

Northeast SARE Professional Development Program Annual Report

1. Rhode Island
2. University of Rhode Island
3. May 1, 2005 to April 30, 2006 (Note: Project term is October 1, 2004 – September 30 2005).

4. URI Cooperative Extension State Implementation Professional Development Program and Special Initiative: “ Farmland Preservation and Estate Planning” (formally, “Conference on Agriculture and Farm Viability”)

5. Project Contact:

Ernest Morreira

Cooperative Extension Education Center

3 East Alumni Ave.

University of RI, Kingston, RI 02881

401-874-4280 Fax: 410-874-2259, E-Mail: Morreira@uri.edu

6. Project Narrative:

Our State Implementation (Professional Development) Program and Special Initiative directly supports URI Extension's goal to reengage commercial agriculture, with a special emphasis on small-scale farms. Creating resource partnerships and collaborations with state and regional organizations allows Extension leverage its resources to better serve its clientele. Current program emphasis related SARE Professional Development and Special Initiative funding includes: Agricultural tourism and direct marketing, farm preservation/estate planning, and integrated pest management.

7. Project Activities

During this term, Our professional development efforts consist of:

Special Initiative: Farm Preservation and Estate Planning

Working with regional partners and the RI Department of Agriculture, URI Extension developed a farm preservation/estate planning workshop. "Transferring the Farm" is an introductory financial planning and risk management workshop designed to help farm families make informed decisions about transferring the farm to the next generation. The program address retirement and estate planning, taxes and legal issues, and it will review effective strategies and tools to determine how best to transfer farm assets. Special features on RI-based farm preservation programs including.

Support farm viability in RI through Extension's project-based strategic partnership

URI/CE has entered into a strategic partnership agreement with the RI Division of Agriculture and Marketing, and the RI Center for Agricultural Education and Promotion (RICAPE), to support farm viability in RI. Extension professionals benefit from this relationship through timely communication with RI agriculture, access to field based

research and reports, and opportunities for multi-disciplinary collaborations, leveraging of resources and funding.

Provide funds for Cooperative Extension field personnel for professional development experiences and topical training

It is not cost effective to develop training on individual topics for RI Extension's small and specialized staff. However, SARE funds are set aside to enable Extension personnel and partners to attend centrally offered area training programs. Extension field personnel have received training on IPM, risk management/estate planning and agricultural tourism, and land-link programming

Provide regional representation for URI CE and RI agricultural interests through engagement in the NE Regional SARE program.

The URI Cooperative Extension has maintained reciprocal and contributory relationship with the SARE program. The State Coordinator fulfills the duties and expectations this assignment, including attendance at seasonal NE SARE Coordinator meetings, promotion of SARE educational resources and grant programs.

8. Publications

9. Performance Targets/Milestones

- Special Initiative: Working with regional partners and the RI Department of Agriculture, URI Extension developed a farm preservation/estate planning workshop for 70 farm operators, Extension and USDA personnel and other agricultural service organizations.
- Support farm viability in RI through Extension's project-based strategic partnership with the RI Division of Agriculture and the RI Center for Agricultural Promotion and Education (RICAPE).
- Provide SARE funds for 4-6 Cooperative Extension personnel receive topical training and professional development opportunities
- Provide regional representation for URI CE and RI agricultural interests through active engagement in the NE SARE Professional Development Program.

10. Accomplishments

Special Initiative: Sixty RI farmers and 10 agricultural service providers increased their knowledge of farm preservation and estate planning at a day-long (3/16/06) risk management/farm transfer workshop developed by URI/CE in association with the RI Division of Agriculture and regional extension partners.

URI Cooperative Extension entered into an ongoing strategic partnership with the RI Center for Agricultural Promotion and Education (RICAPE), and the RI Division of Agriculture to conduct joint programming in support farm viability in RI. Additionally, URI CE worked to enhance the capacity of RICAPE itself by providing consulting services in the areas of strategic planning, program and organizational development, membership and governance, and grant writing and provided active support of

RICAPE, Division of Agriculture and URI program development and delivery. Notable among many agricultural service efficiencies and accomplishments that have come from the Partnership are two USDA/SARE grant-funded programs: The RI Agricultural Tourism Project and the RI Sustainable Agriculture Technical Support Project. Additionally, the Partnership has benefited Cooperative Extension field staff by vastly increasing its interaction with agricultural service agencies and their farm clientele and forging partnerships to address technical support and farm viability needs.

During this period, over 90 RI farm operators and 10 Extension, USDA and other agricultural service professionals attended six RICAPE/URI/Division of Agriculture training sessions that presented principles and practices of agricultural tourism.

Cooperative Extension Field personnel have participated in major training programs in, vegetable production, IPM, and Agricultural Tourism

State PDP Coordinator included: Participation in SARE PDP State Coordinator regional meetings; training program development and delivery; promotion, networking and coordination for SARE educational resources and staff and farmer/grower professional development opportunities, publications and grant programs; and communication, program reporting/accountability. Special effort to promote SARE grants resulted in three RI farms receiving SARE Farmer-Grower Grants

