

**For Immediate Release**

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**California Graduate Student Receives Ag Research Funding:
Hedgerow Restorations for Pollinator Services****WESTERN SARE**

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SARE's four regional programs and outreach office work to advance sustainable innovations to the whole of American agriculture.

Hillary Sardinas, graduate student at the University of California, Berkeley, recently received \$25,000 for her project, "Ecosystem Services in Hedgerow Restorations: Pollination Function and Nesting Habitat."

According to Sardinas, pollination services have been substantially degraded due to agricultural intensification. As a result, there are increasing calls for on-farm management actions that can enhance agroecological resilience by restoring ecosystem services that support and regulate crop production. This project will study the provision of pollination services and subsequent economic benefits associated with hedgerow restoration, a common habitat enhancement technique. The study will also link the abundance and diversity of native bees directly to delivery of services by calculating rates of seed set. Seed set data will be used to create an economic model of ecosystem service provisioning. Results of this project will provide a comprehensive economic valuation of pollination services provided by hedgerows that can be used in farmer decision-making

Western SARE provided a total \$107,118 to five graduate students. These grants, worth up to \$25,000, are used to assist students in their graduate research projects. Full project descriptions and leader contact information can be found at <http://www.westernsare.org/Projects/Funded-Projects-by-Year/2012-Graduate-Student-Projects>. In a recent evaluation of past graduate student recipients, close to 50% stated that their Western SARE-funded grant generated further research projects. Quite a few expressed that the funding was invaluable to their graduate student research.

Western SARE, a USDA program, annually awards grants under five programs to help sustain agriculture, the environment and rural communities. Producers are actively involved in every funded project.

SARE is a program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture that functions through competitive grants conducted cooperatively by farmers, ranchers, researchers and agricultural professionals to advance farm and ranch systems that are profitable, environmentally sound and good for communities.

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