



# ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS

## INTRODUCTION

2024 was a year of growth, collaboration, and impact for GreenSeam as we continued to strengthen the regional economy through strategic partnerships, workforce development, and business support. From publishing research to expanding educational opportunities and assisting local entrepreneurs, our initiatives have driven meaningful progress in positioning the GreenSeam region as a world-class food and agribusiness epicenter. This sheet highlights our key accomplishments and the outcomes of our efforts over the past year.

## DRIVING REGIONAL GROWTH & AWARENESS

- GreenSeam staff delivered **16** presentations to community leaders and educators across the region, raising awareness of the economic significance of food and agriculture.
- March 2024 – Published the 5th **State of Ag Report**, an in-depth study of Minnesota's food and agribusiness ecosystem. In partnership with Minnesota State University, Mankato, GreenSeam surveyed and conducted focus groups with **300+** industry professionals. The report is used to inform policy, guide business decisions, and shape GreenSeam's strategy.
- May 2024 – Launched the **Growing in the GreenSeam Workshops**, offering entrepreneurs training on value creation in food and agriculture while equipping community leaders to foster an entrepreneur-friendly environment.
- September 2024 – Hosted **45** business and community leaders at the Global Workforce Opportunities event in Redwood Falls, Minnesota, featuring solutions for recruiting and retaining international talent in regional businesses.



## STRATEGIC PLANNING

Completed strategic planning for the 2024-2028 term, defining four key focus areas: convening and building the regional ecosystem, positioning GreenSeam as the 'go-to' voice for food, agriculture, and bioeconomy, driving workforce attraction and talent development, and amplifying the GreenSeam brand.



## IMPACTFUL COLLABORATIONS & SUCCESS STORIES

- When Ardent Mills' Mankato location announced closure, GreenSeam leveraged regional partnerships to support the re-employment of **50+** displaced workers.
- Assisted Blumen Acres, a southeast Minnesota flower grower, in expanding operations by connecting them with a landowner offering free use of 2 acres. This enabled an increase of their production by **40%** and led to a collaboration with a nearby business to utilize local waste streams.

## TALENT DEVELOPMENT

- Integral to Minnesota State University, Mankato launching the **School of Applied Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources**, filling an education gap and enhancing regional talent retention.
- Advocated for the **"2+2" articulation agreement** between Minnesota State University, Mankato and South Central College, streamlining the transition from an Associate of Applied Science in Agribusiness to a Bachelor of Applied Science in Agronomy.

## BY THE NUMBERS

- 591 Unique Attendees at GreenSeam Events
- 195 Recipients of Business Education
- 27 Regional Businesses Engaged through our Business Retention & Expansion Program
- 20+ Partnerships with Regional Cities and NGOs Leveraged
- 26 Entrepreneurs Given Technical Assistance

