



2023 CSR REPORT

**BUILDING  
EXTRAORDINARY  
TOGETHER**



# Message to Our Stakeholders

At Ventura Foods, we are proud of our work to be a responsible corporate citizen in every community where we operate. That is why it gives me great pleasure to issue the 2023 Corporate Social Responsibility Report, which details our efforts to invest in the growth of our people and communities, responsibly source and manufacture our products, and protect our environment.

We have made tremendous strides in our CSR program's Product, People, and Planet pillars.

Our company began implementing our three-year Food Safety Culture program to engage all employees on our enterprise-wide, best-in-class food safety journey. For the 25th consecutive year, we honored R&D leaders for their meaningful contributions to the foodservice industry through our MenuMasters program. New employee wellbeing resources continued to be implemented. And the manufacturing teams reduced the use of natural resources and waste production across our operations.

In 2023, we embarked on an exercise to strengthen The Ventura Edge, which serves as our company's identity. Through that process, we modernized our mission, signature strength, and core capabilities to better reflect our work today and in the future. Most significantly, we added a Purpose statement.

At Ventura Foods, our purpose is Building Extraordinary Together.

That means, innovating and manufacturing food products that enable our customers to delight their customers. Providing challenging and fulfilling careers that allow our people to develop and grow. Supporting our communities so they can continue to flourish.

The notion of doing well and doing good has always been a cornerstone of how we operate. But we know there is more we can do to create positive change alongside our stakeholders, including customers, employees, suppliers, and the communities in which we operate. That's why we conducted a materiality assessment to identify the most important topics for

our company and stakeholders. Armed with this information, we will develop actionable and measurable goals to further our responsible citizenship journey. We look forward to sharing our progress in our next CSR report.

In the meantime, we will continue our steadfast focus and commitment to advancing our CSR work. I am incredibly proud of our progress and our employees' dedication to advancing our people, products, and planet goals.



**Chris Furman**

President and CEO



## 2023 CSR REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

At Ventura Foods we strive every day to make quality products, support our people and help care for our planet. Here are a few highlights from our 2023 Report.

## People

Ventura Foods employees recorded **6.8 MILLION** steps as part of their wellness journey



Held 93 interactive educational sessions to roll out our new Ventura Edge and company purpose

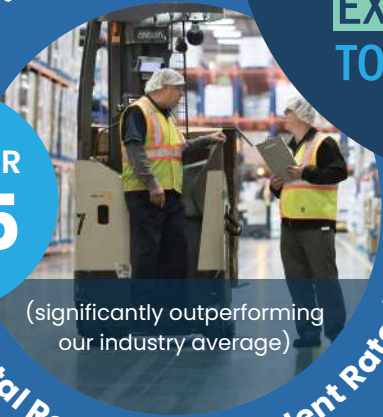
**BUILDING EXTRAORDINARY TOGETHER**

*Our Purpose*

FY23 TRIR  
**1.65**

(significantly outperforming our industry average)

*Total Recordable Incident Rate (TRIR)*



*Celebrated 25 Years*  
of culinary innovation at



## Products

**Educate**

3-Year Food Safety Culture Plan

**Engage**

**Communicate**

*Building a Culture of Food Safety*



## Planet

**10 of our 12**

U.S. manufacturing facilities met our company utilities reduction goal

*Recovered more than*  
**580,995**  
gallons  
of used cooking oil



*Reducing carbon*  
**11,383,134**  
million lbs



**Ventura Foods**

## About this Report

Ventura Foods' 2023 Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Report covers activities from April 1, 2022, to March 31, 2023, the company's 2023 fiscal year (FY23). This is Ventura Foods' eighth annual CSR report. The report describes our performance across various issues material to our business. The report is specific to our U.S. operations and business and does not include reporting on operations outside the United States. In FY24, we will complete the integration of our U.S. and Canadian operations and systems. We plan to include our Canadian business and operations in future reports.

A Certified Internal Auditor from our Internal Auditing team reviewed the accuracy of the information presented in this report.

## Our CSR Approach & Governance

Ventura Foods' CSR strategy is built around the three pillars of Products, People, and Planet, with the input of stakeholders. The United Nations' [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) provide clear guidelines and targets for countries and governments, although industry has a vital role in helping achieve these goals. Our CSR work supports the following SDGs:



Every employee at Ventura Foods contributes to our CSR efforts; however, the governance demonstrates our company's commitments at the highest levels. Ventura Foods' President/CEO and his executive leadership team are accountable for delivering on our CSR program. A CSR Leadership Team comprising senior leaders is responsible for the strategies, goals, objectives, and activities discussed in this report. The Corporate Responsibility Committee of our Board of Directors consists of representatives from our owners – CHS Inc. and Mitsui & Co. – and reviews our progress at least annually.



## Our Purpose & Values

Every day at Ventura Foods, we're helping people reach extraordinary heights. Our success relies on each of us to understand what we do as a company, why our work matters, and the behaviors each of us must exhibit to succeed. The Ventura Edge guides our decision-making. It's what makes Ventura Foods special. It's our identity.

Our Core Values are the qualities that unite us:

**Integrity** – I do what's right, even when nobody's looking;

**Customer Focus** – I make our customers my priority;

**Teamwork** – I've got your back; and

**Personal Ownership** – I'm on it.

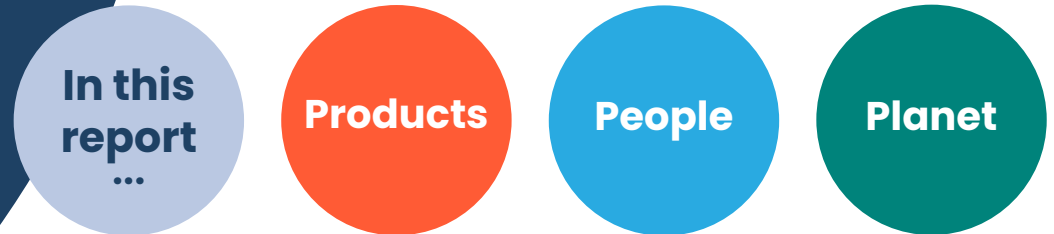
These values represent how we do what we do, drive our success, and underpin our company's purpose of Building Extraordinary Together.

**BUILDING  
EXTRAORDINARY  
TOGETHER**

## Materiality & Stakeholder Engagement

In FY23, we engaged a third party to help us assess where Ventura Foods can most impact the issues of greatest importance to our stakeholders while aligning with our business goals, long-range strategic plan, and customer priorities. Our materiality methodology follows SASB standards, which include interviews, surveys, and focus groups with key internal and external stakeholders. The assessment identified eight high-priority topics as most important to stakeholders and our business: Food safety, product traceability, biodiversity and deforestation, GHG emissions and decarbonization, packaging materials, materials sourcing and efficiency, employee health and safety, and diversity, equity, and inclusion.

In FY24, we will begin developing the next iteration of our CSR strategy and outlining our approach to address each of the topics identified.



# Products

At Ventura Foods, our mission is to create innovative, tailored food solutions that empower our customers to delight their customers. We are dedicated to producing extraordinary dressings, sauces, mayonnaises, butter blends, shortenings, and oils safely and responsibly.

In this  
section  
...

Food Safety  
Responsible Sourcing  
Food Solutions



# Our Culture of Food Safety & Quality

Food safety and quality are at the forefront of everything we do. All employees play an important role in creating an enterprise-wide strong culture of food safety.



**“It’s really about people’s perception of food safety, people’s attitude towards food safety, and how people behave towards food safety when nobody’s watching.”**

In FY23, we aligned and rolled out our three-year Food Safety Culture (FSC) plan built on three pillars, nine key focus areas, and measurable key performance indicators. Our manufacturing plant food safety and quality teams launched the FSC plan by engaging employees through fun activities, luncheons, awards, and friendly competition.



Some key accomplishments in FY 23 include:

- **Educate**
  - Completed Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) and Preventive Controls Qualified Individuals (PCQI) certification for plant quality leadership.
  - Executed FSC Webinar for plant quality leadership.
- **Communicate**
  - Created Food Safety Culture branding.
  - Added a food safety component to Raise the Bar Award, our annual plant performance award.

- **Engage**

- Identified data-driven areas of opportunities.
- Incorporated Canadian manufacturing facilities into Corporate Verification Audit.

We look forward to building on the FSC work accomplished in FY 23 and updating our progress in our 2024 CSR Report.

**12** U.S. manufacturing plants Safe Quality Food (SQF) Level 2 certifications & Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) certified

# Responsible Sourcing

As a leading producer of edible oils and related food products, we continue to align our sourcing priorities with key issues that impact our business. These include sustainable oil sourcing, deforestation, and human rights.

## Sustainable Palm Oil Sourcing

As a member of the [Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil \(RSPO\)](#) since 2010, Ventura Foods is committed to advancing the production of certified sustainable palm oil (CSPO). Ventura Foods has also been a member of the [North American Sustainable Palm Oil Network \(NASPON\)](#) since its founding in 2017. NASPON is an independent group of associations, consumer goods manufacturers, retailers, and palm oil traders and producers committed to increasing the use of CSPO in North America to 100 percent.

As of the end of FY23, our owned brands use 100 percent mass-balance palm oil, contributing to the production of CSPO. We report on our sustainable palm oil sourcing performance annually through our RSPO Annual Communication of Progress Report.

Additionally, we are proud to support our customers who are committed to leveraging certified sustainable palm oil in their products on their sustainability journeys.

## Human Rights

A strong commitment to human rights is essential for fostering a just and inclusive society where every individual can live with dignity and enjoy their fundamental rights and freedoms. We are committed to protecting the human rights of our employees and all those connected to our supply chain, including our suppliers and partners. We are dedicated to conducting business lawfully and ethically. Each of our stakeholders plays a crucial role in our efforts to sustainably manage our supply chain.

We take human rights seriously and require everyone we do business with, including our suppliers, contractors, agents, and consultants throughout the entire supply chain, to demonstrate the same high standards of ethical business behavior. All suppliers are expected to adhere to our company's Supplier Code of Conduct which includes provisions of the Ethical Trading Initiative Base Code, an internationally recognized code of labor practice:

- Employment is freely chosen
- Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining are respected
- Working conditions are safe and hygienic
- Child labor shall not be used
- Living wages are paid
- Working hours are not excessive
- No discrimination is practiced
- Regular employment is provided
- No harsh or inhumane treatment



# Food Solutions

## Celebrating 25 Years of Culinary Innovation

At Ventura Foods, we have a rich history of providing our customers with innovative, custom food solutions. Our culinary team, which has more than 150 years of combined experience, stays ahead of the trends and applies our customer-centric philosophy to create solutions for some of the biggest names in the restaurant industry. As a culinary-solutions-focused company, we are proud to be a co-founder and sponsor of Menu Masters.

In FY23, Ventura Foods, in partnership with Nation's Restaurant News, celebrated the 25th anniversary of MenuMasters, the food industry's premier event that recognizes culinary innovation and the extraordinary people behind it. Over 200 awards have been presented to household culinary legends, such as Chefs Jacques Pepin, Jose Andres, and Stephanie Izard, and the unsung heroes who create and deliver menu items daily to restaurant consumers worldwide.

At the anniversary gala celebration in Chicago, we were proud to induct and recognize for his exceptional culinary achievements, the 2022 MenuMasters Hall of Fame recipient, Chef Thomas Keller. Chef Keller, best known for his California-based restaurant The French Laundry, is a world-renowned and well-respected culinary icon, master of innovation and creativity, cookbook author, and philanthropist. Being part of such a special evening surrounded by our colleagues, customers, and culinary heroes was an honor and privilege.



*Chef Thomas Keller*

**“MenuMasters is a signature event for Ventura Foods. It’s a great way for us to showcase our customer value proposition and reinforce that with our current customers. We’re also able to share with potential new customers what it means to do business with Ventura Foods.”**

**– Luis Andrade  
Ventura Foods’ Executive  
Vice President, Commercial**



**Ventura Foods named Ben E. Keith Foods’ 2022 Supplier of the Year**

**“Ventura Foods continues to be a long-standing and valued business partner of Ben E. Keith Foods. Ventura Foods’ continued commitment to the support of those customers and our divisions has been unmatched. We are excited to continue our partnership well into the future.”**

**– Mike Sweet,  
President of Ben E. Keith Foods**

# People

At Ventura Foods, we support, celebrate, and encourage each other to strive for personal and professional excellence. We are committed to investing in our people and communities because they invest in us.

In this  
section  
...

People Safety  
Employee Well-Being  
Learning & Development  
Diversity & Inclusion  
Community Engagement





# People Safety

As part of our commitment to our people, we are diligent in preventing workplace illness and injuries and promoting a culture centered on health and safety. Workplace safety is the responsibility of every employee, from our CEO to our frontline workers.

We are proud of our safety record. Our FY23 total recordable incident rate of 1.65 significantly outperforms our industry average of 3.0, as reported by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Our manufacturing plants accomplished a 99 percent closure rate for all actions recorded in our VelocityEHS system (EHS Software Application).

At Ventura Foods, our approach to workplace safety is based on safety-leading indicators. Our highlights in FY23 include:

### Management Led Safety Leading Indicators



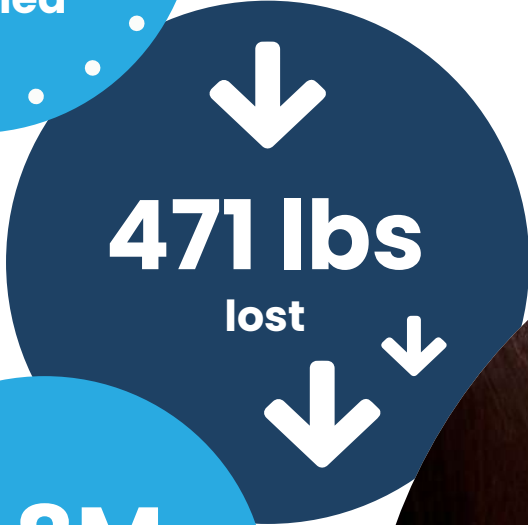
We continued to invest in resources that power our workplace safety agenda, which included our enhanced VelocityEHS by incorporating four new modules: Compliance Calendar, Risk Analysis, Meetings, and Management of Change.

# Employee Wellbeing

At Ventura Foods, we care about the long-term success of our people. We are committed to whole health – physical, financial, and emotional so that our employees and their families can LIVE BETTER.

Our LIVE BETTER program helps our employees and their families live happier, healthier lives. The program offers goal setting, progress tracking, and total rewards to support employee well-being journeys. In FY23, 80 percent of employees completed biometrics screening, earning \$240 each in Virgin Pulse cash rewards that can be redeemed for merchandise, gift cards, or charitable donations.

We rolled out Omada®, a Virgin Pulse personalized program that empowers employees to achieve their health goals. Participating employees received a dedicated health coach and care team, smart devices, and interactive weekly lessons tailored to their health goals, such as weight management, diabetes, and hypertension support.



Wellness efforts also focused on helping employees strengthen their financial wellness. Over 80 percent of employees enrolled in our company-sponsored insurance program completed two financial wellness courses to improve their financial literacy. Our retirement partner conducted a series of group and one-to-one financial wellness sessions and answered employees' detailed questions.





## Learning & Development

At Ventura Foods, we invest in our people and promote a workplace where all employees can do their best work and achieve their goals. We are committed to creating a learning environment that supports our employees' continuous personal and professional growth.

In FY23, we continued work against our holistic company-wide long-range learning and development (L&D) plan with continued investment in expanded resources, initiatives, and L&D offerings. These included:

- Supporting our revised Ventura Edge rollout with 93 educational sessions across our manufacturing and office locations.
- Launching our MVP LMS (Learning Management System). Our new LMS consolidates all our L&D resources into a one-stop shop for the learner, among other key initiatives, that further support our employees and organizational growth.
- Implementing Director's Circle cohort-based learning program with our CEO.
- Expanding our knowledge management and training platform, POKA.

- Rolling out Vector Solutions, a maintenance training assessment and content platform.
- Implementing Territory Management and Large Account Planning training for our sales team.



**243,694**  
total training  
hours

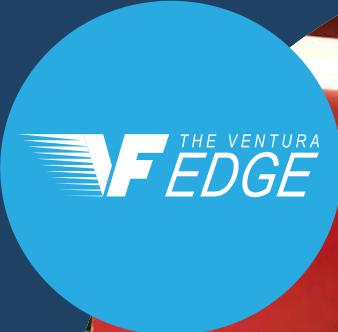
### L&D Spotlight

At Ventura Foods, we strive to train our mechanics to the highest level in electricity, motors, and controls, Programmable Logic Controller (PLC) troubleshooting, and basic programming. Our Chambersburg manufacturing facility partnered with the Franklin County Career and Technology Center (FCCTC) to develop an adult learning class focused on industrial maintenance. Six Ventura Foods mechanics became the first class to complete the six-month program and received OSHA 10-hour safety training certifications.

# Ventura Edge Spotlight

The Ventura Edge is our identity. It's what our company stands for. It outlines expectations for how we interact with each other and the difference we make for our customers. Simply put, the Ventura Edge is what makes Ventura Foods a great supplier and employer.

In FY23, we modernized The Ventura Edge to better reflect the company's current state and ambition. The most significant change to The Ventura Edge is the addition of our company's purpose: Building Extraordinary Together. Every employee in every location, from our front lines to our executive suites, participated in one of 93 educational sessions about The Ventura Edge, including the company's purpose, mission, values and core capabilities. Leaning into our commitment to culture and core values of teamwork and personal ownership, each location delivered the training uniquely to maximize employee engagement and participation.



## Diversity & Inclusion

We value diversity and pride ourselves on providing an inclusive, respectful, and caring work environment. We aim to attract high-performing, diverse talent to help us grow and innovate new products that meet our consumers' preferences and needs.

Ventura Foods is a long-standing supporter of the Women's Foodservice Forum (WFF), the food industry's thought leader on gender equity. Twenty-three Ventura Foods employees attended the WFF Annual Leadership Development Conference. Employees joined breakout sessions that offered actionable insights and heard from inspirational speakers representing diverse industries and perspectives.

We have more than 170 active WFF participants across all company functions. Our WFF partnership and strategic relationship are strongly supported by our senior leadership, who have also served on WFF boards, champion development programming, and act as mentors for all participants.

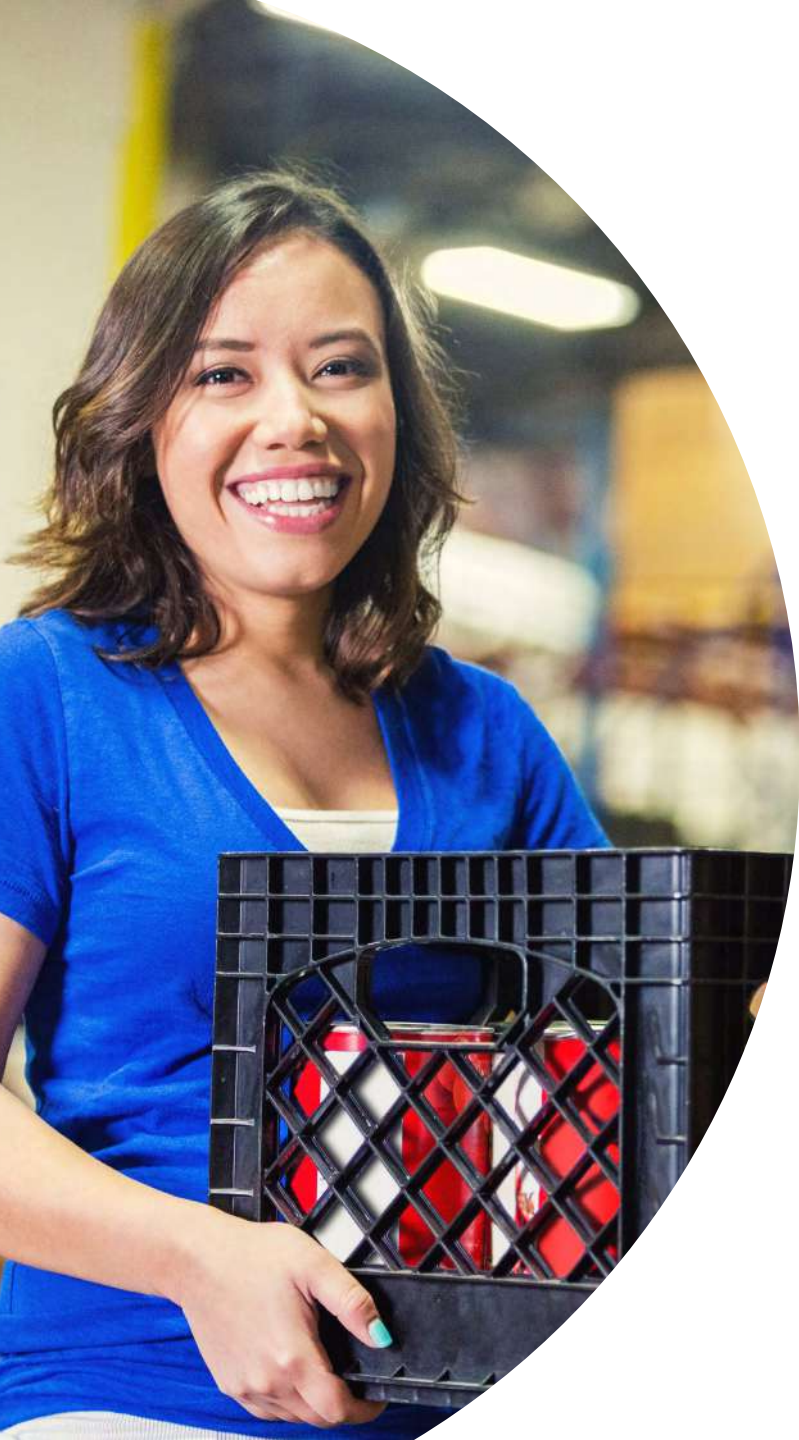
**"It was a pleasure and a privilege to be alongside other members of our Ventura Foods team. I value being part of a company dedicated to employee growth and development by allowing us opportunities such as this conference. I look forward to sharing my learnings with others around me."**

**– Amber Hittle,  
Transportation Operations  
Manager**

## Empowering Women in Manufacturing

Building on what we have learned from our WFF partnership, in FY23, we expanded our partnership with Women in Manufacturing (WiM), the only national and global trade association dedicated to providing year-round support to women who have chosen a career in the manufacturing industry.

On International Women's Day, our Ontario plant hosted California State Polytechnic University, Pomona students interested in food manufacturing. Students toured the facility and participated in a panel discussion to gain insights into the industry and a broad range of opportunities. The students heard from Ventura Food female leaders across many functions, including EHS, corporate communications, and information technology (IT). The students appreciated this unique opportunity to visit a state-of-the-art food manufacturing plant and learn from women leaders in the food manufacturing industry. Ventura Foods is proud to support our current WiM and to promote food manufacturing as a viable path for future female leaders.



## Community Engagement

At Ventura Foods, giving back to the communities where our employees live and work has always been a top priority. While our primary corporate focus is hunger prevention and relief, we also empower our manufacturing and office locations around the U.S. to support hyper-local organizations focusing on issues uniquely relevant to their communities. We impact thousands of neighbors annually through corporate and employee giving, in-kind donations, and volunteer opportunities.

### Together, We Can Edge Out Hunger

Employees across Ventura Foods come together for two weeks each year to support our annual company-wide giving campaign – Edge Out Hunger – built on our company values and philanthropic commitment to support hunger prevention and relief efforts. Our employees and company donated more than \$68,000 to 14 non-profits serving the local communities where we operate.





# Spotlight on Our Communities

## Saginaw, TX

Our Saginaw manufacturing plant employees, family, and friends enjoyed a night out with bowling and laser tag. They used this event to raise awareness of hunger in their community, which kicked off two months of giving to support their local food pantry. Saginaw employees contributed 5,000 pounds of food and \$3,000 to the Saginaw Community Link Food Pantry. The funds will help the organization expand its operations and further aid the community.

## Albert Lea, MN

During the annual company giving campaign, the Ventura Foods team at Albert Lea chose the Freeborn County School Backpack Program as their hunger prevention and relief charity. The program provides backpacks filled with food to help bridge the gap during weekends and non-school periods for kids and their families experiencing food insecurity. Employees raised more than \$1,100, which Ventura Foods matched dollar for dollar.

## Brea, CA

Thirty-five individuals identified as the company's most philanthropic employees in Brea, CA were honored for generously donating their time and talent through corporate initiatives to charities across Orange County, CA, such as the Walk to Feed OC, OneOC's Community Cup, and the Walk for Kids to benefit the Orange County Ronald McDonald House. The Ventura Foods team was among over 700 people from the private, public, and nonprofit sectors recognized during the Spirit of Volunteerism awards one of the largest and longest-running volunteer recognition events in Orange County.



# Planet

Ventura Foods is committed to reducing its operational environmental footprint today and impacting a sustainable and better future.

In this  
section  
...

Reducing Energy  
Reducing Water  
Reducing Waste to Landfill  
Generating Renewable Energy



# Reducing Our Footprint

Ten of our 12 manufacturing facilities met our company goal and reduced one or more utilities (e.g., electricity, natural gas, water, and waste) by three percent or more. While progress against reducing energy and waste was met with headwinds due to production complexities, almost all facilities made significant progress in reducing waste to landfills. In this report, we are pleased to share some of the ways our plant teams continued to address areas of opportunity to reduce energy, water usage, and waste reductions across our operations.



## Reducing Energy Use

- The maintenance team at our Albert Lea, MN facility conducted monthly compressed air leak audits. They identified and repaired 145 cubic feet per minute (cfm) of leaks. The team also replaced two outdated non-VFD (Variable Frequency Drive) air compressors with an energy-efficient 300-hp VFD air compressor, which can help reduce electricity usage by up to 35 percent.
- Our Birmingham, AL operations team reduced energy after conducting an Air Leak Stop Study. This study identified and fixed 87 air leaks across the facility. This resulted in a decrease of 229,787 kWh hours.
- An LED lighting installation project to replace fluorescent lights was completed in Opelousas, LA, lending to long-term energy reductions at their facility.



## Reducing Water Use

- The Chambersburg, PA, team completed several projects to help reduce water withdrawals across their operations. One project included strategically placing needle valves (6000psi) within the operations to “trim” or slow the water flow rate during production. Trimming the water flow between 7 and 20 gallons per hour, reduces water withdrawals by approximately 50 percent or an estimated 1.5 million gallons annually.
- Our Opelousas, LA team reduced water withdrawals by 10,000,000 gallons. The team identified and addressed multiple factors contributing to the significant water reduction, such as repairing the main water supply line and the barometric condenser to reduce steam loss, steam trap and block and bleed trainings.
- A new heat exchanger was installed in Waukesha, WI to reduce single-pass cooling water. The new equipment can reduce the 9,000,000 gallons of water used annually for cooling by up to 50 percent.



# Reducing Our Footprint (continued)

## Reducing Waste to Landfill

- At our St. Joseph, MO facility, two choppers were purchased to enable recycling of green nylon straps. Approximately 1,400 pounds of nylon straps were diverted from the landfill in three months.
- Our Birmingham, AL operations created a cross-functional team composed of distribution, supply chain, and production to identify products close to past shippable shelf life. The team successfully separated items that were reworkable or recyclable resulting in 1,319 tons or 30 percent reduction in total waste to landfill.

## Renewable Energy

Through our Producing Useful Renewable Energy (PURE) program, we work with our environmentally conscious customers to reclaim and convert used cooking oil into biofuel.

Ventura Foods remains committed to supporting a cleaner, healthier, and more sustainable future!

**Recovered  
more than 580,995  
gallons of used  
cooking oil**

**Recycled into  
biofuel**

**Reduced  
carbon 11,383,134  
million pounds**

**Equivalent of  
planting 5,645  
acres of forest**

## About Ventura Foods

Ventura Foods innovates and manufactures food solutions for food service and retail businesses. We make exclusive products for the world's most iconic restaurants and retailers, provide ready-to-go product solutions for professional kitchens, and make consumer brands everyone knows and loves. Our portfolio of Dressings, Sauces, Mayonnaise, Bases, Margarine, and Oil, combined with our slate of services, turns these flavor and performance ingredients into extraordinary menu items and meal ideas for our customers.

Ventura Foods is a privately held joint venture of CHS, Inc. and Mitsui & Co. Our company is headquartered in Brea, CA, with operations across the U.S., Canada, Mexico, and the Philippines.

### DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Ventura Foods is proud to provide this update on progress toward our CSR commitments. We thank you for taking the time to understand how we source our ingredients and make our products, support our people and communities, and help care for our planet.

We welcome your questions and feedback at [www.venturafoods.com/contact/](http://www.venturafoods.com/contact/)

