

# Organic and Regenerative On-Farm Research Grants

*Grants are not free money. Writing a proposal can be time-consuming and there is no promise you will ultimately be selected to receive funds. However, most grant programs that cater specifically to growers are fairly easy to work with. A few of these are included in the list below.*

## Paul C. and Edna H. Warner Endowment Fund for Sustainable Agriculture

Managed by The Ohio State University AMP program, the Warner grant supports farmer-OSU extension research collaboration to identify and publicize sustainable agricultural practices and systems which are profitable, socially responsible, energy efficient, and that improve water quality and other environmental concerns of importance to Ohio farms and farmers.

**Who can apply:** Proposals must come from OSU CFAES faculty and Extension personnel as principal investigators but must be collaborative efforts with specific farmers.

**Application notes:** Fairly simple process. If you have a great idea and need an Ohio State collaborator, give your county educator a call or check the list of potential collaborators included on the grant application. Organic growers may also contact the OFFER program.

**Proposal deadline** is March 1, 2021.

**For more information:** [amp.osu.edu](http://amp.osu.edu)

## SARE Farmer-Rancher Grant

SARE (Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education) funds on-farm research, demonstration, and education projects that explore sustainable solutions to on-farm problems. Project proposals should include a clear question or problem and demonstrate the potential for economic, social, or environmental benefits through your project.

**Award Amount:** Up to \$9,000 per farm (up to \$27,000 for group projects)

**Who can apply:** Any farmer in the northcentral region can apply, but should involve project cooperators who can assist with project planning, evaluation and outreach.

**Application notes:** A simple application, budget, and 1-2 letters of support are the main elements for applying. Application process is managed regionally by North Central NCR-SARE

**Proposal deadline:** usually early December

**For more information:** [northcentral.sare.org/grants](http://northcentral.sare.org/grants)

## MORE RESOURCES

### Regional & local

**Local Community Foundations or Farm Bureau** chapters may provide small local grants, especially for demonstration projects.

**County extension educators** can help you make connections at Ohio State, in the community, or may be interested in working with you on small projects and demonstration sites.

**Local 4-H and FFA programs, or local colleges** may have students interested in a class or individual project and may be able to assist with research labor.

**Ohio Small Business Development Centers** can often assist with market research grants for starting or growing a business.  
[clients.ohiosbdc.ohio.gov/](http://clients.ohiosbdc.ohio.gov/)

**The OEFFA Direct** mailing list or newsletter shares grant opportunities from various sources. Sign up at [oeffa.org](http://oeffa.org)

### State-level

**eFields On-farm research**  
Elizabeth Hawkins  
[digitalag.osu.edu/efields](http://digitalag.osu.edu/efields)

**North Central SARE—Ohio**  
Mike Hogan or Cindy Folk  
[northcentral.sare.org/state-programs/ohio/](http://northcentral.sare.org/state-programs/ohio/)

**Ohio State Organic Food & Farming Education and Research program (OFFER).** Cassy Brown or Brian Gwin  
[offer.osu.edu](http://offer.osu.edu)



**THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

[offer.osu.edu](http://offer.osu.edu)

## Organic Farming Research Foundation

OFRF encourages grants that address the resiliency of organic systems to challenges like climate change and/or have economic and social considerations to complement on-farm research.

**Award Amount:** Up to \$20,000

**Who can apply:** These grants are open to anyone, but OFRF particularly encourages farmers, ranchers, graduate students, veterans, early career researchers, and Extension personnel to apply for funding.

**Application Notes:** This process begins with submitting a letter of intent, which briefly describes your project. These are reviewed and selected candidates are invited to complete a full application.

**Letters of Intent deadline** is usually in the summer.

**For more information** <https://live-ofrf.pantheonsite.io/research/grant-awards/apply-for-funding/>

## National Grazing Lands Coalition Mini-Grants

These grants may be used for research and analysis, conferences, innovative technology, demonstration projects, and publication/media development. Projects must demonstrate grazing lands planning, innovative technology, and economic and environmental sustainability.

**Award Amount:** Typically \$5,000-\$10,000.

**Who can apply:** Any state, tribal, public or private entity.

**Application Notes:** Application must include budget and matching funds sources,

**Proposal deadline** early winter.

**For more information** <https://www.grazinglands.org/>

## Value Added Producer Grants

Managed by the USDA Rural Business-Cooperative Service for private agricultural businesses.

**Maximum Grant Amount:** Planning Grants \$75,000; Working Capital Grants: \$250,000.

**Research Supported:** Planning or working grants may be used to fund business and marketing plans and feasibility studies, improve food safety practices, or to acquire working capital to operate a value-added business venture or alliance. Matching funds required.

**Application Notes:** This is a rather involved federal application, which will take time to complete.

**Proposal Deadline:** March 22, 2021

**For more information,** <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/value-added-producer-grants>



## TIPS FOR GRANT PROPOSAL SUCCESS

- **Check for goal alignment.** Grants and their organizations are usually up front about their priorities. Be very clear about how your proposed project will meet those goals.
- **Be realistic on time and funds.** Be sure you are looking at a grant that provides the time and funding you need to answer your research question. Make sure the grant timeline aligns with your study's timeline as well.
- **Look at past projects** that have been funded. This will give you a good idea of the kinds of work they support and ensure your proposal is a good fit.
- **Follow the instructions.** Read the proposal guidelines. Then read them again. Good grant programs are highly competitive. If your proposal is late, incomplete, or missing pieces, it will often not be reviewed.
- **Seek help.** Visit other research sites and ask experienced researchers or project reviewers to look over your plans. Getting early help will prevent problems and give you a resource to resolve questions or problems during the proposal and research process.
- **Collaborations** with other groups and resources are often required and will always win you points. It shows funding agencies that you have resources to help you succeed and share your project's results.
- **Outreach** is a key requirement for many grants. How will your project benefit other farmers? And how will you share your results?