



## XI. Additional Small Farms Initiatives



USDA Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension (CSREES), which administers the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Program, continues to have small farmers and limited-resource producers as one of its targeted funding priorities.

### AGENCY HIGHLIGHTS

#### Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES)

- **CSREES Small Farm Digest:** In response to the National Commission on Small Farms recommendation that USDA and land-grant universities should examine the social, psychological, and emotional issues which contribute toward farm-related stress in families operating farms, the fall 2000 issue of the CSREES *Small Farm Digest* covered “Managing Farm Stress During Crisis Times.” This issue was posted in its entirety on the CSREES Helping Rural America Face Crisis web site and on the CSREES Small Farm Program web site at [www.reeusda.gov/smallfarm/](http://www.reeusda.gov/smallfarm/).
- **CSREES Small Farm Program Exhibit Emphasizes Diversity of Farming Community:** The CSREES Small Farm exhibit features farmers and ranchers of different ages from across various regions of America to portray the broad diversity of people who make up small farm and ranch communities. These include male and female farmers and ranchers who are African-American, Hispanic, Asian-Pacific, and Native American.
- **CSREES Small Farm Program Newsletter Subscriber Mailing List Builds Diversity:** Built into the 22,000 subscriber database for CSREES *Small Farm Digest* newsletter is the Tribal Leader list, HACU (Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities) institutions, 1890 historically African-American land-grant universities and colleges, 1994 tribal colleges, and diverse readers. Some of these readers include Congressional members; individual African-American, Native American, Asian-Pacific, Hispanic, European, Mennonite, Amish, physically-challenged, male and female farmers and ranchers; those who serve farmers



and ranchers at the Federal, State, and local levels; and others. With every outreach conference attended by CSREES staff, more subscriber names are added to the database from conference participants who visit the CSREES Small Farm Program exhibit and sign up to receive the newsletter.

- **CSREES Is Building Regional Partnerships To Better Serve Small Farmers:** The North Central Region Small Farm Workshop—“Small Farms: A Renewed Opportunity”—was held at the University of Illinois-Springfield during March 2001. The 144 participants included Cooperative Extension field staff and representatives from Federal and State agencies, farmers, and nonprofit organizations. They met to learn more about issues facing small farm operators in the North Central Region, small farm demographic characteristics, and the economic impact of successful small farms. Participants developed coordinated action plans at the conference to partner more fully to support small farmer efforts in the North Central Region.
- **CSREES/SARE Grant Program Targets Small Farmers and Limited-Resource Producers:** USDA/CSREES Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Program continues to have small farmers and limited-resource producers as one of its targeted funding priorities. All four SARE regions are funding a large proportion of projects that benefit small farmers. One example benefiting the Northeast Region was a grant that enabled Cornell University to work in partnership with the New England Small Farm Institute on a major professional development project for small farm experts. A first workshop in this multi-year project, held February 2001, brought together teams of small farmers, sustainable agriculture experts, and key government agencies like NRCS on sustainable agriculture issues. These teams went back to their States to implement sustainable agriculture practices for small farms.

## Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

### NEBRASKA

- NRCS has been working with the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska to provide technical assistance on two projects. One initiative is a hydroponic tomato project. The second is an aquaculture project to develop commercial production and marketing opportunities. A joint project involving one field office and a RC&D Office sponsored a “Women in Agriculture” conference. Seventy-five women representing lending institutions, farmers, ranchers, and government agencies from three States—Nebraska, Wyoming, and Colorado—attended an all day conference. Topics included: How to work with agriculture lenders, stress management, marketing basics, and backyard conservation.



### Rural Development/Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS)

■ During both FY 1999 and 2000, the Administrator’s priority goals included small farm and minority operators. End-of-fiscal-year State Office evaluations measured this effort, and 34 of 47 State offices met or exceeded these goals.

■ A new quarterly project funding report tracks small farm, minority, and beginning farmer technical assistance and funded projects (see Figure 2 below).

Figure 2  
Rural Business Cooperative Service Support for Small, Minority and Beginning Farms

	FY 1999	FY 2000
■ Business Programs	\$22,169,050	\$37,940,787
■ Business and Industry Direct Loans (B&I-Direct)	\$74,000 [in 1 state]	---
■ Business and Industry Guarantee Loans (B&I-Guarantee)	\$19,682,427 [in 5 states]	\$77,621,371 [in 14 States]
■ Intermediary Relending Program (IRP)	\$1,819,000 [in 2 states]	\$504,476 [in 1 State]
■ Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEG)	\$593,623 [in 7 states]	\$2,376,190 [in 19 States]
■ Rural Business Opportunity Grants (RBOG)	[N/A]	\$43,050 [in 4 States]
■ Rural Economic Development Loan and Grants	---	\$1,550,000 [in 4 States]
■ Cooperative Service Programs	\$1,206,776	\$1,905,350
■ Rural Cooperative Development Grant (RCDG)	\$674,000 [4 of 10 grants]	\$1,905,350 [16 of 21 grants]
■ Two special grants focused entirely on small farm cooperatives	\$349,000	---
■ Rural Cooperative Opportunities and Problems (RCOP) projects	\$183,776 [2 of 15 grants]	---