

2025 IMPACT REPORT

GREETINGS!

LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

At Great Lakes Cheese, we believe the decisions we make today shape the company, and the world we leave for tomorrow.

As a family- and employee-owned company, we naturally think long-term. Our Vision, Together, for generations to come, reflects our commitment to building a business that creates lasting value for our people, our communities, and our stakeholders.

Our first Impact Report brings that commitment to life through three areas that define our impact: People, Planet and Purpose.

This report is a reflection of where we are today, the progress we have made and the opportunities ahead. We know meaningful impact is a journey, and we are committed to continuing that journey, together.



Bob Sarver | President & CEO



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SEE BEYOND TODAY AND
HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT

ON OUR

PEOPLE, PLANET, AND PURPOSE

FOR GENERATIONS TO COME.

Every decision we make today has the power to shape tomorrow. The choices we make for our people, communities, environment, and our business create a ripple effect.

At Great Lakes Cheese, we believe lasting success is defined not only by what we achieve now, but by the legacy we build for future generations. As a family- and employee-owned company, we have both the privilege and responsibility to build something that endures.

Our Vision **Together, for generation to come**, naturally puts generational impact at the center of how we work, grow, and serve. It inspires us to operate responsibly, support our communities, and continually improve so we can leave our company—and the world around us—better than we found it.

Our Ownership Culture is how we bring this vision to life, by empowering every employee-owner to think long-term, take responsible action, and make decisions that create lasting value. That ownership mindset is what turns our Vision into action—connecting who we are to what we do and grounding our impact in the responsibility we share.



People:

We care for each other & embrace infinite potential

- Employee-Owner Engagement & Development
- Employee-Owner Health, Safety, & Wellness
- Community Giving



Planet:

We protect and restore the world we share

- Sustainable Packaging
- Energy & GHG Emissions
- Water Stewardship

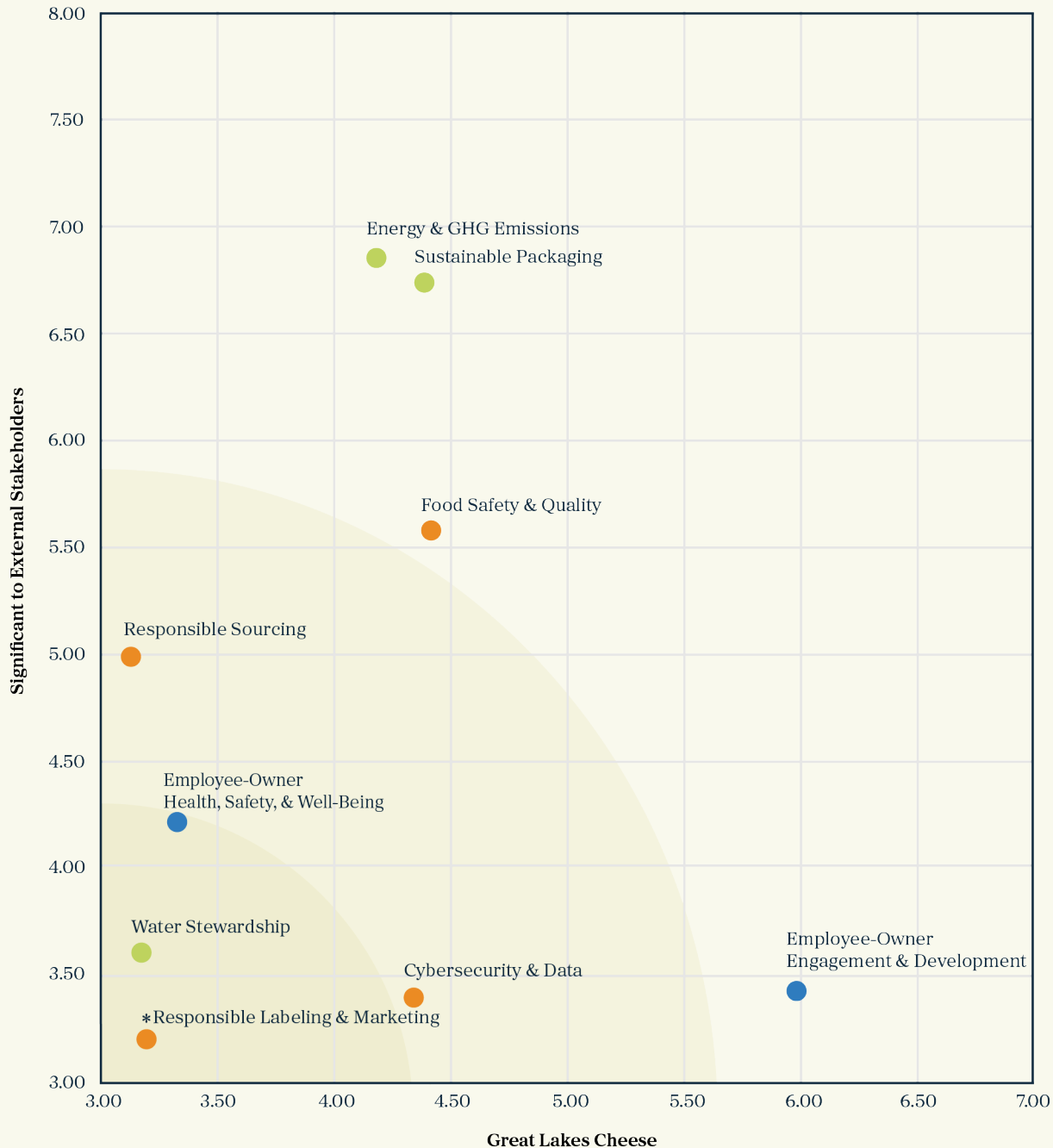


Purpose:

We instill and reinforce trust in the food supply chain

- Food Safety & Quality
- Responsible Sourcing
- Cybersecurity & Data Privacy
- Responsible Labeling & Marketing

MATERIALITY MATRIX



MATERIALITY ASSESMENT

To ensure our impact efforts focus where they matter most, we conducted a comprehensive materiality assessment in 2024. By engaging a diverse group of internal and external stakeholders, we identified the people, planet, and purpose topics with the greatest significance to our business and the stakeholders we serve. The insights gained continue to guide where we invest our time, resources, and efforts to create meaningful, lasting impact.

Community Giving was not listed as a priority topic for any external stakeholders, but had a very high ranking among internal stakeholders. This led us to add it to the original nine material topics that scored 3 or above both internally and externally.

Key:

- People
- Planet
- Purpose

** This topic was listed as an emerging topic and may be skewed due to an unconscious bias in the interview process.*

PEOPLE



At Great Lakes Cheese, our long-term success begins with people. For nearly seven decades, generations of employee-owners have shaped who we are, how we work, and how we care for one another and communities. This section highlights the ways we invest in that ownership culture—by supporting health, safety, and well-being; creating opportunities for engagement and development; and strengthening the communities where our employee-owners live and work. Together, these commitments reflect a simple belief: when our people thrive, our business and communities are stronger for generations to come.

To focus our efforts and align on shared objectives, these are how we define each of our people-related material topics.

1

Employee-Owner Health, Safety, & Well-Being

Identify hazards and manage risks to help keep employee-owners safe.
Enable employee-owners to take ownership of their holistic wellness with ample information, resources and programs.

2

Employee-Owner Engagement & Development

Foster our ownership culture and offer opportunities for employee-owners to realize their infinite potential.

3

Community Giving

Promote the health and well-being of the communities where we live and work by providing time, product, and resources.

EMPLOYEE-OWNER HEALTH, SAFETY & WELL-BEING

We recognize that supporting employee-owners' holistic wellness requires more than comprehensive benefits offerings; the work environment itself needs to encourage **wellness**. This is an ongoing cross-functional effort across our Operations, Environment, Health & Safety (EHS), and Total Rewards teams.

Health, Safety & Well-Being At Work

When it comes to employee-owner safety at GLC, our focus is simple: take care of ourselves and each other. In 2024, we launched a behavioral-based safety program, **Pause**. We chose **Pause** because we wanted to emphasize how the micro-moments in our daily rhythm make the difference between a safe and unsafe work environment. Our Pause mindset encourages employee-owners to slow down, assess their surroundings, stay focused, and act with intention. While GLC provides the training, tools, and resources to work safely, it is the everyday decisions of our employee-owners that help everyone stay safe.



Reinforcing Safe Choices

A strong commitment to safety is built through conversation. That's why leaders across our facilities conduct Pause Observations—brief, real-time conversations that reinforce safe behaviors, identify opportunities to improve, and recognize employees for making thoughtful, safe decisions. In 2025, leaders completed **17,197 Pause Observations**, creating thousands of opportunities to coach, encourage, and strengthen our shared commitment to safety.

Not just another safety program, Pause is about **engagement, empowerment, and ownership**. This program encourages employee owners to focus on:

- **Awareness:** Looking, listening, observing obstructions, utilizing horns and lights.
- **Attentiveness to Tasks:** Paying attention to the task at hand without distraction i.e. not walking, talking, carrying, opening, writing all at once.
- **Moving with Intention:** Working efficiently yet with intention and focus, without rushing.
- **Safety Ownership:** Recognizing fatigue, poor judgement, unsafe decisions or unsafe conditions in co-owners (and notifying someone).



Great Lakes Cheese focuses on using leading indicators to prevent injuries and improve the safety of all employee-owners.



Health, Safety & Well-Being Benefits

We offer competitive benefit options to our employee-owners and their families to help them reduce risk and enhance their holistic wellness. These programs represent a huge investment in our people and our business continuity.

We review benefit effectiveness alongside safety outcomes, utilization trends, attendance, retention, and employee feedback, to support continuous improvement and alignment with long-term workforce and business needs.

1

Medical, Dental, and Vision:

Together, these benefits provide access to preventive and ongoing care, supporting early intervention and sustained wellness for our employee-owners and their dependents.

2

Life and Disability:

Benefits offer financial protection during unexpected events, reinforcing stability for employees and their families.

3

Competitive Weekly Pay:

Supports predictable cash flow and near-term financial stability, helping employees better manage routine expenses and reduce financial uncertainty.

4

Paid Personal Time and Holidays:

Promote recovery and balance, which are essential to safety and performance in operational roles.

5

401(k) and Employee Stock Ownership Plan:

Support long-term financial security and shared commitment to the company's success.

6

Employee Assistance Program:

Provides confidential access to mental health and practical support, contributing to psychological safety and early problem solving.

7

Tuition Reimbursement:

Supports skill development and workforce adaptability, strengthening long-term capability.

Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP)

In 1971, Founder Hans Epprecht launched the Profit Sharing Plan to ensure that every employee had a vested interest in and benefited from the company's success. In 1998, the Epprecht Family converted the Profit Sharing Plan into an **Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP)**, now **one of the largest in the nation**. Today, all eligible employees participate in the ESOP, meaning that when you join the company, you become an **employee-owner**.

The ESOP is a company-funded retirement benefit that gives employee-owners a meaningful stake in the future of our business. As the company grows and creates long-term value, employee-owners have the opportunity to share in that success through their retirement accounts. More than a benefit, the ESOP helps shape our **ownership culture**. It reinforces the idea that every employee-owner contributes to our collective success and encourages long-term thinking, accountability, collaboration, and pride in the work we do **together**.

Historically, many employee-owners have seen the value of their ESOP accounts begin to compound in fewer than 10 years. While annual values may fluctuate with market conditions and business performance, our **long-term focus remains the same: building a stronger company that creates lasting value for generations of employee-owners**.

Average account balances for employee-owners working in a variety of hourly plant positions with different levels of tenure:



* Past performance does not guarantee future results



Being part of a company that doesn't just see you as an employee, but as an **owner** is very rewarding.

RENE AYALA

PRODUCTION SUPERVISOR | ABILENE, TX



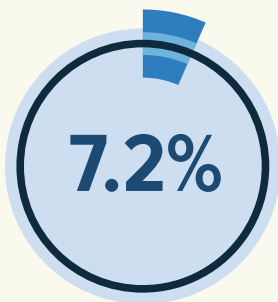
Total Rewards Survey

In Spring 2025, we conducted a survey to get input from all of our employee-owners on our **Total Rewards** program, which includes benefits, time off, retirement programs, compensation, and workplace experiences.

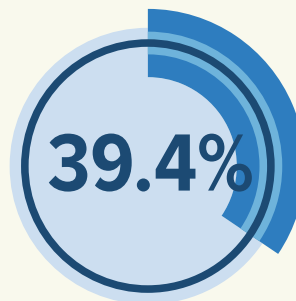
Nearly 40% of all Great Lakes Cheese employee-owners participated. The feedback—from all sites, job types, age groups, and levels of experience—gives us confidence that the results will help guide our decisions for the next three to five years.

The feedback will help guide our decision-making, allowing us to strengthen and invest in areas employees value most, while simplifying offerings that were identified as lower priority. This employee-driven approach ensures our benefits strategy continues to evolve in ways that best support our people.

Our **Health and Wellness Steering Committee** will evaluate our rewards program and build a roadmap for continuous improvement.



342
EMPLOYEE-OWNERS
WITH 20+ YEARS



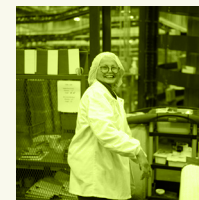
1,872
EMPLOYEE-OWNERS
WITH 5+ YEARS



GLC has been good to me and my family. I think a lot of the people who stay here a long time do so because they feel good — you, know, they feel like **they are home**. And that's how I feel!

SOCORRO EMERSON

FSQA SPECIALIST | WAUSAU, WI



EMPLOYEE-OWNER

Engagement & Development

The long-term strength of Great Lakes Cheese depends on the knowledge, skills, and leadership of our people. As experienced employee-owners retire and new generations join our workforce, we have a responsibility to preserve institutional knowledge, prepare future leaders, and ensure the expertise that has shaped our company continues for generations to come.

Developing people is more than career growth—it's how we safeguard the future of our business. Through intentional succession planning, leadership development, and knowledge sharing, we are investing in the next generation of employee-owners, while honoring the experience of those who came before them.



Internal promotions
in 2025



Total headcount as of
December 31, 2025



Internal promotions
between 2021 and 2025



Potential is Infinite

Every employee-owner's journey is different. Whether someone is just beginning their career, developing new skills, or preparing for retirement, we believe in creating opportunities that help people shape their career trajectory. Through learning, development, on-the-job experience, and internal career opportunities, employee-owners have the ability to expand their skills, explore new paths, and define success on their own terms. As they grow, so does their ability to shape their future—both professionally and personally. Our commitment is not to define what success looks like, but to provide the tools, support, and opportunities that help employee-owners pursue it.

Leadership Development

Leadership at Great Lakes Cheese is built on the belief that great leaders are developed—not simply promoted. To prepare the next generation of leaders, dozens of cross-functional employee-owners identified five leadership competencies that define what successful leadership looks like across our organization. Each competency is supported by practical behaviors and tools that help leaders apply these principles in their everyday work.

Rather than prescribing a single leadership style, our **Leadership Competency Model** meets leaders where they are in their journey, providing flexible, actionable resources that encourage self-reflection and growth. Together, these competencies create a common leadership language all leaders can learn.

Take Ownership | **Empower People** | **Drive Collaboration** | **Embrace Change** | **Deliver Results**



I took over 10 years off from work to stay home and raise my four children. I decided to re-enter the workforce at Great Lakes Cheese in 2017. I have been able to work in several different departments, learn more about the business, and take on more responsibility.

As the lives and needs of my children have evolved, I have been given the opportunity to flex my career, experiencing remarkable professional growth while balancing work and home life.

LUCY ZAMARY

* **DIRECTOR, PROCUREMENT** | **HIRAM, OH**



* Started as a Regulatory Intern

Additional Resources Offered

1 Programs

Create meaningful opportunities for employee-owners to build experience, explore career paths, and develop leadership skills at every stage of their journey.

- **Early Career Development:** A 9-week summer internship program that introduces students to our business through hands-on experience and professional development.
- **Leader Launchpad:** Foundational learning for emerging leaders as they transition into leadership roles.
- **Leadership Workshops:** Curated sessions that help strengthen people leaders' skills and capabilities across a variety of topics.

2 Continuous Learning

Foster a mindset of lifelong learning by giving employee-owners access to knowledge, industry expertise, and development resources that help them grow throughout their careers.

- **LinkedIn Learning:** On-demand training across thousands of professional topics from technical skills to leadership development. GLC employees utilized 582 hours of LinkedIn Learning lessons in 2025.
- **University Partnerships:** Collaborations with universities such as Case Western Reserve University, Cornell University, and Utah State University.
- **Industry Knowledge Sharing:** Participation in organizations such as Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association and International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA) to stay connected to industry best practices and emerging trends.

3 Tuition Reimbursement

Whether pursuing a technical certification, undergraduate degree, or graduate program, tuition reimbursement helps employee-owners invest in themselves while continuing to contribute to the future of Great Lakes Cheese.

- GLC had 26 employee-owners take advantage of this program in 2025.
- **Total reimbursements for 2025 valued at \$123,720.38.**

INTERN CONVERSION
RATE SINCE 2018

42%

My internships provided a strong foundation in both technical and cross-functional aspects of the business. They helped me understand real world applications of food science, strengthened my problem solving skills, and allowed me to apply creativity while working through practical challenges.

MONIK RUPAREL

PROCESS CHEESE FORMULATIONS SCIENTIST

LA CROSSE, WI



43%

INTERNS IN 2025
HIRED FULL-TIME

Employee Recognition

Great Lakes Cheese has various opportunities each year for recognizing employees who live out our ownership culture.

Founder's Award

At our annual National Business Meeting, one leader is recognized each year with this prestigious award. This award is presented to a steady leader who brings clarity and resolution to every challenge, and **embodies the core values of our founder, Hans Epprecht: hard work, honesty, and integrity.**

Stewardship Award

At our annual all-employee meetings at each site, we recognize **one individual per site with the Stewardship Award (10 per year)**. This is the highest recognition at the sites each year. These individuals represent the very heart of what it means to be an employee-owner. By embracing the spirit of growth and partnership, they set a standard of excellence for us all.

You Make a Difference Program

Throughout the year, we recognize employee-owners for demonstrating our ownership culture, specifically our **Core Promises of Protect, Care, Create, Grow, and Partner**. This peer-to-peer recognition program at our sites encourages our teams to celebrate each other. Employee-owners are recognized each month for a variety of ways they help create a collaborative and caring workplace.



Both of my parents retired from GLC, and I'm **proud to follow in their footsteps**. I even met my wife working here. Starting here at 18, I grew into a responsible, dependable adult. The support of the employee-owners before me were a big part of my development. I now look forward to passing on my knowledge and experiences to the **next generation** of GLC employee-owners.

BRIAN PINNEY

**PRODUCTION MANAGER
FRANKLINVILLE, NY**



One of our 2025 Stewardship Award Recipients



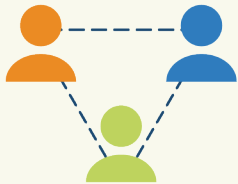
COMMUNITY GIVING

Strengthening the Communities We Call Home

As a family- and employee-owned company, we believe strong communities create stronger futures. That's why we partner with organizations and initiatives that address local needs, create meaningful connections, and help communities thrive.

Our community partnerships are guided by three areas of focus:

Connecting People



Nourishing Neighbors



Building Community



Greater Cleveland Food Bank



Connecting People

Strong communities begin with strong relationships. We support organizations that foster mentorship, personal development, education, and opportunities for individuals and families to connect, grow, and realize their infinite potential.

- Hours volunteered in last 3 years: **1,947**
 - Volunteer hours **increased by over 100% in the last year alone**
- * One of our many partnerships is with the Hands on Science Center in Manchester, TN, which helps grow STEM educational opportunities for children.*

Nourishing Neighbors

As a company rooted in food, we believe in being a part of food solutions. We partner with food banks, hunger relief organizations, schools, and community programs to help increase access to nutritious food and support families facing food insecurity.

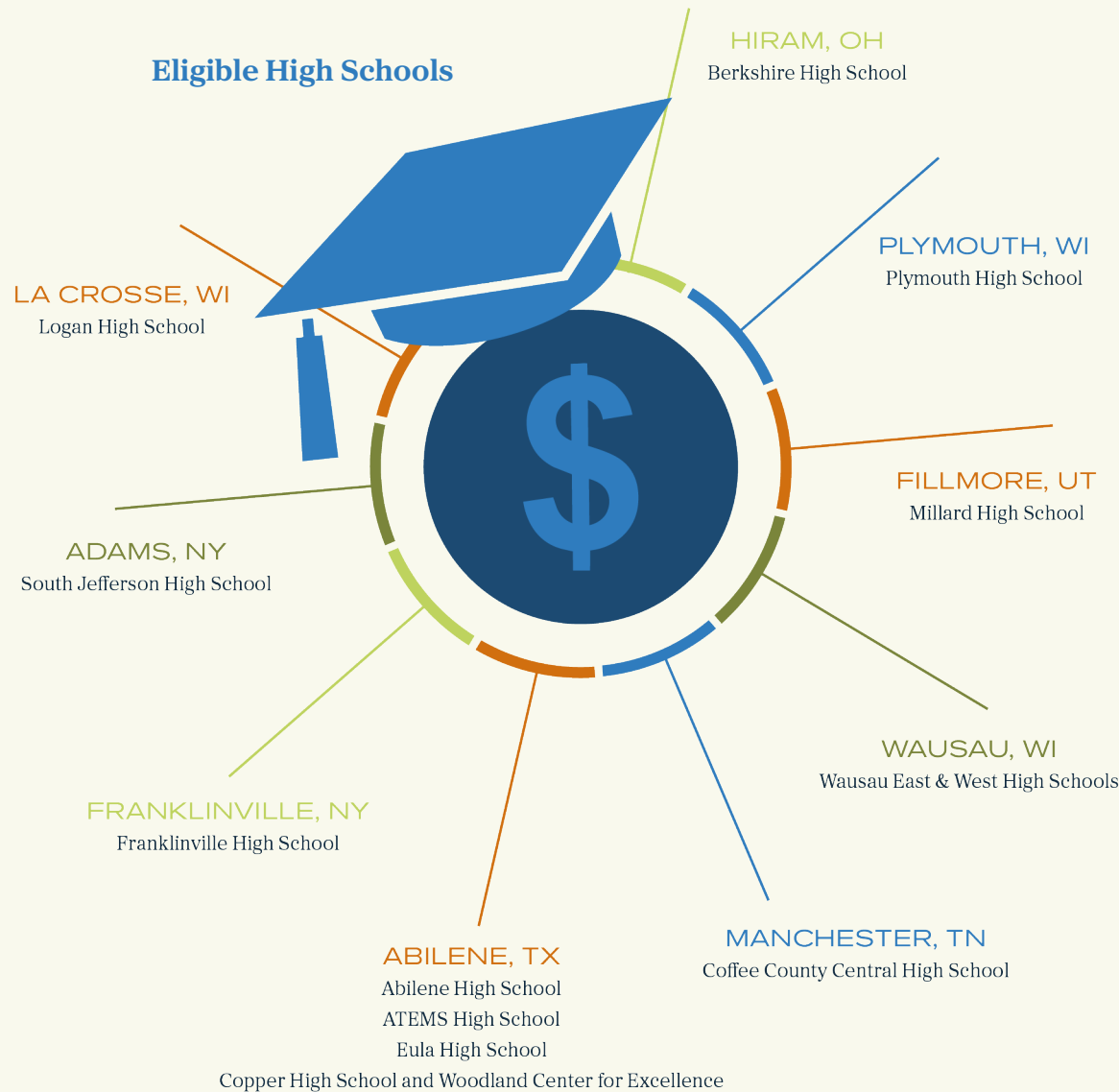
- Pounds donated last 3 years: **113,811**
 - We maintain a relationship with the Ohio Association of Food Banks, applying for bids to supply cheese at-cost on a quarterly basis. This association purchases products at-cost from a variety of companies and distributes the products to food banks across Ohio.
- * Partnering with local Fillmore schools, Great Lakes Cheese fights food insecurity through the weekend backpack program and relieves financial stress by paying off student lunch debt.*

Building Community

Vibrant communities are built through shared experiences and local traditions. We support festivals, community events, youth activities, and civic initiatives that bring people together, celebrate local pride, and enhance the places where our employee-owners live and work.

- * Backing our Hmong employees, our Wausau location proudly supports Hmong New Year, a 5,000-to-7,000-attendee cultural celebration that boosts the local economy.*





Epprecht Family Foundation

The Epprecht Family Foundation was established to create opportunities that Founder, Hans Epprecht, was not given – opening doors for future generations through access to education and support. Each year, the Foundation awards scholarships to high school seniors across the **school districts where Great Lakes Cheese operates facilities**. These scholarships provide up to **\$15,000** per year for up to four years of undergraduate education, – specifically targeting students attending technical schools and pursuing STEM-related fields – helping them pursue opportunities that may otherwise be out of reach.

Over the past nine years, more than **\$2 million** has been awarded in scholarships, supporting students as they take their next steps toward higher education and future careers.

While the Foundation operates independently from the company, its purpose reflects a shared belief that **investing in people—especially young people—creates lasting impact far beyond today.**

* This logo is a trademark of the Epprecht Family Foundation

PLANET

The scale of our operations gives us an opportunity to make a meaningful difference through how we use energy and water, package our products, and reduce waste. Our approach centers on three areas where we can make the greatest impact: **energy and greenhouse gas emissions, sustainable packaging, and water stewardship**. By measuring our footprint, identifying opportunities to improve, and evolving how we operate, we can help conserve resources, reduce waste, and build a stronger, more resilient business for the future.

To focus our efforts and align on shared objectives, these are how we define each of our planet-related material topics.

1

Energy & GHG Emissions

Meeting energy requirements with traditional, alternative, or renewable sources and tracking and reducing energy consumption and greenhouse (GHG) emissions.

2

Sustainable Packaging

We are committed to advancing sustainable packaging solutions with a focus on recyclability, recycled content, and minimizing waste. As packaging technology and end-of-life infrastructure evolves, we continue to explore opportunities that support circular packaging while considering product quality, safety, performance, and regulatory requirements.

3

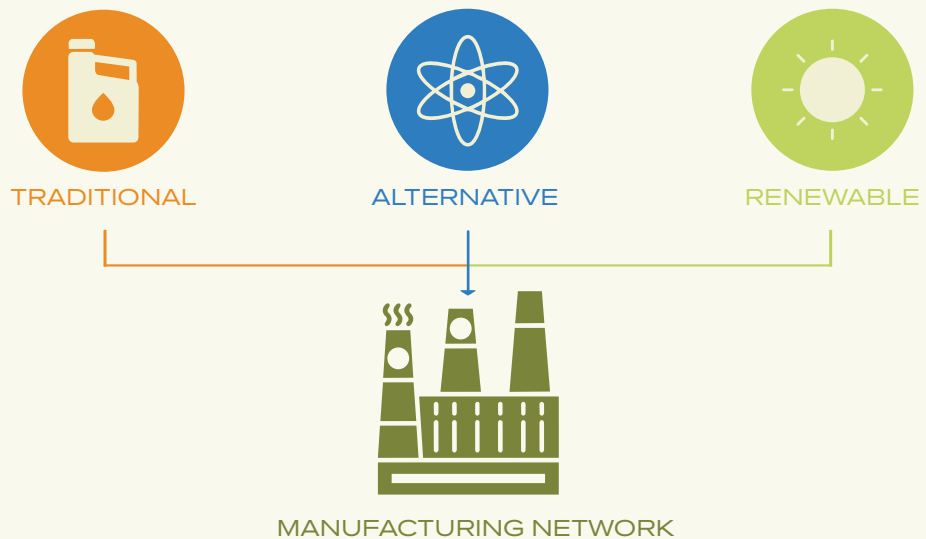
Water Stewardship

Management of water resources for meeting business needs that conserves water for future use.

ENERGY & GHG EMISSIONS

We are committed to reducing energy consumption and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions across our operations while responsibly meeting the energy needs of our growing business.

This includes evaluating traditional, alternative, and renewable energy sources and continuously improving efficiency across our manufacturing network.

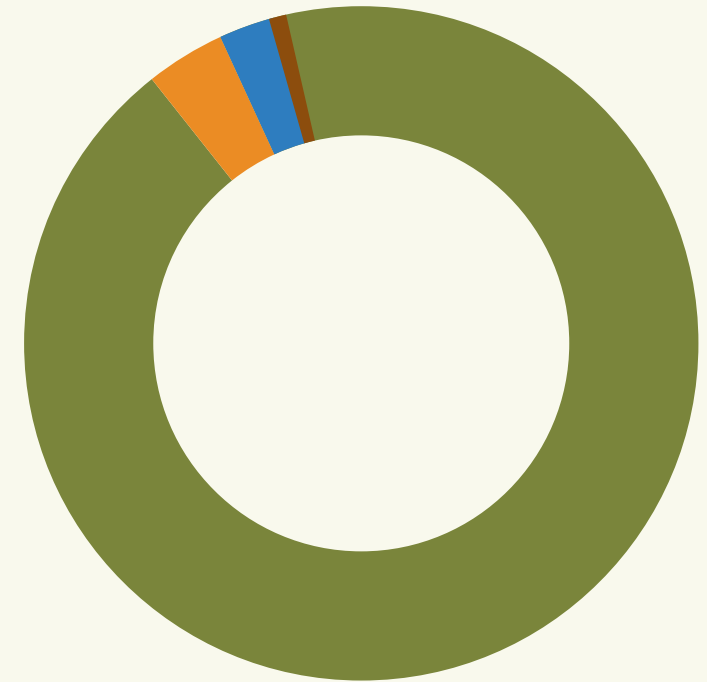


Understanding Our Emissions

Great Lakes Cheese conducted our first complete GHG inventory in 2023 to identify emissions hotspots and track against progress. This process followed the Greenhouse Gas Protocol guidance for calculating Scopes 1, 2, and 3, including FLAG emissions, as well as inventory guidance created by the Innovation Center for US Dairy specifically for dairy processors. Since then, we have been making year over year progress on tracking and measuring. For our 2025 Scope 1 & 2 inventory, GLC has been working with a 3rd party consultant to validate our emissions to ensure continued accuracy and reliability. Through this exercise, we have identified key areas for emission reduction opportunities and further developed our environmental sustainability program.

The most significant source of **Scope 1 (direct) emissions is our natural gas consumption used in our facilities**. Other sources include mobile combustion, and fugitive emissions from refrigeration systems. Emissions from **Scope 2 (purchased energy) emissions are from electricity consumption**. Although we measure both Location-based and Market-based emissions, our strategy and effort will be aligned with Market-based Accounting.

Over 85% of Scope 3 (value chain) emissions stem from our purchased goods and services. One of our key emissions hotspots is from purchased dairy products, which are driven by on-farm sources such as enteric fermentation, manure management, feed production, and energy and fuel use. **Other Scope 3 emissions include upstream and downstream transportation & distribution, waste generated in operations, and packaging**.



2025 GHG FOOTPRINT

Key:

- **Scopes 1 & 2** (Market-Based)
- **Scope 3:** Purchased Goods & Services
- **Scope 3:** All Other Categories
- **Scope 3:** Upstream & Downstream Transportation & Distribution

Near-term Climate Targets

In 2024, Great Lakes Cheese committed to set near-term emission reduction targets through the Science Based Targets Initiative (SBTi) to turn our GHG measurement and tracking efforts into action. Validating our targets by SBTi ensures that we are aligned in limiting global warming with the latest climate science from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). We chose a 2025 baseline year to best reflect our growing business operations. This means that we will be building upon the immense Scope 2 emissions reductions from 2023-2025 and committing to making even greater progress.

Great Lakes Cheese commits to reduce absolute:

- **Scope 1 & 2 emissions by 50%**
- **Scope 3 FLAG emissions by 30.3%**
- **Scope 3 Energy & Industry emissions by 30%**

by 2035 from a 2025 base year.

U.S. Dairy Stewardship Commitment

The U.S Dairy Stewardship Commitment empowers and equips the U.S dairy community to demonstrate sustainability progress through aligned action and reporting as an industry. Dairy cooperatives and processes that adopt the Stewardship Commitment uphold U.S dairy's social responsibility pledge to consumers, customers, and other stakeholders. The Stewardship Commitment demonstrates how U.S dairy:

- Responsibly produces milk and dairy products
- Brings value to the communities it serves
- Acts transparently and meets globally accepted standards

As part of the U.S. Dairy Stewardship Commitment, we align with a shared framework of responsibility, transparency, and sustainability progress to help achieve greenhouse gas neutrality across the value chain by 2050.

INDUSTRY-WIDE GOALS BY 2050



Achieve greenhouse gas neutrality



Optimize water use while
maximizing recycling



Improve water quality by optimizing
utilization of manure and nutrients

Reducing Emissions in Our Operations

Renewal Energy Procurement

In 2023, we entered into a power purchase agreement to receive renewable energy credits from Sunflower Wind Farm in Marion County, Kansas. The energy from this project covered approximately 30% of our annual Scope 2 emissions in 2024 and 2025. As our business grows, we will continue to evaluate renewable energy procurement options. In New York, we contract a portion of our electricity supply from hydroelectric energy.

On-Site Solar Installation

To support energy needs in our plant in Plymouth, WI, we invested in LED lighting upgrades and solar energy to cover key areas of the plant.

Efficiency Measures

Our plant operations focus on efficiency measures to ensure that we are best utilizing our resources. To conserve energy in our plants, we have automated refrigeration controls to optimize loading of the systems and maintain proper cooling, invested in higher efficiency boilers, transitioned to LED lighting, made insulation improvements, and have heat recovery systems to capture and reuse energy in production processes.

In our Utah packaging plant, we have upgraded our refrigeration system with Variable Frequency Drives (VFD) controls, and optimized our Clean in Place (CIP) tanks.



Employee-owners visiting Sunflower Wind Farm



SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING

From 2020 to 2025, our sustainable packaging strategy focused on reducing virgin plastic, improving recyclability, and advancing innovation across cheese packaging formats. We set our strategy in alignment with the Ellen MacArthur Foundation goal that all store brands plastic packaging be reusable, recyclable, or compostable by 2025.

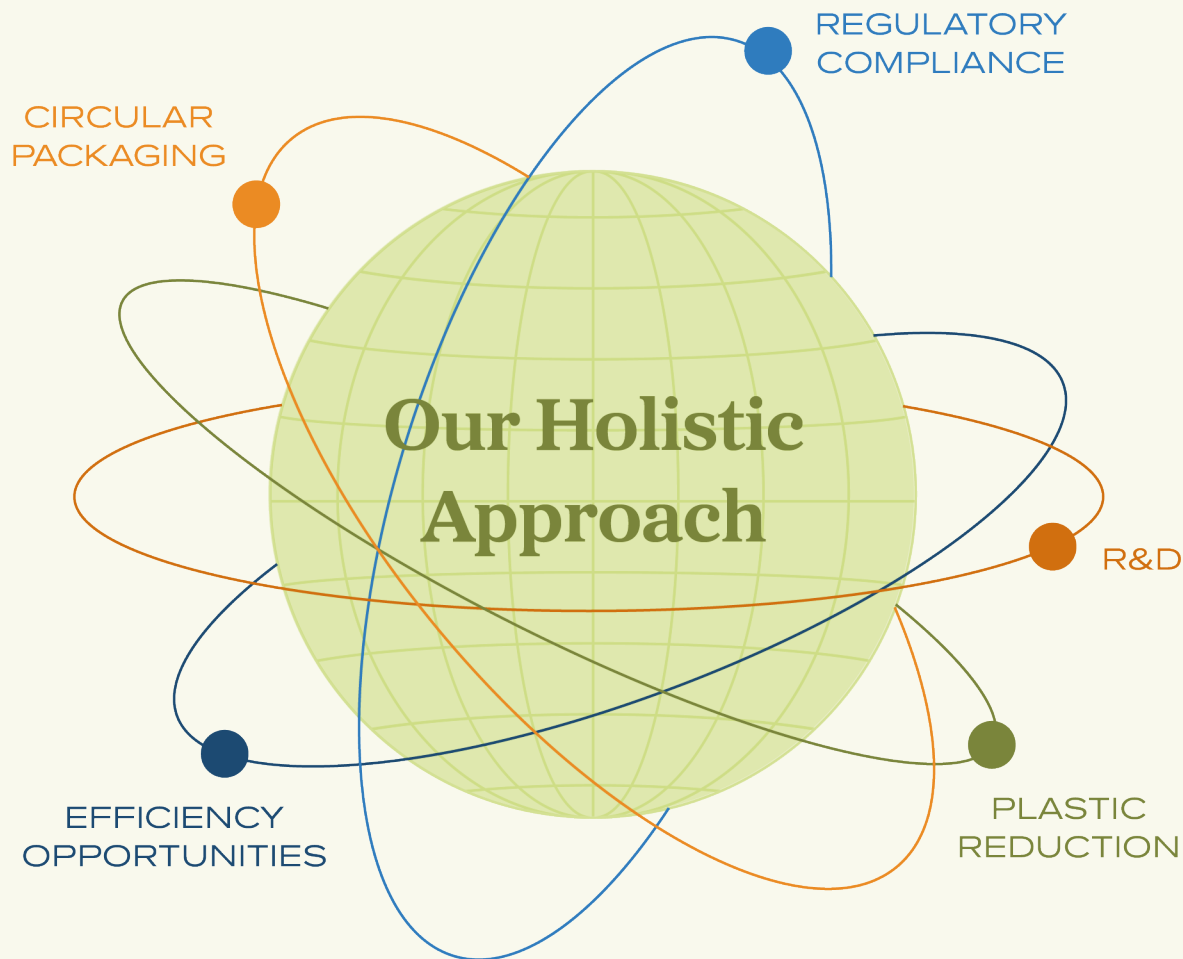
Our #1 objective for 2025 was to qualify packaging materials to be recycle-ready while maintaining rigorous safety and quality standards.

Working closely with suppliers and industry partners, we have made meaningful progress in designing packaging so that when streams and infrastructure are ready, our packaging is ready.

Key achievements include:

- Conducted over 200 trials
- Explored alternative materials to current non-recyclable plastic
- Increased recyclability of primary packaging through material color change





Our Revised Strategy

Looking towards 2030, we will be annually evolving our strategy to further strengthen governance, regulatory alignment, circular packaging innovation, and R&D investment in next-generation materials. Moving forward we are taking a more holistic approach to ensure we can be nimble while driving progress across primary, secondary, and tertiary packaging.

Key Focus Areas:

- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) readiness
- Balancing source reduction and product integrity
- Strong partnerships with industry associations, suppliers and customers

WATER STEWARDSHIP

Water is essential to our operations through our rigorous cleaning standards, our boilers and equipment, along with other essential processes. We are committed to using our resources responsibly, improving efficiency, and protecting water quality for future generations. We have aligned with the U.S. Dairy Stewardship Commitment to optimize water use, increase recycling, and improve water quality through responsible nutrient and wastewater management practices.

We have aligned with the U.S. Dairy Stewardship Commitment to:



Optimize water use



Increase recycling



Improve water quality through responsible nutrient
and wastewater management practices



Site Innovation in Action

At our Hiram packaging facility, improvements to our wastewater treatment and water reclamation systems have enabled significant reuse of water, particularly for cooling tower operations during periods of high demand. These enhancements reflect our broader commitment to water conservation and operational efficiency. A key part of our water strategy is the use of condensate of whey (COW) water, a reclaimed water source generated during production. This water is reused in operations where appropriate, reducing overall reliance on fresh water.

From 2020 to 2025, our Adams plant decreased water withdrawal by 10% due to an increase in the amount of cow water recovered and reused in our own operations

Managing Water Responsibly Through Continuous Improvement

We continuously monitor and improve water efficiency across our facilities, measured as gallons of water used per 1,000 lbs. of milk processed at our make sites and per 1,000 lbs. of finished goods at our packaging sites. We also maintain compliance systems related to water quality permits and environmental standards across all locations. Our cheese-make facilities have wastewater treatment plants that manage the discharge of treated wastewater. In response to an environmental impact that occurred in 2025 near our Franklinville facility, we as a company are evaluating and investing in the people, process, and technology that will support our ongoing commitment to water stewardship.



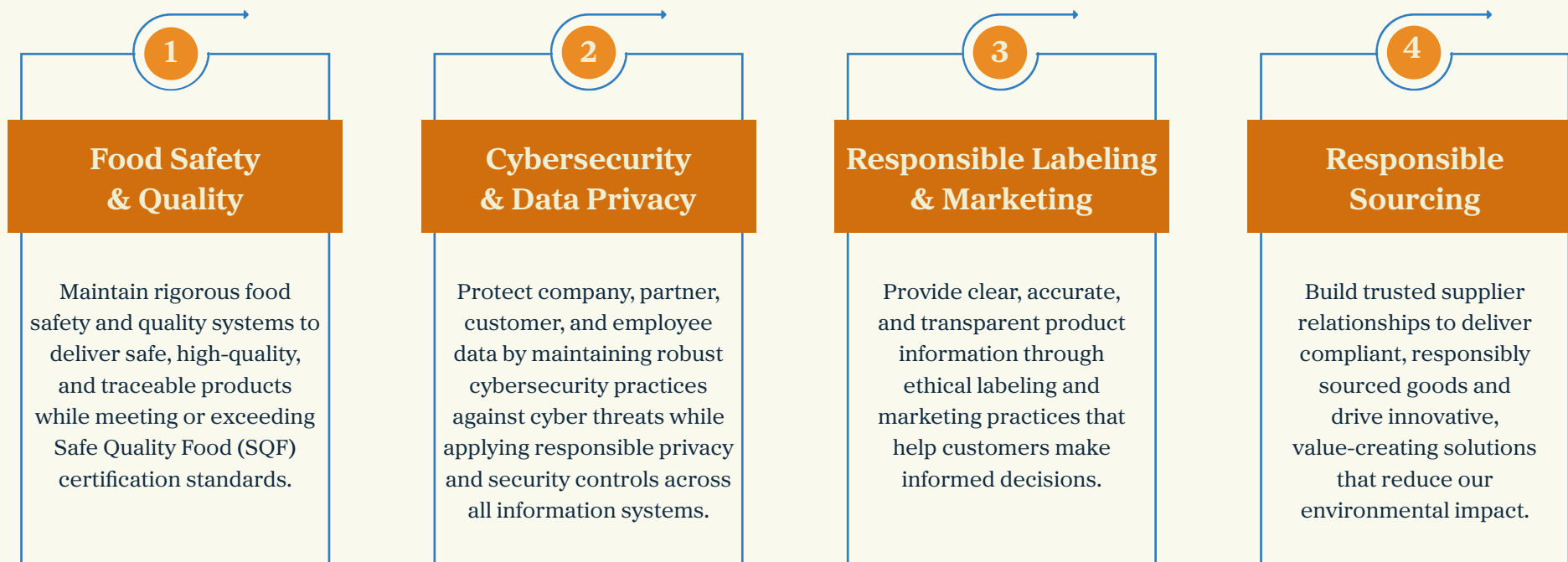
We **reclaimed 10%**
of our water in our
Hiram plant in 2025



PURPOSE

Purpose is how we create lasting value through the way we operate, the standards we uphold, and the trust we build with our stakeholders. Across our value chain, we recognize that responsible business practices extend beyond our own operations—from the dairy and packaging suppliers we work with, to our manufacturing and digital systems, to our retail partners and the consumers who ultimately enjoy our products. To focus our efforts and align on shared objectives, these are how we define each of our purpose-related material topics.

This section encompasses responsible sourcing, food safety and consumer protection, ethical and transparent business practices, cybersecurity and data privacy, and the systems of compliance, oversight, and accountability that help us operate with integrity.



FOOD SAFETY & QUALITY

Our customers, communities, and families trust that the food they purchase from retailers, restaurants and wholesalers is safe. As the nation's largest natural cheese packager and award-winning manufacturer, Great Lakes Cheese has an enormous responsibility to deliver on their trust.

We are committed to purchasing high-quality raw ingredients and reliable materials. We process, package and deliver the safest possible products with intention and care. Almost every aspect of the production, manufacturing and sales of food products must adhere to a law or regulation to ensure food safety and transparency for all. Most of our regulatory oversight comes from the Food & Drug Administration (FDA) and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in the form of inspections. Great Lakes Cheese adheres to all local, state and federal food regulations.



Program Overview

Our systems carefully manage ingredients, suppliers, packaging, and production processes to ensure only the intended ingredients enter our finished products. These controls also ensure ingredients are correctly classified (such as organic or bioengineered) and that allergens and other sensitive ingredients (such as wheat, milk, etc.) are properly identified and handled. Examples of our dedication to food safety are the systems and programs we have built to protect it:

- **Supplier monitoring** to make sure we are buying safe products.
- A dedicated **Sanitation Department** to ensure we clean our equipment, tools and facilities properly for our food.

Food Safety Plan

Great Lakes Cheese has developed many preventative control and prerequisite programs that manage our food safety and quality.

- **Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs)** are essential for the development and implementation of our Food Safety Plan.
- **Safe Quality Foods (SQF) Accredited.** The SQF certification program is part of the global food safety initiative.
- **Hazardous Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP).** We use HACCP, a NASA-inspired technical approach that identifies and helps us develop a plan that can prevent problems from occurring.

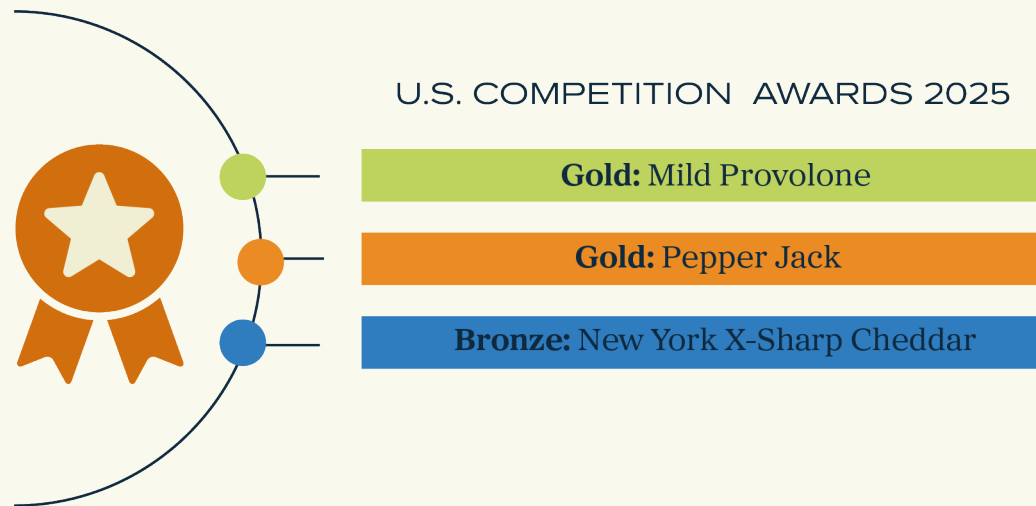


All GLC
plants are
SQF
accredited

Company Awards & Recognition

Recognition from customers and industry organizations reinforces the importance of the work we put in the producing safe, quality products. Awards and customer recognition reflect not only product quality, but also the expertise, discipline, and ownership mindset employees bring to each batch, shipment, and customer relationship.

Recent recognition includes honors at the **World Cheese Championship for Whey Protein Concentrate 80, Low-Moisture Part-Skim Mozzarella String, and Shredded Cheese Blend** as well as customer recognition through the Top Supply Chain Award.



Our cheese has won over **200 awards** in the **last 25 years** in taste testes around the world



CYBERSECURITY & DATA PRIVACY

As a family- and employee-owned company, protecting our systems and data protects the value we all share. We rely on digital systems to manage operations, customer information, employee information, supplier data, product records, traceability, labeling, and compliance activities. A disruption to these systems or unauthorized access to sensitive information could affect operations, customers, employees, suppliers, and the company's reputation.

Responsible management of cybersecurity and data privacy requires strong internal controls, secure handling of information, monitoring for potential threats, and clear practices for collecting, storing, processing, using, and sharing data. These capabilities help protect company, partner, customer, and employee information while also supporting the integrity of business processes that depend on accurate and secure data.

- **Susceptibility:** Less than 2%
- **How many people report phishing:** Average more than 20%
- **Data Breaches:** 0 in the last 3 years



COMPLIANCE IS BUILT IN AT EVERY STAGE



RESPONSIBLE LABELING & MARKETING

Responsible labeling and marketing help customers and consumers make informed decisions and protect the trust associated with the company's products and labels we package under.

Clear, accurate, and transparent product information is especially important in food manufacturing, where labels and product claims may address ingredients, allergens, nutrition, certifications, sourcing attributes, handling instructions, and other compliance-related information. We ensure that labels comply with applicable local, state, and federal requirements and that marketing claims are truthful, supportable, and not misleading. Strong review processes, cross-functional coordination, and accurate product data help reduce the risk of mislabeling, customer confusion, recalls, or reputational harm.

RESPONSIBLE SOURCING

Responsible sourcing focuses on building trusted relationships with suppliers that provide compliant, reliable goods sourced and made with integrity. Although we do not own or operate dairies, we are inherently connected to dairy farms and other suppliers through the ingredients, materials, and services that support cheese manufacturing and packaging. Supplier relationships therefore play an important role in product quality, food safety, traceability, ethical business practices, and environmental stewardship.

Great Lakes Cheese has laid a good foundation in the Responsible Sourcing space. We have established clear supplier expectations. We leverage supplier-management mechanisms such as the FARM Program and Supplier Code of Conduct, and collaborating with suppliers on solutions that create value while reducing environmental impact.

Looking ahead, we will continue to evolve our Responsible Sourcing program by identifying opportunities to expand our focus into areas where we can create meaningful impact and where our values and passion can drive continued progress.





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