From funding to field findings

A three-project preview for Northeast SARE

September 13, 2026

Three public final reports show how funding supported field research and practical learning. Each example connects an award to its research question, field work, reported findings and practical use.

Prepared for feedback. This independent OpenAgData preview is not a SARE-endorsed evaluation.

3 final reports	$458,733 in awards	2014-2018 study years

Nominal funds awarded, not expenditures or economic returns. A selected demonstration, not a representative SARE portfolio.

Read the pathway

Award > Research question > Field work > Reported findings > Practical use

Measured result - A finding reported by investigators, checked against the report rather than independently reanalyzed.

Reported adoption - Practice changes or benefits described through project reporting, including farmer accounts.

Target - An intended project achievement, kept separate from results.

Practical implication - OpenAgData interpretation for discussion, not a universal agronomic recommendation.

The question for your team

Does this make it easier to explain what these grants produced, and which missing connection matters most? A correction, one missing field, or the most useful part would be enough to improve the next version.

Scope and method

The selected statements were checked against the reports' methods, results and outcome sections. We did not reanalyze raw trial data or verify post-project adoption. Research dates, grant dates, targets and reported outcomes remain distinct. Locations describe documented research activity, not statewide coverage or recipient headquarters; no precise farm coordinates are inferred. Results are not pooled, and no benefit-cost estimate is made.

Winter-terminated cover crops

Winter-terminated cover crop strategies for vegetable farms in northern New England

$14,996 awarded in 2017 | University of Vermont

Research lead: Heather Darby | Field studies: 2017-2018

Research question

Can winter-terminated cover crops support nutrient cycling and soil cover in northern vegetable systems?

Where and how

Borderview Farm, Alburgh; Pomykala Farm; River Berry Farm (Vermont)

Borderview: 17 treatments plus control, four replicates. River Berry: three treatments; Pomykala: four; three replicates each. Soil nitrate, biomass and crop responses tracked.

What the report supports

MEASURED RESULT

No significant sweet-corn yield differences were reported at Borderview and Pomykala.

Source: Research results: Tables 10 and 14 and discussion

MEASURED RESULT

Winter-terminated covers released nitrate earlier in spring than overwintering covers in this trial.

Source: Summary; Research conclusions

Practical implication

Match cover-crop winter survival and planting date to the following crop. Treat these findings as one-season evidence.

Keep this qualification

Strawberries at River Berry were not due for harvest until 2019; the broad summary does not establish a yield result there. Longer-term soil-health effects remain unresolved.

Outputs to follow: Research reports and a vegetable cover-cropping bulletin.

Source context: Research: Materials and methods; Tables 10 and 14; Research conclusions. Projected end date listed: 2018-12-31.

ONE17-293 - public final report

For review: Is the narrower yield statement appropriate, given the unharvested strawberry crop?

Early cover crops and deep nitrogen

Deep soil nitrogen: A resource for sustainability in the mid-Atlantic using early cover crops

$249,576 awarded in 2014 | University of Maryland

Research lead: Ray Weil; Sarah Hirsh | Field studies: 2014-2018

Research question

Can early cover crops recover deep residual nitrogen after summer crops?

Where and how

CMREC Clarksville; CMREC Beltsville Facility, Laurel; cooperating farms in Maryland and southeastern Pennsylvania

Deep soil sampling to 210 cm in 29 fields; replicated cover-crop trials and isotope-tracer experiments.

What the report supports

MEASURED RESULT

Mean residual mineral nitrogen was 253 kg/ha across the sampled 0-210 cm soil profile; 55% was below 90 cm.

Source: Summary: Research conclusions; Research results: residual soil nitrogen

MEASURED RESULT

Cover crops planted by early September reduced deep-soil nitrogen by December; responses varied with soil fertility and weather.

Source: Summary: Research conclusions; Research results

REPORTED ADOPTION

The performance-outcome field records 22 farmers changing cropping systems toward earlier cover-crop planting.

Source: Performance Target Outcomes: Actual number of farmers; Actual change/adoption

TARGET

The original target was 250 farmers and 2 million pounds less nitrogen leaching; this is not a measured achievement.

Source: Project Objectives; Performance Target Outcomes: Target

Practical implication

Evaluate earlier establishment and species choice together; nitrogen capture does not automatically equal fertilizer savings.

Keep this qualification

Reported adoption acreage differs between Learning Outcomes and Performance Target Outcomes. Preserve each scope; do not combine them or infer grant-wide nitrogen savings.

Outputs to follow: Journal articles, field demonstrations and extension resources.

Source context: Summary: Research conclusions; Research: Materials and methods; Performance Target Outcomes; Learning Outcomes. Projected end date listed: 2018-10-31.

LNE14-338 - public final report

For review: Which adoption measure should be used in a program summary, and is supporting verification available?

Cover crops as dairy forage

Building resilience and sustainability in dairy forage systems in New England

$194,161 awarded in 2015 | University of Massachusetts Amherst

Research lead: Masoud Hashemi | Field studies: 2014-2018 (MA); 2015-2018 (VT)

Research question

Can dual-purpose cover crops add forage while maintaining subsequent corn production?

Where and how

UMass research farm, Deerfield; Borderview, Alburgh; on-farm trials in MA, VT and ME

Planting-date and corn-maturity experiments; residue studies; research-station and on-farm trials.

What the report supports

MEASURED RESULT

The report describes spring forage yields of 1-2.5 tons dry matter/acre with appropriate management.

Source: Summary: Research Conclusions

REPORTED ADOPTION

More than 30 farms confirmed increased feed inventories; adoption reporting included farmer accounts.

Source: Summary: Farmer Adoption Actions; Performance target outcome narrative

Practical implication

Assess total annual forage alongside planting, residue and fertility management; forage value alone is not net profit.

Keep this qualification

Some adoption measures were self-reported. Corn responses depended on management and weather. Historical forage valuations do not establish current net profit; the report states nitrogen applications were not directly reduced on farm.

Outputs to follow: Extension reports, field events and farmer learning resources.

Source context: Summary: Research Conclusions; Farmer Adoption Actions; Research: Materials and methods; Performance target outcome narrative. Projected end date listed: 2019-03-31.

LNE15-340 - public final report

For review: Would you prioritize forage production, adoption, or the management conditions in an outreach summary?