

# SARE STATE PROGRAM FUNDING YEAR-END REPORT

## Northeast SARE State Program Report Funding Year November 1, 2007 – September 30, 2008

1. State: Massachusetts
2. Land-Grant Institution: University of Massachusetts Amherst
3. Report Period: November 1, 2007 to September 30, 2008
4. Project Title: Massachusetts Sustainable Agriculture Training
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### 6. Summary:

It is the mission of the Univ. of Massachusetts Extension Agriculture and Landscape Program, in cooperation with other agencies and nonprofit groups, to enhance the economy and environment of Massachusetts by providing knowledge to agricultural and nonagricultural communities through research, education, and outreach, enabling development of ecologically and economically sustainable and socially responsible agriculture and land-management systems. The Massachusetts Sustainable Agriculture Training continues the focus on the three goals of economic viability, environmental sustainability, and community support.

Strategic objectives for each goal were met through workshops, seminars, and field tours involving staff from UMass Extension, USDA-NRCS, Mass. Dept. of Agric. Resources, and other interested groups. One new feature in 2008 was the NOFA/Mass Summer Conference and Mass Grass Grazing School hosted at the Univ. of Massachusetts August 8, 2008. Mass Grass (massgrass.org) was formed in late 2007 by several pasture-based farmers, NOFA/Mass, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), University of Massachusetts Extension and other groups. Together they have been meeting to organize education programs and initiatives including pasture walks and the Grazing school.

In further support of the goals of economic viability, environmental sustainability, and community support in-service training was provided on farms and at the UMass Crop and Animal Research and Education Center. Examples of cooperative training in Massachusetts were workshops for USDA, field meetings with UMass Extension educators and USDA-NRCS staff, and the two day Certified Crop Advisors training meeting for educators and service providers from extension, USDA, Depts of Agriculture, non-profits and industry. This CCA meeting was jointly conducted by the New England states. Also, several farmers, educators and researchers in Massachusetts have SARE projects in the Farmer-Grower, and Research and Education grant programs.

Issue-Based Planning continued to provide a review of the goals for extension and offered to a degree a level of training as each issue team continued the development and review of five year plans with issues, impacts and indicators.

More than 20 Extension Staff participated in Issue Based Planning and more than 12 Extension staff and 10 USDA staff participated in relevant workshops, seminars and field tours. Four UMass staff had earlier participated in a comprehensive survey of dairy farms and their cropping and other farm practices. The results of the survey have been used in staff training locally and regionally in the New England annual Certified Crop Advisors meeting in New Hampshire.

7. Performance Targets: In the first year it includes participation in Massachusetts and regional training of 8 to 12 staff from Extension and other Agencies related to, for example, the high prices for corn and soybean grain concentrates, and nitrogen fertilizer. This will primarily involve staff related to dairy and livestock, and vegetables farm industries. Among staff participating in this agricultural training in sustainability 4 to 6 will indicate interest in implementing one or more learned topic with other staff and farmers, and plan or participate in applied field demonstrations in the second year. The third year 3 to 5 will actually implement one or more topic related to sustainable agriculture (water resource protection, farm economics and land use management) and the Northeast SARE outcome statement with staff from Extension and other Agencies, and farmers.

Participation in training of 10 to 15 educators and service providers from agricultural agencies and UMass Extension Faculty and Professional staff. Among staff attending training activities 5 to 8 indicate an interest in implementing one or more learned topic with farmers and community, and 3 to 5 actually implement one or more topic related to sustainable agriculture.

8. Milestones: Performance targets were met or exceeded through staff training at field meetings and tours, regional workshops, and seminars. More than 15 educators and service providers received training and several of these have incorporated some of the training into their work activity with farmers. The training activities related to the goals of economic viability and environmental sustainability. Activities are on-going and future meetings are planned.
9. Performance Target Verification: Formal and informal surveys are used at CCA meeting, pasture walks, In-Service Teacher Training, Twilight meeting, and field days.

The in-service training provided at the CCA meeting on nutrient management on dairy farms has resulted in three states developing cooperative research and extension programming on evaluating early corn hybrids to help farmers achieve more effective cover crops for end-of-season N accumulation.

Mass Grass was formed by USDA-NRCS, UMass Extension, NOFA/Mass and concerned farmers to provide training and programming related to pasture management. Mass Grass sponsored several pasture walks for novice and advanced gazers, and conducted the Grazing School at UMass in conjunction with the summer NOFA/Mass conference and thus training to more than 30 extension and USDA staff, and information to more than 100 farmers.

## BENEFICIARY FORM

**Northeast SARE State Program Funding Year-End Report, Nov. 1, 2007 – Sept. 30, 2008**

Univ. of Massachusetts

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Institution

Activity	Date	Location (City/ State)	Number of Beneficiaries					
			Extension	USDA	Non-Profit	Industry	Farmers	Other
CCA training	1/31/8	Newcastle, NH	12	5	7	45		
Inter-Departmental Seminar – Nutrient flows in dairy farms. Dept. Vet. & An. Sci.	2/27/8	Amherst	3					22
Mass Grass Pasture walks, on-farm, UMass farm	10 event	Mass.	10	12	10	9	65 <sup>+</sup>	
Teacher In-Service Training	7/8/08	Deerfield, MA	3					18
Dairy Twilight Meeting	7/31/8	Baldinville, MA	4	3	1	4	15	5
UMass Field Days	8/8- 9/08	Deerfield, MA						
Mass Grass Grazing School			8	5	6	6	42	10