

North Central Region SARE:
advancing the frontier of...

Organic Farming

Organic agriculture is a whole-farm management system that replaces synthetic inputs with methods that mimic natural ecological processes. Demand for organic food is far outpacing supply, as U.S. sales in this dynamic sector have nearly quadrupled in the last decade. All 50 states have USDA-certified organic farmland, totaling more than 4 million acres of range, pasture and cropland. The North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program (NCR-SARE) has invested in more than 100 projects to help achieve the sustainability and well-being of all aspects of organic agriculture and those communities that support organic agriculture.

NCR SARE Project Sampler

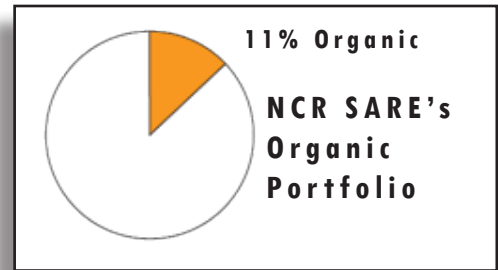
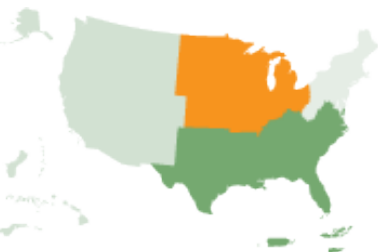
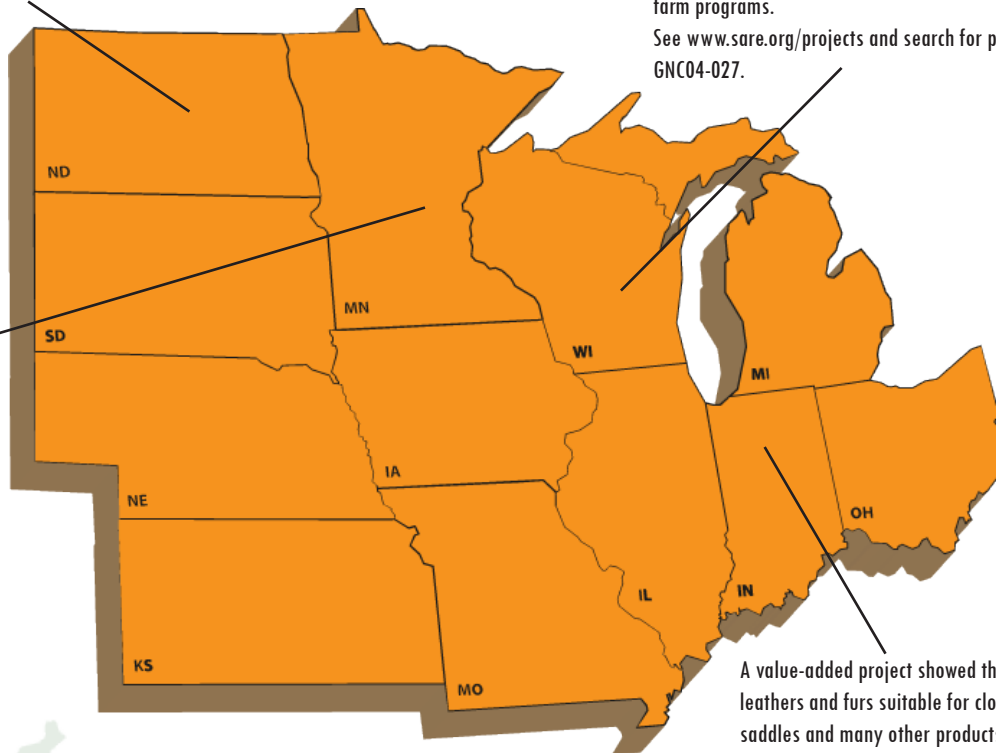
To view SARE's entire organic farming portfolio, or just the North Central Region's, visit www.sare.org/projects. For selected NCR organic farming grants, see the reverse side.

A project on small-grain variety showed that certified organic fields are good locations for cultivar adaptation studies, provided that well-planned crop rotations and other appropriate management strategies are followed. Some crop breeders expressed a willingness to locate future cultivar adaptation studies in certified organic fields, partly because of positive results, and because of the experiences of the organic farmers and crop scientists involved.

See www.sare.org/projects and search for project number LNC02-201.

A majority of ag professionals in Minnesota who participated in an organics short course have gone on to share information they learned with an estimated 850 organic growers.

See www.sare.org/projects and search for project number ENC02-065.



At least 1,000 reports on organic and Amish dairy have been distributed to farmers, educators and academics as a result of a project analyzing grass-based and conventional operations. The exposure to basic information on alternative techniques could be instrumental in adoption decisions and designing farm programs.

See www.sare.org/projects and search for project number GNC04-027.

A value-added project showed that high quality leathers and furs suitable for clothing, footwear, saddles and many other products can be made using organic, healthy, non-toxic processes. Analysis shows that scaling to a regional organic/natural tannery could be successful if the desire for "green" products continues to rise.

See www.sare.org/projects and search for project number FNC05-549.

SARE's four regional programs and outreach office work to advance — to the whole of American agriculture — innovations that improve profitability, stewardship and quality of life by investing in groundbreaking research and education.

– NCR SARE's Organic Farming Portfolio

Selected Grants

RESEARCH AND EDUCATION GRANTS

Grassfed and Organic Beef: Production Costs and Profit Potential

Mary Holz-Clause, Iowa State University of Science and Technology, Ames IA, LNC07-289, \$149,966

Evaluating Corn Varieties in Pure and Mixed Stands for Organic Crop Production Across Three States in the Corn Belt

Peter Thomison, The Ohio State University, Columbus OH, LNC06-272, \$138,252

Microbial Safety of Organic Fruits and Vegetables

Francisco Diez-Gonzalez, University of Minnesota, St. Paul MN, LNC03-231, \$139,650

Marketing Sustainable and/or Organic Products in Small Metro Areas

David Watt, North Dakota State University, Fargo ND, LNC98-126, \$41,355

Impacts of Agricultural Management Systems on Economic, Environmental, and Wildlife Values of Altered and Unaltered Wetland Areas

Diane Rickerl, South Dakota State University, Brookings SD, ANC94-011.1, \$4,500

FARMER AND RANCHER GRANTS

Prairie Farm Pilot Project - Transitioning from Conventional To Organic Farming

Richard Grotberg, Bethany Prairie Farm, Wimbledon ND, FNC06-625, \$18,000

Designing a Small-Scale Organic Agaricus Mushroom Production System to Provide Additional Income to Family Farms

Bob Semyck, Tecumseh MO, FNC06-614, \$6,000

Designing My Path into Sustainable Organic Farming

Roy Monzo, Clare MI, FNC03-440, \$5,488

Fulfilling a Market Niche, Organically

Drew Kimmell, Nevada MO, FNC03-492, \$17,000

Re-Introduction of Flax as a Viable Economic and Rotational Crop in an Organic System

Joel Rissman, Waterman IL, FNC99-249, \$875

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

Training for Organic Farming and Ranching in the Great Plains

Charles Francis, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln NE, ENC06-092, \$75,000

The New Agriculture Network: An Organic Farming Forum for Education and Research

Dale Mutch, Michigan State University, Hickory Corners MI, ENC06-088, \$75,000

Food Alliance Workshops: Helping Extension Educators Build Community Food Systems with Certified Sustainable Practices

James Ennis, Cooperative Development Services, St. Paul MN, ENC04-080, \$13,645

Organic Farming Education for Agricultural Professionals

Faye Jones, Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Services, Spring Valley WI, ENC02-066, \$88,170

Transitioning to Sustainable and Organic Grain and Livestock Production Systems: On-Farm Training for Extension Agents (CES) and NRCS Personnel

Margaret Huelsman, Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association, Columbus OH, ENC99-040, \$46,715

GRADUATE STUDENT GRANTS

Cropping Intensity and Organic Amendments in Transitional Farming Systems: Effects on Microbial Diversity

Shin-Yi Lee, University of Illinois, Urbana IL, GNC06-057, \$9,375

Soil & Crop Quality Under High Tunnels

Sharon Knewton, Kansas State University, Manhattan KS, GNC05-048, \$10,000

Using Farmer Input to Develop Research Projects and Outreach Activities for Organic Agriculture

David Hillger, Purdue University, W. Lafayette IN, GNC05-045, \$10,000

A Socioeconomic Analysis of Organic, Grass-Based & Conventional Dairy Farmers in Wisconsin with Case Study in Amish Stewardship Practices in Kickapoo Valley

Caroline Brock, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison WI, GNC04-027, \$10,000

Comparing Organic and Conventional Fertilization Methods for Cut Flower Production in Haygrove High Tunnels

Katherine Stolp, Kansas State University, Manhattan KS, GNC04-040, \$10,000

For information on many more SARE-funded organic farming projects (1988-2008), search the SARE project database: www.sare.org/projects

This publication was made with funding by USDA's Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service.

