



This month, *The Shelby Report of the Southeast* salutes our first Sustainability in the Food Industry honorees. These companies have demonstrated a commitment to reducing food waste, supporting hunger-relief efforts and improving operational efficiency. From eco-designed packaging to sustainable refrigeration solutions, they are doing all they can to build a smarter, greener and more resilient food ecosystem.

Ahold Delhaize USA

Salisbury, North Carolina

Ahold Delhaize USA aims to build a more sustainable food system through collaboration, innovation and scale.

Recognizing that the industry’s biggest environmental challenges cannot be solved by one company alone, ADUSA has joined with supplier partners Kellanova, General Mills and Campbell’s in efforts to reduce Scope 3 emissions, advance regenerative agriculture and drive positive change from farm to shelf.

Partnership spotlight

With Kellanova, ADUSA is working alongside Bartlett to create a farm-to-shelf wheat-sourcing program that strengthens supply chain resilience while supporting farmers adopting practices that improve soil health and conserve resources.

The pilot demonstrates how retailers and suppliers can align purchasing with sustainability outcomes to benefit people and the planet.

It starts at the farm, implementing conservation practices to improve soil health, which improves water quality and helps reduce emissions, then continues through milling, manufacturing and ends on ADUSA brand shelves.

Through its collaboration with General Mills, ADUSA is supporting farmers in the adoption of regenerative agriculture in key sourcing regions. This partnership accelerates farming practices to reduce emissions, improve water stewardship and enhance biodiversity – safeguarding the food system’s viability while advancing shared climate goals.

In partnership with The Campbell’s Company, ADUSA is supporting potato farms to implement regenerative farming techniques to create more resilient agricultural systems and reduce emissions through soil health practices. The initiative covers 1,000 acres, corresponding with the approximate number of acres used annually to grow potatoes for Campbell’s potato chip and soup products sold in ADUSA brand stores.

Driving collaborative impact

While each partnership is distinct, together they represent a bold new model for retailer-supplier collaboration.

By connecting expertise, investment and scale, ADUSA and its partners are building momentum for systemic change to drive reduced environmental impact, strengthen food security and build a more resilient supply chain.

Although measurable results are in early stages, the anticipated impact is significant: improved soil health, reduced emissions, enhanced biodiversity and stronger farmer livelihoods across thousands of acres of U.S. farmland.

Equally important, these initiatives set an example for how retailers and suppliers can work together to advance sustainability at scale, providing a road map for the industry. ADUSA has seen firsthand that industry collaboration can unlock impact that no single company could achieve alone.

Additionally, suppliers are essential partners in our sustainability journey across ADUSA local brands. Through these efforts, ADUSA demonstrates leadership and reaffirms its commitment to healthier people and planet.



Dole

Charlotte, North Carolina

A Honduras-based project between Dole and Zamorano University focused on tropical agriculture was designed to develop an integral and sustainable water management in the Uchapa-Pimienta micro-watershed, strengthening local capacities and reducing climate vulnerability.

The area is rural and close to Dole banana farms. The project covers key areas of water stewardship at landscape level to reach maximum impact and is closely aligned with the needs of local and indigenous communities, schools and local stakeholders.

The project has targeted and achieved significant progress in three key areas – environmental education, water management as an ecosystem resource and sustainable production systems through a range of initiatives.

For education, youth participation was promoted with the involvement of 551 high school students in environmental protection and restoration activities. In addition, 45 children were trained on issues related to climate change and natural resource management. About 480 m² of the Olanchito municipal nursery was rebuilt, with the capacity to produce 50,000 plants annually. Further, school gardens were implemented, engaging 65 children and 38 young people under the Learning by Doing methodology, consolidating themselves as an innovative and transformative tool for hands-on environmental education.

With respect to ecosystem water management, the project achieved strong results. An official declaration was obtained for 569 hectares of Quebrada Andaluz micro-basin as a forest protection zone. About 29 hectares were restored with diverse forest species and an additional 672 hectares were secured under forest protection and restoration.

In addition, three community fire protection brigades were equipped and two forest protection plans (2024–25) were implemented, reducing wildfires to less than 5 percent of the total area – evidence of the effectiveness of inter-institutional coordination promoted by the Forest Protection Board.

In addition, 230 families benefited from improvements in the water distribution system by getting their homes connected to the water infrastructure.

Finally, within the sustainable production systems component, environmentally friendly production models were promoted. Two thousand fruit trees were established on farmers’ plots and 40 production units were enriched through agroforestry systems of fruit species. Support was also provided to two beekeeping organizations that included 17 women and 33 men. Some 30,000 ornamental, fruit and timber plants were produced in the nursery.





Sustainability Starts with Smarter Water Use

Dole has 52 water recirculation systems, operating in 83% of banana packing plants.

Leading banana production with innovative water management.

That's The Dole Way.



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G&R Farms

Glennville, Georgia

At G&R Farms, sustainability is at the heart of everything it does. As stewards of the land, the company’s goal is to grow the sweetest Vidalia onions possible while conserving resources, reducing waste and ensuring the health of workers and soil for generations to come.

Less is more – Through precision planting, G&R Farms carefully selects sweet onion varieties and matches them with the right sowing and transplanting dates. This approach enhances taste, appearance and shelf-life while minimizing inputs. The use of sandy, low-sulfur soils and diverse crop rotations keeps the land healthy and productive. G&R Farms focuses on what matters most – onions that look beautiful, taste exceptional and stay fresh longer.

Strategic field management – G&R Farms strikes a balance between consistency and innovation, utilizing larger fields for reliable production while testing new methods in smaller fields. By practicing conservative fertilization and harvest timing in core acreage, it reduces environmental impact while continuing to advance farming practices in targeted areas. This ensures dependable supply and continuous improvement in sustainability.

Resource-smart farming – Recent changes to G&R Farms’ planting strategy has allowed it to reduce the total planted area by 160 acres while increasing planting density by 20 percent. This innovation results in brighter, more uniform onions and higher yields – meeting consumer demand with fewer acres. These changes also drive significant conservation gains:

- Water – Saving more than 21 million gallons of irrigation water each year.
- Fertilizer – Cutting fertilizer use by 15 percent thanks to advanced precision application technology, which improves efficiency and protects the land.

Every decision made is guided by a belief that farming must not only nourish people today but also preserve the land for tomorrow. By embracing precision, efficiency and innovation, G&R Farms ensures that its Vidalia onions are truly “Grown with Passion, Served with Pride.”



Harris Teeter

Matthews, North Carolina

Harris Teeter demonstrates that being “in food with love” extends beyond customers to encompass communities and the planet. Through its comprehensive food rescue program and sustainability initiatives, Harris Teeter is transforming what could potentially be food waste into community nourishment across 250-plus stores.

Food rescue program impact

In 2024, Harris Teeter donated \$12.8 million worth of food – 7.3 million pounds – directly to local food banks and community organizations, including 4.9 million pounds of perishables, providing 5.9 million meals to families facing food insecurity. Through May 2025, it had donated 1.6 million pounds, representing 1.9 million meals valued at \$2.7 million.

The program operates through partnerships with food banks across the company’s footprint, coordinating daily with those partner organizations to ensure fresh produce, bakery items, dairy and prepared foods reach those in need rather than landfills. In May 2025 alone, Harris Teeter distributed 361,428 meals across communities.



Comprehensive waste diversion

Beyond food rescue, Harris Teeter’s waste management strategy prevented more than 39 million pounds of organic waste from reaching landfills in 2024.

Through partnerships with Divert and Organix Recycling, the company diverted 36.5 million pounds for clean energy production and composting. Its recycling efforts included 51,321 tons of cardboard, 2.94 million pounds of plastic, 1.27 million pounds of cooking oil, 2.46 million pounds of meat department by-products and 696,000 pounds of pharmacy paper.

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delhaize USA



Ahold Delhaize USA is proud to be recognized for environmental collaboration, regenerative agriculture and supply chain innovation. Together with partners like Campbell’s, General Mills and Kellanova, we are helping advance real change from farm to shelf.



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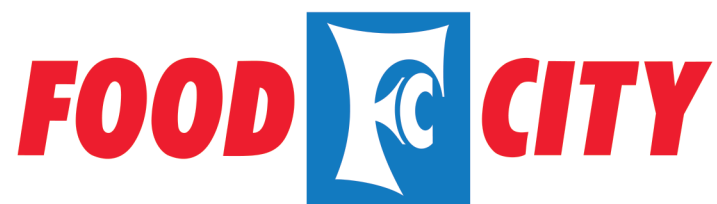


<https://www.linkedin.com/company/ahold-delhaize-usa/>



Congratulations to Food City!

Food City has been honored with the Shelby Report Sustainability Award for their commitment to greener practices—from investing over \$5 million annually in locally grown produce to sourcing sustainable seafood and grass-fed beef. With a hybrid fleet, EV chargers, energy-efficient systems, and community initiatives like Earth Day events, they are reducing their environmental impact while supporting local farmers and families.



K-VA-T Food Stores, d/b/a Food City

Abingdon, Virginia

Food City is dedicated to enhancing sustainability across various aspects of its operations. Food City's initiatives span from local produce sourcing to energy-efficient store designs, all aimed at reducing its environmental footprint and promoting sustainable practices.

Food City purchases more than \$5 million in locally grown produce annually, reducing transportation needs and supporting local farmers. Its partnerships with more than 20 farms across several states have positively impacted local communities.

For instance, Food City's tomato partner, Red Sun, uses innovative water systems and integrated pest management to minimize water use and eliminate the need for herbicides. Additionally, Free Leafy Greens in Ohio employs sustainable growing processes to ensure the safety and quality of its produce.

Food City sources sustainable seafood and grass-fed beef from certified suppliers. Thomas Foods International USA, one of its beef suppliers, uses solar energy and recycling efforts to minimize its environmental impact.

Wampler's Farm Sausage, another key partner, has achieved net-zero energy use through solar arrays and the Proton Power CHyP system. Food City also offers plant-based meat alternatives from Beyond Meat, which require less land and produce fewer greenhouse gas emissions.

Food City's new store locations feature energy-saving concepts, including LED lighting, energy-efficient refrigeration and HVAC systems. It also is investing in solar energy, with one solar array in operation. Motion sensors and energy-efficient doors further enhance stores' energy efficiency.

Food City is committed to reducing waste





We are proud to receive this year's Sustainability Award!

through various initiatives. It uses reusable plastic containers (RPCs) for fresh products, recycles significant amounts of cardboard, metal and plastic and participates in composting programs.

Food City's food waste reduction efforts include donations to local food pantries and community organizations. In 2024, it donated more than \$2.8 million through various initiatives and raised over \$4.4 million for community support.

Food City operates a fleet of 140-plus hybrid vehicles, significantly reducing fuel emissions. Its dynamic routing system has reduced the total miles traveled and the number of trips, contributing to lower emissions.

Food City hosts annual Earth Day initiatives and encourages sustainability among employees and customers. It also promotes digital policies to reduce paper use and continues to educate its employees on sustainability practices.

Okeanos

Miami Beach, Florida

Okeanos is transforming the food packaging industry with its patented Made From Stone technology. This scalable, drop-in solution replaces the majority of petroleum-based plastic resin with naturally abundant calcium carbonate (CaCO₃) in a drop-in compound that can be used on existing plastics manufacturing equipment.

By cutting plastic at the source, Okeanos delivers immediate environmental and economic benefits for food manufacturers, brands and consumers.

The measurable impact is significant:

- **Plastic reduction** – By displacing up to 60 percent of plastic resin, Made From Stone packaging has prevented thousands of metric tons of plastic from entering the waste stream.
- **Carbon reduction** – Calcium carbonate requires far less energy to process than petroleum-based polymers, reducing CO₂ emissions by as much as 67 percent across key applications.
- **Operational efficiency** – Manufacturers adopting Made From Stone compounds report energy savings of about 10 percent on processing lines, while maintaining or improving throughput.
- **Regulatory alignment** – As governments enact stricter packaging laws, Made From Stone helps brands comply seamlessly, bridging the gap between ambitious sustainability targets and operational feasibility.
- **Affordable sustainability** – Priced lower than virgin resin, ensuring accessibility.

In food applications specifically, Okeanos has partnered with leading dairy and snack producers to scale adoption in bottles, sachets, butter wraps and flow-wrap packaging. These solutions not only reduce reliance on virgin plastics but also improve recyclability when designed as monomaterial films. Okeanos' footprint now spans 13 global manufacturing locations, including facilities in Latin America, the Middle East and Asia – regions where plastic pollution and regulatory urgency are at their peak.

By enabling local production, Okeanos reduces transportation emissions while accelerating access to affordable, sustainable packaging.

Beyond materials science, Okeanos is committed to education and community impact. The company invests in industry partnerships and transparent product labeling, powered by dynamic life-cycle analysis (LCA) QR codes, which empower consumers to understand the impacts of their purchasing decisions.

By replacing plastic with stone, Okeanos is redefining what sustainable packaging looks like – offering an immediate, cost-stable and scalable solution that helps the food industry achieve meaningful waste and carbon reduction today.

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Operational innovation

Harris Teeter has implemented energy-efficient LED lighting across all refrigerated cases and freezers with motion sensor technology that reduces energy consumption while maintaining food safety. Its private label team has transitioned to compostable deli packaging and is advancing responsible sourcing initiatives.



Community impact

Harris Teeter's sustainability efforts create multiplier effects – every rescued pound provides 1.2 meals while preventing landfill methane emissions.

Harris Teeter proves neighborhood markets can be powerful sustainability catalysts, transforming waste into community nourishment one rescued meal at a time.





ROOTED IN TRADITION

Growing for Tomorrow



Sustainably Grown
Protecting land,
water & resources



Generational Legacy
3rd generation family farm,
80 years strong



Reliable Supply
Year-round sweet onions
you can count on



Future Focused
Supporting FFA students
in college ag studies - nearly
\$500k raised

Sustainable Farming, Premium Potato Products.

- Gold Level in the Sustainability Standard by Primus Auditing Ops
- Low-flow irrigation systems for soil & water conservation
- 1-megawatt solar farm
- Treating acid mine drainage water
- Using methane gas from a neighboring landfill



MASSER
FAMILY OF COMPANIES

