internet search
- National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition
<http://sustainableagriculture.net/publications/grassrootsguide/farm-bill-programs-and-grants/>
- Charts that provide a quick guide to federal farm and food-related programs and grants and who is eligible



Where to find grants



| Full Program Title | Description | Eligibility: Farmers (F) or Organizations (O) |
|--|---|---|
| <i>Beginning & Socially Disadvantaged Farmers & Ranchers</i> | | |
| Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program | Strengthens beginning farmers' technical and business skills by funding training projects for beginning farmers led by non-profit organizations, academic institutions, extension services, and producer groups. | O |
| Beginning Farmer and Rancher Individual Development Account | Funds local organizations to help beginning farmers and ranchers finance their agricultural endeavors through business education and matched savings accounts. | O |
| Conservation Reserve Program – Transition Incentives Program | Encourages landowners to sell or lease long-term to beginning or socially-disadvantaged farmers and ranchers willing to implement sustainable practices or transition to organic production by providing two years of additional payments for expiring CRP-enrolled land. | F |
| Direct and Guaranteed Farm Loans | DIRECT Provides government loans to allow family farmers, including beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers, purchase farmland, equipment, and other start-up and production necessities. GUARANTEE Provides a government guarantee on commercial loans to family farmers, including beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers, for real estate costs or farm operating expenses. | F |



Where to find grants



GRASSROOTS GUIDE TO FEDERAL FARM
AND FOOD PROGRAMS

FARM BILL PROGRAMS & GRANTS - OVERVIEW

PREFACE

CONSERVATION & ENVIRONMENT

BEGINNING & SOCIALLY
DISADVANTAGED FARMERS

CREDIT & CROP INSURANCE

LOCAL & REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS

ORGANIC PRODUCTION

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

SUSTAINABLE & ORGANIC RESEARCH

FOOD SAFETY

RENEWABLE ENERGY

GLOSSARY AND ACRONYMS

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Where to find grants



- Websites for known funders, examples:
 - Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD)
<http://www.michigan.gov/mdard/>
 - US Department of Agriculture (USDA)/National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA)
<https://nifa.usda.gov/>
 - Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program <http://www.northcentralsare.org/>
- Their grant programs are not always obvious, you may have to use their search box



Where to find grants



- Websites for private foundations, examples:
 - Organic Farming Research Foundation (OFRF)
 - This non-profit foundation sponsors research, including farmer-directed research related to organic farming practices. Proposals are considered twice a year in May and November. For more information, call 831-426- 6606 or go to www.ofrf.org.
 - Local Community Foundations
 - Local Philanthropic Foundations
- Again, they will have certain things they fund
- Their grant programs aren't always widely advertised, **doesn't hurt to call**



Where to find grants



- You have found a grant program, but the RFP is closed. What do you do?
 - Look at the closing date, many grants are on an annual cycle
 - Give yourself a reminder to check 2 – 3 months before that date next year
- Many funders have sign-ups for email newsletters, updates and notifications
- **Sign-up and read their emails!**



Grant writing tips



- You have found a grant program that meets your general information requirements, Now what do you do?
 - **Thoroughly read the RFP, then read it again!**
 - Also, **read organizations mission, goals and objectives**, note key words and concepts, use them
 - If you don't understand something call or email the contact, **It's their job to help you!**
 - **Writing a grant proposal is a lot of work!**
 - **Don't expend the energy** to later realize you won't be considered because you missed something or guessed



Grant writing tips



- You have found a grant program that meets your general information requirements, Now what do you do?
 - **Thoroughly read the RFP, then read it again!**
 - **Follow the directions**, many RFPs have:
 - Page limits, section limits, font size requirements, margin requirements, description of what goes in a section, etc.
 - These to force you to be concise and not ramble
 - **That violating any of these could lead to rejection of the proposal without review**
 - I hate to tell you, but **you are not special**, they make the rules!



Grant writing tips

- Now you are writing...
 - **Write clearly and concisely**
 - **Write logically**, don't jump around with you thoughts
 - Build the next thought, sentence, paragraph or section on the previous
 - **Don't use acronyms, jargon or technical terms** without explaining them
 - Reviewers may not be as well versed in you field as you are
 - Tell them what they need to know, don't assume they already know something



Grant writing tips

- Now you are writing...
 - **Don't make statements you can't backup** with data or other references
 - **If it is your opinion, say that**
 - For example "I believe that..."
 - **Don't use superlatives**, that is a red flag to reviewers
 - "This proposal will produce the very best method to..." What is very best?, Who says?
 - Instead "This proposal will produce a better method to..."
 - Reviewers look for proposals that unbiasedly evaluates something, that are realistic



Grant writing tips

- Now you are writing...
 - **Give them what they ask for**, if you can't, explain why, don't ignore
 - You want to **convince them to fund your proposal**
 - Present **realistic, believable and logical reasons** why
 - **Avoid sales pitches and hyperbole**
 - **Reviewers have a responsibility** to be objective and thorough, **they know what to look for**



Grant writing tips

- Now you are **done** writing...
 - **Have other people review it**
 - Including **someone not familiar** with the topic
 - **Address their feedback**, if they are confused or don't understand something, reviewers will have the same issues
 - **Find and fix spelling and grammar mistakes**
 - **Don't push the deadline**, give yourself time to fix things and re-review what you've written



Grant writing tips



- Now you are **done** writing...
 - **Submit on time!**
 - **Build in time** for problems with the submission process
 - **Most organizations will not accept proposals** after the submission deadline
 - **Most importantly, congratulate yourself for successfully submitting a proposal!**



Grant writing tips

- Where to get **help** with your proposal...
 - There are organizations that offer free grant writing assistance



- Search for them on the internet

- Example:
Michael Fields
Agricultural
Institute
<http://michaelfields.org/grant-advising-resources/>

Grant Advising Resources

MFAI's Grant Advisory & Resources can help you apply to grants and cost-share programs of state or federal sources that could help you achieve your farming or ag-related business goals.

Select from the following **Grant Advising Resources** to learn more:

- [What Makes A Proposal](#)
- [Grant Writing Tips & Common Errors](#)
- [Federal Grant & Loan Programs](#)
- [Preparing to Apply to USDA Grants by Electronic Submission](#)
- [Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food: Grants, Loans and Support](#)
- [WEBINAR RECORDING: Grant Writing Basics - USDA NIFA](#)
 - *Presenters: Margaret Krome, Una van Duvall, and Dr. Mark Miranda*

Select from the following **Grants Advising Guides** for descriptions and application info for federal programs:

- [NSAC's Farmers' Guide to Value-Added Producer Grants](#)
- [Building Sustainable Farms, Ranches, and Communities: A Guide to Federal Programs for Sustainable Agriculture, Forestry, Entrepreneurship, Conservation, Food Systems, and Community Development](#)

To be on the Grants Advising email list for funding program announcements, please email [Kitt Healy](mailto:kitt.healy@michaelfields.org) below. Check our Archive for announcements you may have missed.

For additional grant advising information, contact Kitt Healy, grants@michaelfields.org, Michael Fields Agricultural Institute's Grant Advisor.

Grant writing tips

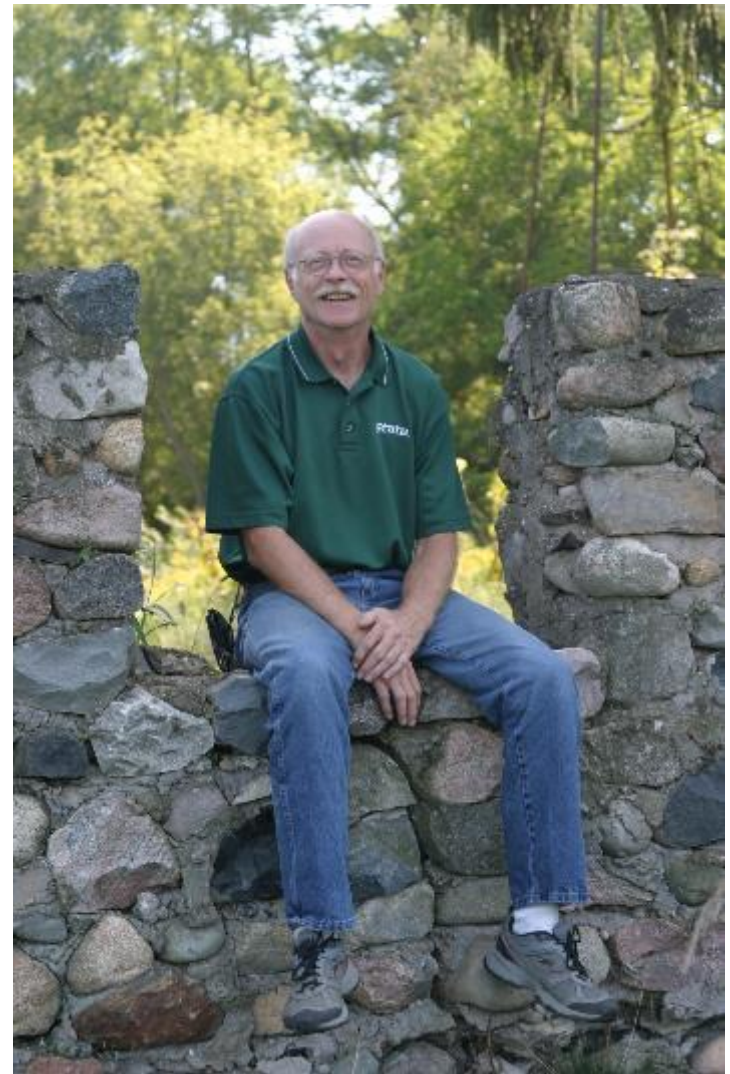


- You've submitted and been rejected...
 - **Don't take it personal!**
 - They only have so much money, other proposals may have better meet their program objectives
 - **Read the reviewer comments**
 - If the comments are generally positive, **resubmit during the next grant cycle**
 - **Address negative comments** in the next submission
 - **Don't get discouraged**, now you know the process, give it one or two or three... more tries



or contact me about SARE It's my job!!!!

Dean Baas, PhD
Extension Educator
Ag and Agribusiness Institute
Michigan State University Extension
612 E. Main Street
Centreville, MI 49032
Office Phone: 269-467-5646
Cell Phone: 269-967-9672
Email: baasdean@anr.msu.edu



MSU is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer. Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status.

