Farmer Grants

Not-so-secret tips to securing funding!

By Violet Stone
NY SARE / Cornell Small Farms Program
Farmer Grants: Not-so-secret tips to Success!

$$$ Everyone is looking for it $$$

Grants tend to fall into 3 categories: 1) farm viability 2) on-farm research 3) conservation/energy
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Funding Resources are Abundant!
## Farmer Grants: Not-so-secret tips to Success!

**Today’s Focus: SARE Grants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grant Type</th>
<th>2012 Amount Awarded</th>
<th># of Projects Funded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farmer Grants</td>
<td>$395,648</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnership Grants</td>
<td>$300,480</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Community Grants</td>
<td>$147,224</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research and Education Grants</td>
<td>1.5 million</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td>$476,143</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Goal of the Farmer Grant Program

To develop, refine, and demonstrate new sustainable techniques and to explore innovative ideas developed by farmers across the region.

Farmer grant projects should seek new knowledge that other farmers can use and should address questions that are directly linked to

• improved profits
• better stewardship
• stronger rural communities

The maximum award is $15,000.
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Who can apply?

To apply, you must be a farmer in the Northeast SARE region. You need not be farming full time, but your operation should have an established crop or animal product that you sell on a regular basis.

Institutional and incorporated farms may apply, but the primary activity of that farm must be to produce and sell food under the kinds of economic constraints that affect commercial growers.

Many community-supported farms qualify, but farms where the primary mission is educational normally do not.
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Types of Funded Projects

Farmer Grant funds can be used to:

- Explore new marketing and production techniques
- Pest management
- Cover crops
- Composting
- Agroforestry
- New crop trials
- Bee health and alternative pollinators
- New tool development

And a very broad range of other topics that improve profitability, stewardship, and the rural community.
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Types of Funded Projects

Basically…..

ANYTHING!

Projects must test a genuinely new idea, offer a new twist on an old one, and show evidence of careful planning. SARE doesn’t fund projects where a farmer merely wants to adopt a proven sustainable technique

Innovation is KEY!
What are allowable expenses?

What funds can be used for:

- Pay farmers for their time (be generous!)
- Project-related materials
- Project costs like consulting fees or soil tests
- Communications or outreach expenses associated with telling others about project results.

What funds cannot be used for:

- Capital costs associated with building a barn, greenhouse, or other major farm fixture
- Purchase land
- Purchase durable equipment like tractors or computers
- Utility, telephone, or other overhead costs that would be there in the absence of the project.
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Let’s look at some Examples!

Improving growing practices for processing tomatoes using the Rodale roller crimper
Princeton NJ

Farmer-built spelt dehuller
Avella PA

Evaluation of 12 yellow-flesh peach cultivars for organic production in the Northeast
Fairfield PA

Improving quality of queen honeybees in the Northeast by modifying the standard boxes
Somerset NJ

Winter Grazing in the Northeast
Hardwick MA

Raising figs in high tunnels in the Northeast
Fairton NJ

Hops trellis systems comparison: High vs Low
Exeter RI
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Let’s brainstorm ideas

Time to Play!

• Turn to your neighbor and brainstorm a research question about your farm.

• The question might relate to production (soil health, livestock health, pasture management, etc), your marketing/sales plan, or new tool or recipe development.

• If you’re an educator or community member, think of a question that could help farmers in your community

Sheep/Goat Funded examples:
• Grazing Sheep in a Pumpkin Field
• Educating Consumers and Chefs About Lesser Cuts of Meat Through a Grass-fed Meats Day
• Raising Lambs on Fresh Goats Milk
• Nutrition & Management of Dairy Sheep & Goats on Pasture
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How do I apply?

Farmer Grants:
Due November 27, 2012

Funds and project length
Funds are released as soon as all the required contracts and other documents are returned to the Northeast SARE office. Most projects run one growing season, but others run longer if the plan of work requires it. The maximum time span for a single project is four years.

Reporting
If your project will run longer than a year, we will request an interim report, usually in late winter, and all grantees need to send in a final report within 60 days of project completion. We will send a description of our reporting instructions to you, usually in November or early December.
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What is expected of grantees?

What is expected of grantees?

• Project data and reporting
• Collect and manage reliable data about their project
• Keep records of their project costs and save receipts

Technical advisors
Grant recipients also need to talk with their technical advisor periodically about how the project is going and are responsible for contacting Northeast SARE promptly if a major problem arises.

Continuing interest in project results
Even after the project is over, grant recipients should be prepared to respond to inquiries about it. A summary of the project results will be posted to the web, and there is often ongoing interest in projects that get interesting results or that other farmers want to explore.
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More information!

You’ll find these great resources available online for further information and assistance:

- 2012 Farmer Grant Application Instructions
- How to Write a Farmer Grant
- One-page summary, Farmer Grants
- Tip sheet for Technical Advisors

www.nesare.org
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Contact me with any questions!

Contact:
Violet Stone
607-255-9227
vws7@cornell.edu

15 Plant Science Building
Cornell University
Ithaca, NY
14853