

Kansas Center for Sustainable Agriculture and Alternative Crops

2011 Report to the Kansas Legislature

KCSAAC Enabling Legislation

KSA 76-4, 103 – Functions and duties of the center of excellence on sustainable agriculture and alternative crops shall include but not be limited to:

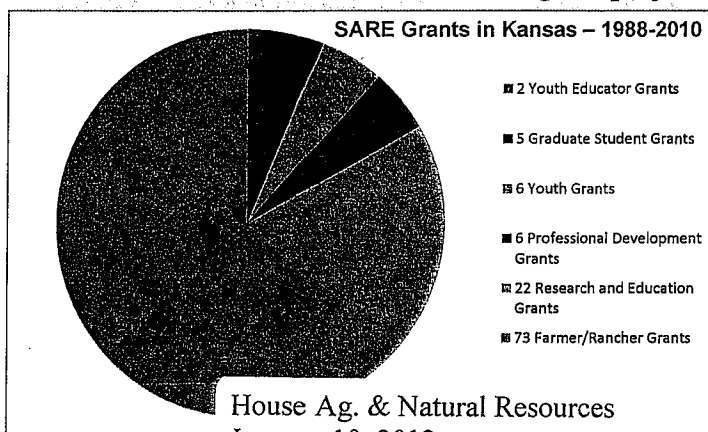
- Emphasizing research, education, outreach and marketing for sustainable agriculture and alternative food, fiber and medicinal crops.
- Assisting producers to increase their share of the food system dollar.
- Collecting and analyzing basic information on the Kansas food system and opportunities for production and direct marketing.
- Focusing research on value added processes and new crops that offer low-volume, high margin niche opportunities.
- Assisting small farmers to access lower input costs through a delivery system with expanded access to sustainable agricultural practices.
- Providing marketing assistance to promote products produced and processed in Kansas.
- Expanding small farm research to include: Organic products; less capital intensive investments; energy saving technology; and agricultural practices that reduce soil erosion and restore soil health.
- Developing and distributing a guide of all state services for small farms and value added agriculture.

The Kansas Center for Sustainable Agriculture and Alternative Crops, part of K-State Research and Extension, has been able to extend its range through a successful partnership with the North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (NCR-SARE).

This relationship allows KCSAAC to coordinate the Kansas SARE Professional Development Program for Extension and other ag professionals and maintain an active role in North Central Region SARE grant funding activities.

The SARE program, part of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA), provides grants and outreach resources for farmers, ranchers, researchers, educators, and youth who want to develop innovations that improve farm profitability, protect water and land, and revitalize communities.

Even before KCSAAC, the SARE program was actively funding grants in Kansas. Since 1988, NCR-SARE has awarded \$2.6 million to 114 grant projects.



House Ag. & Natural Resources
January 10, 2012
Attachment 1

KCSAAC 2011 Report to the Legislature

The pie chart shows that SARE awards grants directly to farmers for on-farm research and education projects. SARE also provides grants to youth and their adult educators for innovative programming about alternative and sustainable agriculture practices.

NCR-SARE is a 12-state region – one of four SARE regions in the U.S. The SARE mission aligns well with that of KCSAAC. SARE's mission is to advance the whole of American agriculture -- innovations that improve profitability, stewardship, and quality of life by investing in groundbreaking research and education. KCSAAC's mission is to support family farms and ranches through research, education, and outreach focused on production, storage, processing, and marketing technologies that will boost farm profitability, protect natural resources, and enhance rural communities.

Together, KCSAAC and SARE provide a continuum of resources for the benefit of all Kansas farmers and ranchers as well as agricultural professionals. This strong partnership has worked well for the past 11 years and will continue to serve the Kansas agricultural community well as we navigate the future.

KCSAAC Plans for 2012

Projects and activities planned for KCSAAC and the Kansas SARE Professional Development Program include providing assistance for:

- Managing Drought Risk on the Ranch, one-day workshop coordinated by Kansas Grazing Lands Coalition, Kansas Graziers Association, and Kansas Rural Center
- Organic Farming 101 Training for Extension professionals, coordinated by Kansas SARE and Kansas Rural Center
- Carbon-Energy-Climate Train-the-Trainer Workshop, coordinated by NCR-SARE, designed to help ag professionals better understand how agriculture affects and is affected by carbon, energy, and climate in the North Central Region. A team of 7 Kansans will attend.
- Continue work on economic analysis of data collected to determine the costs to producers of scaling up local food production; publish results
- Continue work on comprehensive redesign of the Kansas Family Farmer and Rancher Resources Guide
- Kansas Sustainable Agriculture Conference
- Kansas Center for Agricultural Resources and the Environment (KCARE)

Highlights from 2011

KCSAAC helped sponsor and/or participated in the following activities in 2011:

- 2 Basic Organic Training Workshops and 1 Advanced Organic Training for 75 NRCS field staff
- Began data collection on real costs of scaling up local food production
- Local Food Roundtable Discussion; 20 participants
- 5 Grazing Management Workshops and Winter Grazing Conference; 400 participants
- Options, Opportunities & Optimism: Cultivating Our Food and Farm Future, 2011 Sustainable Agriculture Conference; 150 participants
- 2 Good Agricultural Practices (GAPS) Trainings; 50 participants
- Hosted a 5-day tour for NCR-SARE Administrators to visit 10 SARE grant recipients
- Hosted USDA Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan's Farmer Roundtable, 47 participants
- Awarded \$11,400 for SARE travel scholarships and mini grants for 20 sustainable agriculture projects