



Sustainable Agriculture
Research & Education



Connecticut
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New York
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Sustainable
Agriculture
Research &
Education

a competitive USDA
grants program

Sustainable Community Grants

Sustainable Community Grants focus on sustainable agriculture as it affects community development, and successful proposals enhance the economic, social, and environmental position of farms and farmers. Reviewers are looking for innovative projects that clearly benefit farmers and were planned in coordination with them; they also want to see efforts that others can replicate and that are likely to bring about durable and positive institutional change.

Proposals must address certain key issues such as finance, marketing, land use, water use, enterprise development, value-added activities, or labor.

Who can apply?

Sustainable Community Grants are primarily for agriculturally oriented agencies and nonprofits (Cooperative Extension, NRCS, state departments of agriculture, or comparable entities), and community development groups with the capacity and experience to foster sustainable agriculture enterprise development.

What is the size of a Sustainable Community Grant?

The cap on any single award is \$15,000.

What can funds be used for?

Grant funds can be used to pay for personnel costs, mileage, materials and supplies specific to the project, outreach, per-diem or consultant costs, and project-specific long distance, fax, and conference calls. Grant funds can also be used to cover meeting expenses and printing, postage, or outreach costs associated with hosting an event or field day. Any equipment costs must be project-specific; requests for general office equipment costs are not allowable.

www.nesare.org





Reviewers look for new ideas to improve farm productivity, profits, stewardship, and the vibrancy of the farm community.

Projects must include farmers in planning and implementation and offer measurable benefit to them.

Are there things funds can't be used for?

Specifically excluded from this grant are food donation programs, educational programs for non-farmers, public awareness campaigns about agriculture, and community or school gardening projects. Grants cannot be used to simply adopt practices or methods already in use—for example, to fund ongoing general support for farmers' markets or to establish another farm-to-school program that is not innovative in some way. Instead, proposals should break new ground and offer fresh approaches to enhancing sustainable commercial agriculture and community development.

What else should I know about Sustainable Community Grants?

- * This grant program is competitive. Each year we fund between 12 and 15 projects and allocate about \$250,000 for the overall program.
- * Proposals are reviewed by a team that includes extension and NRCS staff, farmers, consultants, and people from the rural and community development sector.
- * Projects must actively include farmers in planning and implementation and offer measurable benefit to them. Projects focusing on the non-farming community will not be competitive.

Can I see examples of past projects?

Brief descriptions of past projects in the Northeast are on our web site at www.nesare.org. You can also search a national database of projects from around the country at www.sare.org; select the "Project Reports" link.

Where can I learn more about how to apply?

A complete outline of the application requirements, content, and what to expect if your project is funded is on the Northeast SARE web site—follow the "Get a Grant" link to "Sustainable Community Grants."

Each state also has a Northeast SARE coordinator who can tell you more about SARE programs and SARE priorities. You can find contact information for your state coordinator on our web site under "State Programs."

