

2024-2025 ANNUAL REPORT

GreenSeam continues to be a catalyst for economic growth, business development, and workforce advancement in our region. In the 2024-2025 fiscal year, we made meaningful strides in strengthening our food and agribusiness ecosystem through key initiatives, partnerships, and meaningful engagements.

This past year has been incredibly rewarding as GreenSeam deepened its engagement with both emerging and established businesses across the region. Through numerous touchpoints focused on talent development and retention, we've strengthened our impact and expanded our reach. Here are some key statements that reflect our progress:

- Held two Growing in the GreenSeam workshops for entrepreneurs in Fairmont and New Ulm with over 60 in attendance, supported by CFANS faculty through these workshops we connected them to new resources and helped them in the next steps for their business.
- Directly engaged 31 rural agricultural businesses through our Business Retention & Expansion Program, providing custom assistance and collaborating with local economic development leaders.
- Provided technical assistance to 33 entrepreneurs and startups through one-on-one meetings and resource connections.
- Partnered with 43 Municipalities, NGOs, and Education Institutions in delivering rural economic development services.
- Partnered with MN State University, Mankato on a \$775,000 federal grant for the Main Street Business Focused on Food and Ag initiative, supporting businesses in Blue Earth and Owatonna.
- Provided speakers to classrooms, including connecting Mankato Public Schools with the U of M Vet Program for 8th grade career days.
- Held the Future Solvers competition for college students to solve rural MN challenges with an agricultural focus, awarding \$30,000 in prize money.
- Supported diverse businesses from Cannon Falls to Worthington, including small flower farmers and the new Green Acres Oat Mill in Albert Lea.

Talent remains a key focus. We connected student clubs with industry experts, supported the launch of Minnesota State University, Mankato's School of Applied Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources, and facilitated 2+2 articulation agreements between South Central College and Minnesota State University, Mankato for agronomy students. We also hosted the Global Workforce Opportunities workshop in Redwood Falls to address regional workforce challenges.

We have also maintained a comprehensive online business directory with over 1,000 listings, enhancing visibility and digital presence for regional agribusinesses.

Through strategic programming, we published the 6th State of Ag Report in collaboration with Minnesota State University Mankato, surveying over 300 industry professionals and held focus groups to provide actionable insights.

GreenSeam completed its 2024-2028 strategic plan, outlining four priorities:

- Convening and building the regional ecosystem.



- Positioning GreenSeam as the 'go-to' voice for food, agriculture, and bioeconomy.
- Driving workforce attraction and talent development.
- Amplifying the GreenSeam brand.

GreenSeam's efforts extend beyond numbers, we create real opportunities. From supporting displaced workers at Ardent Mills to enabling Blumen Acres' expansion and advocating for higher education pathways, we remain committed to fostering growth and resilience in our region.

The progress we've made would not be possible without the support of our partners, businesses, and community members. Thank you for your dedication and belief in the future of GreenSeam. Together, we will continue shaping our region into a world-class food and agribusiness epicenter.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sam Ziegler'.

Sam Ziegler
President & Director
GreenSeam & GreenSeam Futures