



IMPACT REPORT 2024



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Message from our President & CEO



To Our Stakeholders,

As the largest full-service restaurant company in America — employing more than 190,000 team members, serving more than one million meals a day and operating 2,000-plus restaurants across all 50 states — we seek to nourish and delight everyone we serve. At Darden, we consider this our higher purpose and also integral to achieving our mission to be financially successful through great people consistently delivering outstanding food, drinks and service in an inviting atmosphere, making every guest loyal.

Many actions we take to fulfill our mission happen well before our guests visit our restaurants. We support our team members, source food with care, give back to our communities, conserve natural resources and operate with honesty and transparency. This report highlights the efforts we are taking on our journey to continually improve the ways we do that across three key areas — People, Planet and Plate.

One of the things that sets Darden apart — and inspires me every day — is bringing out the best in our team members as we work together to create memorable guest experiences. We are proud of our inclusive and supportive culture, as well as the ways we invest in our people's success — from competitive pay and benefits to the broad range of training and development opportunities we provide. Most importantly — through mentorship, collaboration and a commitment to promoting from within — we consistently identify potential in our team members, spark their development and support career growth with Darden or wherever their paths take them.

Our collaborative approach extends to the many suppliers that share our values and commitment to continuous improvement and excellent service. We work closely with them to maintain the highest standards for food safety and quality. We also partner with our suppliers and others across our industry to drive progress on challenges no single company or sector can tackle alone, such as climate change and animal welfare. We focus our efforts where we believe we can have the greatest impact, always guided by scientifically proven standards, data-driven programs, and fiscal responsibility.

We also aim to contribute to the communities we serve in meaningful ways that align with our business and where we are equipped to make a real difference. We have a longstanding commitment to helping fight hunger through both food and financial donations. In addition, we support a range of youth outreach, educational scholarships and industry educational programs to expand access to opportunity in our communities.

In closing, I want to thank all our stakeholders — our team members, guests, shareholders, suppliers and industry partners — for joining Darden on this journey. We hope you will see our commitment to collaboration and partnership reflected in these pages. We know there is more work to be done and we look forward to joining together to drive progress.

Respectfully,



Rick Cardenas

President and Chief Executive Officer
Darden Restaurants



A FULL-SERVICE RESTAURANT COMPANY WITH...

1
MISSION

Be financially successful through great people consistently delivering outstanding food, drinks and service in an inviting atmosphere making every guest loyal.

4
COMPETITIVE
ADVANTAGES

- Significant Scale
- Extensive Data & Insights
- Rigorous Strategic Planning
- Results-Oriented Culture

1
DRIVING
PHILOSOPHY

BACK-TO-BASICS

- Culinary Innovation & Execution
- Attentive Service
- Engaging Atmosphere
- Integrated Marketing

9
ICONIC
BRANDS



Our Purpose

Nourish & delight everyone we serve.

Our Values

BEING OF SERVICE

INCLUSION & DIVERSITY

RESPECT & CARING

INTEGRITY & FAIRNESS

TEAMWORK

EXCELLENCE

ALWAYS LEARNING, ALWAYS TEACHING

Our Competitive Advantages

- **Significant Scale** enables deep relationships with our supplier partners and creates cost advantages our brands could not achieve on their own. It also allows us to have our own dedicated distribution network, ensuring an uninterrupted supply chain to our restaurants. Further, our size enables us to centralize shared support functions and the associated costs.
- **Extensive Data & Insights** ensure we continually meet our guests' expectations and allow us to identify opportunities to improve the guest experience and drive incremental sales. The rich insights we glean are shared across our brands and lead to smarter, faster and more impactful decision-making.
- **Rigorous Strategic Planning** at the enterprise level ensures we have the right portfolio of brands with a compelling, logical fit. We align strategies and coordinate operations to maximize our portfolio's value, and we capture the available synergies across our brands. At the brand level, we determine the distinct advantages of each brand and their strategic role in the portfolio, develop a deep understanding of the competitive landscape, identify and cultivate a clear, differentiated positioning for each brand, and ensure our brands have the right strategy in place to compete effectively and grow share.
- **Results-Oriented Culture** strengthens our greatest asset: our people. We constantly work to reinforce that every team member matters and owns a stake in our success. Our culture helps drive our growth, and we are focused on hiring, training, rewarding and retaining the best talent in our industry.

Our Company

190,000

TEAM MEMBERS IN

2,000+

RESTAURANTS ACROSS ALL

50 STATES

SERVING

420 MILLION

GUESTS IN FISCAL 2024

Governance

Darden is committed to maintaining best-in-class corporate governance and upholding the highest ethical standards. Our governance framework is guided by principles that promote integrity, fairness and responsible decision-making, helping our company grow and succeed while generating value for stakeholders.

Darden Board Structure

The Board of Directors plays a critical role in Darden's success by overseeing management and ensuring that the long-term interests of shareholders are served. As noted in our robust [Corporate Governance Guidelines](#), the Board sets strategic goals, monitors financial performance, selects the CEO, provides counsel to and oversight of the CEO on the selection of the senior management team, and assesses major risks, including those related to human capital.

Independence of directors

Darden's Board currently consists of nine directors, with at least two-thirds required to be independent. The current Chair of the Board, Cynthia T. Jamison, is an independent director. All directors stand for reelection annually, and we have a majority vote standard for uncontested elections. Darden's Corporate Governance Guidelines require Board members to have complete access to management, which strengthens governance and collaboration. The independent directors meet in executive session, without members of management present, at least at each quarterly Board meeting.

Board role in oversight of risk management

Darden maintains a robust enterprise risk management process, guided by the Internal Audit team and Audit Committee, with oversight from the full Board. The Board assesses the major risks facing Darden at least annually and reviews options for mitigation. Each Board committee oversees key risk areas relevant to the committee's responsibilities and reviews the policies and practices developed and implemented by management to assess and manage those risks. The areas of risk responsibility for each of the Board's Committees are described in the respective [Committee Charters](#). Selected top risks are highlighted for deeper dives at every quarterly Board meeting.



Committee Responsibilities

All Board committees are composed of only independent directors.

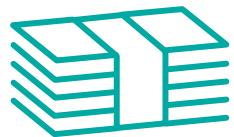


Nominating and Governance Committee:

Identifies individuals qualified to become Board members, consistent with criteria approved by the Board and recommends to the Board a slate of director nominees for the next annual meeting. This committee also oversees risks related to Darden's corporate governance, director succession planning, political and charitable contributions, insider trading, environmental and social responsibility, and reputational risk. Environmental performance, including energy and climate metrics are reported to this committee annually.



Audit Committee: Assists the Board in fulfilling its oversight responsibilities to shareholders. The Audit Committee oversees Darden's financial reporting processes and internal controls, including the process for assessing the risk of fraudulent financial reporting and significant financial risk exposures, and the steps management takes to monitor, mitigate and report those exposures.



Compensation Committee: Oversees the company's overall compensation programs and philosophy, and determines or recommends compensation for the CEO, employee-directors and executive officers, along with associated risks.



Finance Committee: Helps ensure the company has a capital structure, including financing strategy and financial policies, that is efficiently optimized to maximize returns to shareholders at an acceptable risk threshold. Also oversees Darden's major financial risk exposures and management's monitoring, mitigation activities and policies related to financial risk.

Management of climate-related risks

Darden has a robust Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) process for strategically identifying, prioritizing and managing risks to our business, including climate risks, which includes regular and appropriate Board oversight. The Nominating and Governance Committee is charged with discussing and reporting to the Board annually on Darden's major risk exposures and management's risk monitoring and mitigation activities related to climate, environmental and social responsibility.

The Darden [FY2024 10-K](#) discusses risk factors related to climate change, severe weather conditions and natural disasters that could adversely affect sales at Darden restaurants or the results of our operations.

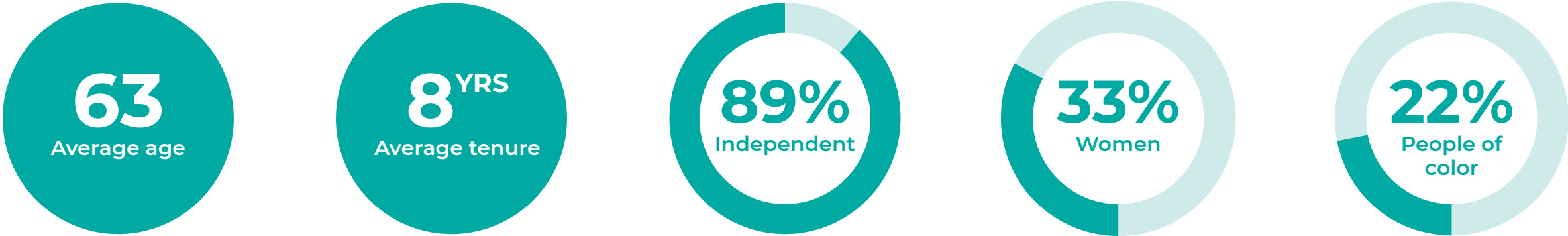
In fiscal 2024, Darden partnered with [BWD Strategic](#) to assess climate-related risks to our business. The assessment was performed in accordance with guidance from the Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD). The key climate-related risks that were identified as having the most potential financial impact and likelihood of occurrence were:

- Potential impacts to our operations from extreme weather events
- Potential impacts to our supply chain from extreme weather events
- Potential increased operating costs due to energy policy
- Potential increased climate-related disclosure requirements due to new regulations and/or stakeholder demands



Board of Directors At-a-Glance

								
Shân Atkins	Rick Cardenas	Juliana Chugg	James Fogarty	Cynthia Jamison	Nana Mensah	William Simon	Charles Sonsteby	Timothy Wilmott
Audit Committee Chair Nominating & Governance Committee	President & Chief Executive Officer	Nominating & Governance Committee Chair Audit Committee	Finance Committee Nominating & Governance Committee	Chair of the Board	Finance Committee Chair Compensation Committee	Audit Committee Compensation Committee	Audit Committee Finance Committee Nominating & Governance Committee	Compensation Committee Chair Finance Committee



Darden's policy is to include women and people of color in the candidate pool for every Board position.

5 Current or Former Chief Executive Officers	4 Former Chief Financial Officers	6 Current or Former Restaurant or Hospitality Industry Executives	3 Certified Public Accountants
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Codes of Business Conduct & Ethics

Darden is committed to ethics and integrity throughout our organization. We bring that commitment to life through codes of conduct for team members, the CEO and senior financial officers, members of the Board and suppliers.

Darden code of conduct for team members

Darden is committed to our core value of integrity, and we understand that fulfilling it requires a sincere commitment from everyone. Our [Code of Conduct](#) describes our expectations for how our team members engage with each other, guests, vendors and suppliers, shareholders and all who have a stake in Darden's success.

Each team member is expected to be aware of our standards. They are required to acknowledge the Code of Conduct when they join Darden and review and acknowledge it each year as part of mandatory ethics training. Darden team members are responsible for knowing and following the Code of Conduct as well as related policies. People leaders have an increased responsibility to serve as an example of integrity and ethical decision-making. They help ensure team members are aware of the Code and serve as champions of compliance with our policies and the law.

In addition, all team members are responsible for raising ethical questions and promptly reporting concerns. Team members may speak with their immediate supervisor; contact their Director of Operations, Employee Relations, HR Business Partner, or the Dispute Resolution Program; email the Ethics & Compliance team; or call the toll-free Helpline to report a concern anonymously.

Darden has a zero-tolerance policy for anyone who threatens or takes action against a team member for raising questions or reporting concerns related to the Code of Conduct or for assisting in the handling or investigation of a good-faith complaint.

Non-discrimination and non-harassment

Darden values differences in experience, age, race, length of service, and religion, among other qualities, in our team members, guests, vendors and suppliers. Discrimination or harassment in the workplace for any protected category violates our Code of Conduct and core values, as well as the law. For further information, see the [Non-Discrimination and Non-Harassment Policy](#).

Additional codes of conduct

Darden's [Code of Ethics for CEO and Senior Financial Officers](#) provides policies in addition to the Code of Conduct.

The [Code of Business Conduct and Ethics for Members of the Board of Directors](#) is intended to focus the Board and each director on areas of ethical risk, guide directors to help them recognize and deal with ethical issues, provide mechanisms to report unethical conduct and help foster a culture of honesty and accountability.

Darden holds suppliers who perform work, deliver services or provide goods to us to the same standards team members must follow. In addition, our [Supplier Code of Business Conduct](#) details all applicable human rights and labor laws and regulations covering employee treatment.

Political Advocacy & Expenditures

We actively communicate with policymakers regarding decisions at the local, state and federal levels that may significantly impact our business, team members and guests. We are committed to transparency and accountability in our political and advocacy activities, ensuring they are lawful and consistent with our core values and protect and enhance shareholder value.

Our policy engagement focuses on these areas:



Food, beverage and nutrition



Labor, benefits and employment

General business and tax



For information on political advocacy, see the [Darden Political Contribution Disclosures](#).



PEOPLE

Darden's culture, our work ethic and our business are all about being of service. This goes beyond the more than one million guests we nourish each day – it also includes our team members and the investments we make to help them build meaningful careers. Our service also extends into the communities where we operate, where we support our friends and neighbors beyond the walls of our restaurants.

Team Members

Darden's team members are at the heart of everything we do. We only succeed when they succeed, which is why we invest in them every step of the way by providing excellent opportunities throughout their Darden experience. This includes pay and benefits, training and development, as well as health and safety – all in an environment that is welcoming, inclusive and supportive.



Our People Strategy

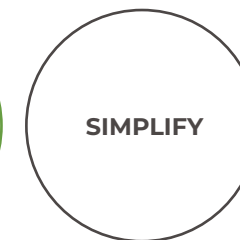


Every team member matters and owns a stake in our success. To thrive here you must have a desire to win, a passion to serve, and the ability to build relationships along the way.



Build Teams That Build Guest Loyalty

HIRE → TRAIN → REWARD → RETAIN



- Integrity & Fairness
- Respect & Caring
- Inclusion & Diversity
- Always Learning, Always Teaching

- Being of Service
- Teamwork
- Excellence

Offering Competitive Pay

Our servers, bussers, cooks, dishwashers and the rest of our hourly team members are the face of our brands as they serve our guests. These roles are not only critical for our operations, but also a source of our future leaders. We provide competitive pay and career opportunities. The minimum hourly

wage for our restaurant team members is \$12 per hour, including gratuities – but in practice our team members typically earn considerably more than that. In fact, across all our brands, our hourly team members earn, on average, more than \$23 per hour, which includes tip income.

**All Darden brands
average hourly rate**
As of May 26, 2024, inclusive of tips



**OVERALL
\$23.39**



**BARTENDER
\$35.26**



**SERVER
\$28.12**



**CULINARY
\$21.31**



**KITCHEN UTILITY
\$17.75**



**BUSSER
\$19.21**



**HOST
\$15.62**

Providing Comprehensive Benefits

We provide valuable programs beyond pay that support both our salaried and our hourly team members' overall financial and physical well-being including:

Immediately upon hire:

- Paid Sick Leave
- 401(k) Savings
- Employee Assistance Program
- Short-Term Disability
- Dining Discount
- Medical Insurance*
- Dental Insurance
- Vision Insurance
- Your Pay Today (helps access earned income)
- Fast Fluency (English as a second language tools)

*1 year, 30-hour average required for hourly team members.

After one year of service:

- Paid Family & Medical Leave
- Access to Health Benefits (when averaging 30 hours or more per week)
- Stock Purchase Plan (when averaging 20 hours or more per week)

**\$350M
in initiatives**

Over the past five years, we have invested more than \$350 million in initiatives such as paid sick leave, bonuses and subsidized medical insurance premiums directly benefiting our workforce with more than half going to hourly team members.



Listening and Responding to Team Member Feedback

Our team members bring our brands to life each day, and we know engaged team members are vital to creating great guest experiences. We conduct engagement surveys with hourly team members and management twice a year through Gallup, and Darden's overall engagement is well above the average for both U.S. and international companies as measured by Gallup. In fact, our most recent survey results showed that our overall level of engagement is at an all-time high.



Promoting Pathways to Success

To fill positions at each level within Darden, we look first to our internal talent pipeline. Our hourly workforce is a primary source of talent to fill management roles. In fact, we promoted 1,100 hourly restaurant team members into management in fiscal 2024 and we filled other leadership roles primarily with internal candidates.

Each Darden restaurant is a multimillion-dollar business led by a General Manager (GM) or Managing Partner (MP). In fiscal 2024, all of these critical leaders, who are responsible for cultivating our culture and bringing our brands to life every day, were filled by internal candidates. On average, these leaders earn total cash compensation of approximately \$100,000 annually and have an average tenure of 14 years.

The GM or MP leads a team of three or more restaurant managers. These managers are responsible for overseeing the culinary team, the service team and other front-of-house areas such as the lobby, bar and off-premise dining.

In fiscal 2024, 65% of our restaurant managers were promoted from our hourly ranks, and their average annual total cash compensation exceeds \$60,000 with an average tenure of nine years.

In addition to pay, we recognize and reward the performance of our leaders as a key component of our results-oriented culture through incentives, including:

Long-Term Incentives for GMs and MPs provide rewards in the form of Darden Stock Units (DSUs). These grants are awarded annually based on performance against established metrics. The DSUs track with the price of Darden stock and are paid in cash when they vest.

The Operations Leader Bonus program rewards the entire restaurant management team for their performance against financial goals for the year.

The bonus is based on an annual target amount and is paid out quarterly.

The Diamond Club program recognizes the top 5% of restaurants across each of Darden's brands. Restaurants can achieve Diamond Club status when they excel in retaining team members, delivering exceptional guest experiences and achieving financial success. Hourly team members and managers at winning restaurants receive a cash bonus, and the GM/MP and their guest are honored at an exclusive VIP celebration held at a unique resort setting.



Training & Development Opportunities

Nearly one in three Americans enters the workforce at a restaurant.¹ This is one of the reasons Darden plays an important role in helping shape the broader workforce – by providing an on-ramp for hundreds of thousands of people across the United States. Our training programs promote customer service, teamwork and responsibility, in addition to the specific responsibilities of the team member’s role and the inner workings of a restaurant.

For many, a job with one of our brands is the start of a rewarding career with our company. For others, it is a steppingstone to further education or other pursuits. The skills and experience we provide help our team members grow and succeed with Darden or wherever their paths take them.

Darden invests \$40 million annually in a robust training program that begins immediately upon hiring, regardless of role. On average, our new team members receive 40-80 hours of training (depending on their role). As team members expand into new roles and responsibilities, so does the training.

^[1] [America Works Here.](#)

Leadership Development

Our leadership training and development programs include:

- **Manager in Training (MIT)** is an in-depth program that focuses on the processes involved in running a restaurant, leadership development and business acumen. It culminates with a week of classroom and hands-on instruction at our Restaurant Support Center in Orlando that includes separate leadership conversations hosted by Darden’s CEO and our Chief People & Diversity Officer. In addition, restaurant managers receive approximately 600 hours of training outside of MIT during their first year in the role.
- **GM/MP Leadership Experience**, a two-day learning program, focuses on critical skills needed to lead teams and achieve results. The program helps GMs/MPs transition into leading an entire restaurant and its management team. Through instructor-led classroom learning and role-play scenarios, attendees focus on topics such as Building Culture through Inclusion, Hiring for Success, Coaching Managers, Managing Difficult Situations and Growing Sales & Improving Profitability. The program concludes with a Q&A session hosted by our CEO.
- **GM or MP Conferences** convened by each brand are annual leadership events that highlight business plans and build excitement among their teams. These conferences also feature content focused on the continued development of GMs and MPs.

CASE STUDY

Journey to Leadership



“I always remember Bill Darden’s words of wisdom – that our team members are our greatest competitive advantage,” said Messersmith. “I am proof of the career opportunities that are available to people who do good work and represent our values as we serve our guests.”

When Amber Messersmith applied for a hostess position at Olive Garden, she was looking for part-time work that could fit into her packed schedule as a full-time college student at UCLA. More than 20 years since that first hourly job and her college graduation, Amber now works as a Divisional Vice President overseeing more than 90 Olive Garden restaurants in the Pacific Northwest. Her journey demonstrates the benefits of Darden’s culture that prioritizes promoting from within.

Thankfully, Amber’s first manager saw her potential and encouraged her to consider Darden as the pathway to a fulfilling career. As one of the many company leaders who began their careers as entry-level team members, Amber understands the important role that everyone at Darden plays in serving customers and has been able to pay forward the opportunity provided by that first manager as she mentors new generations of Darden leaders.



Embracing Inclusion & Diversity

At Darden, everyone is welcome to a seat at our table. When Bill Darden opened his first restaurant in 1938, he employed anyone willing to work hard, work smart and grow with the company – without regard to race, gender or background. We carry this important legacy forward today.



Our inclusion & diversity strategy

We believe there is strength in bringing together a diversity of cultures, perspectives, backgrounds and ideas. Building inclusive workplace cultures is a key tenet of our industry leading team member engagement and retention. The result fuels our growth as a company and creates great places to work for our team members who extend that sense of welcome and belonging to our guests.

To advance workplace diversity, we aim to:

- Increase our pipeline of diverse leaders
- Ensure all levels of our team reflect the diversity of talent in our industry and communities
- Expand inclusive hiring and development best practices across all our brands

To create an inclusive environment, we work to:

- Expand inclusion and diversity awareness and training to all team members
- Equip all leaders with the tools and resources to foster an inclusive environment for team members, vendors and guests
- Leverage Employee Resource Groups to engage, educate, retain and positively impact our team member experience

To build on our commitment to diversity, we intend to:

- Make a positive impact in the communities we serve
- Continue to invest in diverse suppliers

85%

of our hourly team members for the past three years have been people of color and/or women

71%

of promotions into management for the past three years have been people of color and/or women

36%

of leadership across our restaurants and support center teams are people of color

44%

of leadership across our restaurants and support center teams are women

51%

of our Executive Leadership is comprised of people of color and/or women

33%

of our Board of Directors are women

22%

of our Board of Directors are people of color

A Culture of Inclusion

Our Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) help engage, educate, retain and support our team. Creating a culture of inclusion not only promotes a positive work environment, it also helps deliver business results. Our ERGs support Darden’s efforts to help foster a welcoming environment where every team member matters and their unique perspectives are valued, heard and celebrated.



Darden African American Network
Sharing the Past, Building the Future



Darden Asian Network
Embracing Asian Cultures



Hispanic or Latin American Network
Many Cultures, One Vision



Darden Pride Alliance
Celebrating LGBTQ – Uniting All



Darden Serve Network
Proud to Serve



Darden Women's Network
Inspiring & Connecting Women

Communities

Darden restaurants play an important role in our communities. In addition to offering opportunities in the local workforce and places for friends and families to gather over a good meal, we are honored to provide resources to help meet community needs.

Both the company and the Darden Restaurants, Inc. Foundation (Darden Foundation) work together to serve and invest in our communities in four key areas that we believe are most aligned with our business and where we can have the greatest impact. These include: fighting hunger, investing in future generations, helping in times of need and making a difference in our hometown. Over the last five years, the Darden Foundation has donated more than \$20 million to charitable organizations that support the communities we serve.

Fighting Hunger

Thanks to the scale and scope of our family of restaurants, we are uniquely positioned to help fight hunger in the communities we serve. Two key ways we do that are through our ongoing partnership with Feeding America™ and our Darden Harvest food donation program.



BY THE NUMBERS

\$18M+

donated to Feeding America by the Darden Foundation since 2010

5.4M

pounds donated through Harvest in fiscal 2024

140M+

pounds of food donated through our Harvest program since its inception



People in every community across the United States face food insecurity. Feeding America estimates that more than 34 million people may face hunger.

We partner with Feeding America to enhance access to nutritious food in areas with higher levels of food insecurity. One component of our partnership is a

collaboration with Penske Truck Leasing to donate 45 refrigerated box trucks over the past four years. These donations help provide reliable transportation and operating funds to the Feeding America network of food banks, increasing access to fresh food by addressing transportation needs.

The Darden Foundation donated \$2 million to support Feeding America in fiscal 2024.



Investing in Future Generations

We believe it is important to invest in the success of younger generations across our communities. Darden Restaurants and the Darden Foundation support programs and organizations that help America’s youth realize their potential and achieve their dreams.

Boys & Girls Clubs of America

Darden and the Darden Foundation are proud to support the valuable contributions made by the Boys & Girls Clubs of America in communities across the country by providing opportunities for young people to discover their great futures.

At the national level, we are partnering with Boys & Girls Clubs of America to develop training that will help youth of all ages better understand inclusion and diversity and combat racial discrimination. In fiscal 2024, the Darden Foundation provided \$500,000 to support the development and implementation of the Youth for Unity training curriculum, which provides dynamic experiences and activities focused on combating racism and promoting equity. The curriculum will help foster the next generation of leaders, problem-solvers and advocates for change.

Educational Scholarships

In fiscal 2023, the Darden Foundation introduced the Next Course Scholarship program to provide scholarships for our team members’ children pursuing a college education. In the first two years, we awarded nearly 200 scholarships worth \$3,000 each. These scholarships helped team members and their families at 140 different restaurants across all of our brands and 39 states.

The Darden Foundation has funded scholarships, fellowships and professorships through more than \$5.5 million in endowments to universities across the country to promote careers in the hospitality industry and provide financial aid for students to gain valuable experience.

CASE STUDY

Expanding Access & Opportunities

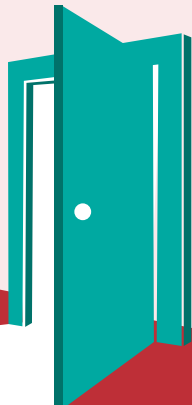
The restaurant industry offers great opportunities for young people as they enter the workforce. To help provide young people and others access to the rewarding career pathways our industry can provide, while developing the talent pipeline our industry needs, the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation (NRAEF) offers innovative training and educational opportunities to prepare people for the restaurant, foodservice and hospitality industry. The Darden Foundation contributes \$250,000 annually to support NRAEF’s four core programs:

ProStart® is a two-year culinary arts and restaurant management program that introduces high school students to career opportunities in the restaurant industry and provides training on topics ranging from culinary techniques to management skills. The program reaches approximately 165,000 students in more than 1,800 schools each year.

Restaurant Ready is a growing national program that currently partners with 75 community-based organizations that serve people who have historically faced barriers to opportunity. Restaurant Ready helps people acquire basic job and life skills and provides access to local restaurant and hospitality employers along with wrap-around services to support success.

Apprenticeships offered through the [Restaurant & Hospitality Leadership Center](#) provide accredited training programs for new and current employees. Apprentices participate in classes and on-the-job training to support career advancement. This program also strengthens employee engagement for restaurants.

Scholarships focus on supporting women, racial/ethnic minorities and first-generation students who are pursuing degrees in the industry. For the 2023-2024 school year, part of Darden’s annual contribution helped to support a scholarship program that awarded \$1 million in scholarships ranging from \$2,500 to \$10,000.



Helping in Times of Need

Darden remains ready to provide help when disasters strike our communities and our team members. We do this by supporting the American Red Cross and through our Darden Dimes team member emergency assistance fund, as well as by responding to community needs when they arise.

American Red Cross

We are a proud member of the American Red Cross Annual Disaster Giving Program, which equips the Red Cross with support to immediately respond to individuals and families impacted by disasters anywhere in the United States. This includes basic needs like warm meals, shelter, relief supplies and emotional support as they recover from unforeseen challenges. The Darden Foundation's long-term partnership with the Red Cross began in 1997. Darden donates \$500,000 annually to support this program.

Darden Dimes

Our signature employee giving program, Darden Dimes, is an emergency assistance fund that enables our team members to help one another in times of need. Since its inception in 1999, this program has played a critical role in providing relief for our team members when disaster strikes. More than \$38 million donated by team members has provided more than 83,000 Darden Dimes grants since the program began.

Darden restaurants around the country are quick to take action to support their communities by providing meals to first responders, making donations to local organizations, volunteering and lending assistance to victims of natural disasters.



SPOTLIGHT

Nourishing Our Communities

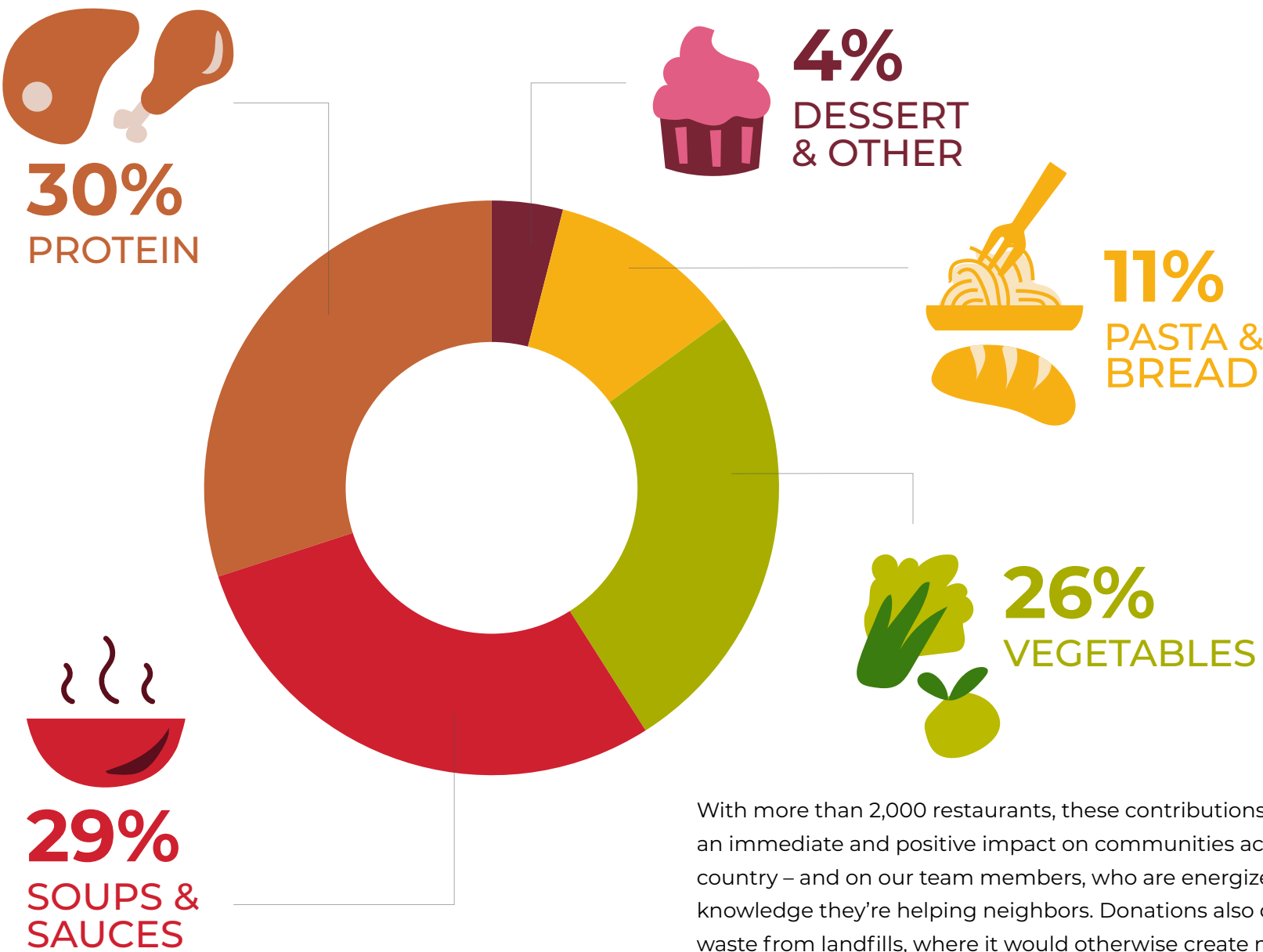
Darden Restaurants is in the business of feeding people – more than a million meals each day. We try to generate as little food waste as possible for financial and environmental reasons. Years ago, we realized our excess could feed hungry people in our local communities. The key was to get the food to the people who need it.

We do that through the Darden Harvest food donation program. We launched Harvest to get safe, high-quality surplus food from our restaurants to those in need instead of throwing it away. As of the end of fiscal 2024, that’s amounted to more than 140 million pounds.

This isn’t food off guests’ plates but rather items that were intended to serve customers but not used. At the end of the evening, team members in the back of the house prepare surplus food for local charities – even after a long shift, they want to give back to their community.

Food Donation Connection (FDC), a national nonprofit organization, serves as the liaison, linking Darden restaurants to shelters, soup kitchens, food pantries and others in need.

Darden Harvest food donation program breakdown



With more than 2,000 restaurants, these contributions make an immediate and positive impact on communities across the country – and on our team members, who are energized by the knowledge they’re helping neighbors. Donations also divert food waste from landfills, where it would otherwise create methane gas and contribute to a municipality’s carbon footprint.

SPOTLIGHT

Food Donation Connection Helps Darden Steward Resources

When FDC and Darden began discussing a company-wide commitment to donating excess food to community organizations as part of the Harvest program, the overwhelming benefits weren't immediately obvious.

"The team was inspired at a shelter in Orlando when they realized the surplus Darden was throwing away could benefit the people standing in line," said Jim Larson, Vice President of Development at FDC. "Through these donations, Darden is helping charities reduce their food budgets so they can spend more on their core missions – like providing temporary shelter, medical care, mental health services, long-term housing and job training."

Restaurants coordinate, weigh and track the items they provide, which supports tax deductions for charitable donations. FDC ensures food that Darden donates stays in the communities where we live and operate, benefiting local families.

Darden is proud to help make a difference in people's lives by sharing surplus food while building team morale and being good stewards of the planet and our resources.



Culinary trainees at the [Knox Area Rescue Ministries \(KARM\)](#) prepare meals for hundreds using ingredients donated by Darden restaurants as part of the Harvest program. KARM helps those struggling with homelessness, poverty and addiction to build a better life. Food donations offset costs for hunger relief and directly support other services that the organizations provide.



PLANET

Darden depends on energy and water to operate our restaurants, along with the natural resources needed to grow, process and transport the food that our guests enjoy. We recognize our responsibility to conserve these resources and protect our planet for future generations. We do this by incorporating environmental considerations into how we design and operate our restaurants and by partnering with suppliers to increase the sustainability of the food we source.

Environmental Strategy

Our conservation efforts begin where we have the most direct control – the 2,000+ restaurants where we work to use energy and water efficiently and minimize waste. We incorporate processes and behaviors along with equipment and technology that drive conservation, and we incorporate best practices for green buildings in the design of new restaurants.

While our efforts begin within our own operations, we are increasingly working to drive improvements throughout our supply chain, where our analysis shows we have the greatest footprints. To identify opportunities to advance our strategy, we completed assessments of the climate and water environmental impacts from our upstream and downstream value chain. We have assessed the energy and water it takes to produce food and to transport it to our restaurants. As a result, we're investing resources in working with suppliers in areas where we believe we can make the biggest difference.

Underpinning these efforts is our ongoing work to identify and mitigate the risks climate change poses to our business. We've identified risks

associated with extreme weather events that may cause disruption to our own assets, our supply chain and our guests, along with regulatory demands related to climate disclosures.

Among our efforts to address those risks, we have increased the robustness of our assessment and disclosures by aligning Darden's environmental data collection for energy, water, waste and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions with the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB) framework for the Food and Beverage Sector, beginning in fiscal 2023. As part of this effort, we work with a third party to verify our GHG inventory for environmental disclosures to a limited level of assurance each year.



The Darden restaurant support center in Orlando is LEED Gold certified for new construction. Its features include a 4,500-panel solar array that has a generating capacity of 1.1 megawatts (MW), and the use of reclaimed water for restrooms and irrigation saves nearly two million gallons of water annually.

Our Approach

Darden strives for continuous improvement in the environmental performance of our operations and in our supply chain. We are carefully evaluating our impacts, tradeoffs, risks and opportunities related to environmental issues including climate change, deforestation, water, waste, nature and biodiversity. **Our strategic approach is built on three pillars:**



IMPROVING DATA QUALITY

We depend on data-driven, scientifically proven strategies that align with our core business priorities. We're aiming to provide actual data for metrics on everything from emissions to packaging rather than estimates based on industry factors. Many of our supply chain partners are just beginning to measure baseline GHG, water and other metrics, which is a key first step in ensuring that our actions make meaningful and measurable improvements.



TESTING IDEAS WITH PILOT PROJECTS

We're testing programs and running pilots to evaluate ways to operate our restaurants efficiently, such as subscribing to community solar programs and piloting energy-efficient kitchen equipment. Although every project isn't a win, we move toward continuous improvement by testing and learning before rolling out broader programs.



PARTNERSHIPS

We scale our impact by collaborating with suppliers, researchers, non-governmental organizations and other industry partners in organizations like the [U.S. Roundtable for Sustainable Beef \(USRSB\)](#), [Roundtable for Sustainable Poultry and Eggs](#), and others. In addition, we participate in regular meetings with other members of the National Restaurant Association's [Sustainability Expert Exchange](#) to address critical pre-competitive issues and opportunities.



Energy & Emissions

We aim to reduce energy consumption within our properties to save on operating costs and to mitigate GHG emissions where possible. We do so primarily by increasing energy efficiency and conservation, as well as by increasing our use of renewable energy.

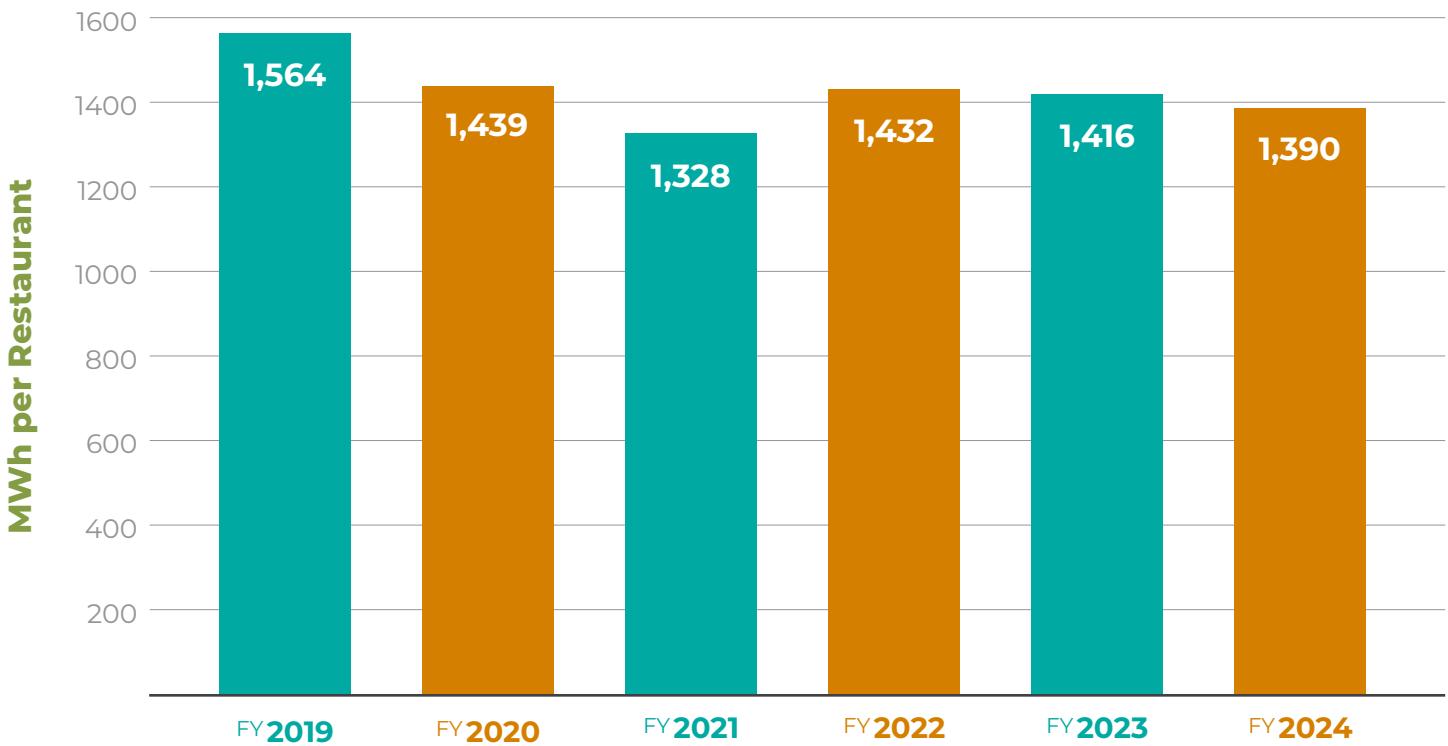
In 2011, Darden began installing building management systems in select restaurants to help us monitor and control temperature, lighting and refrigeration, and to use energy more efficiently and cost effectively. These systems are now installed at all new restaurants across all our brands.

In addition to increasing efficiency by using less energy to perform the same tasks, we conserve energy by not using it when it's not needed. Process improvements play an essential part. "Power on, Power off" labels on kitchen equipment in Darden restaurants list

standard times to power up equipment when it's needed. For example, a fryer or grill will have instructions clearly visible to indicate the correct time and setting to use when ramping up for dinner.

We're also focused on reducing energy consumption at the restaurant level by installing smart kitchen equipment. By using advanced thermostats and kitchen equipment that adjusts to changing needs in the kitchen, we use less energy. For example, managers can monitor and adjust refrigerator and freezer temperatures through an app on their phone.

Energy Intensity



Energy Consumption

 2,843 GWh total energy consumed in FY24

 700,000+ KWh renewable energy generated in FY24

Tapping into Renewable Energy

As part of our efforts to reduce fossil fuel use and resulting emissions, our energy strategy incorporates renewable sources. For instance, Darden installed a 4,500-panel solar array on the roof of our Restaurant Support Center in Orlando, Florida. The panels have a generating capacity of 1.1 megawatts (MW) of energy.



CASE STUDY

Darden Joins Community Solar Projects

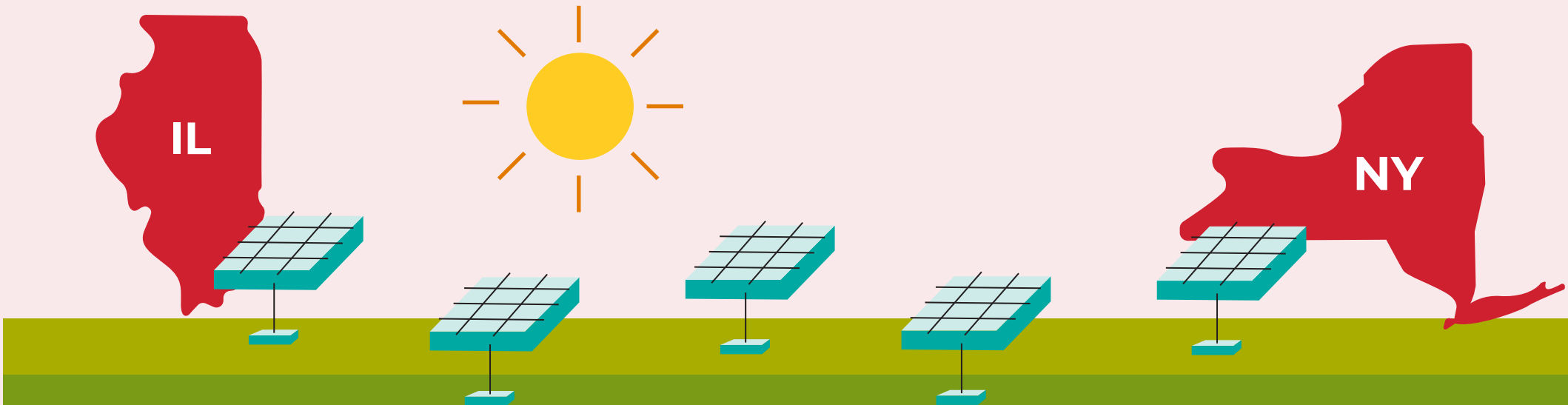
Darden is reducing our carbon footprint and supporting the development of renewable energy in the communities where we live and work – all while reducing energy costs for 79 restaurants.

In 2023, Darden became an anchor tenant for two community-based solar projects. We subscribed to 15 community solar farms across New York and Illinois that generate approximately 20 MW of renewable energy and help power our local restaurants.

Each community solar project consists of several acres of solar panels. The energy they produce flows to the grid, replacing electricity from fossil fuels and reducing emissions. The solar farms are projected to produce more than 30 million kWh and reduce energy costs for Darden while contributing to the expansion of local renewable energy near our restaurants.

In addition, Darden signed a long-term contract to support the installation of a battery storage power station. This contract for the virtual power consumption for our restaurants helped seed the project, and we received a discounted rate on the electricity. The system, which consists of a group of large batteries, stores electrical energy generated from solar panels so that it can be consumed when needed.

These projects also make low-carbon energy more accessible to community members who can't implement on-site renewable energy.



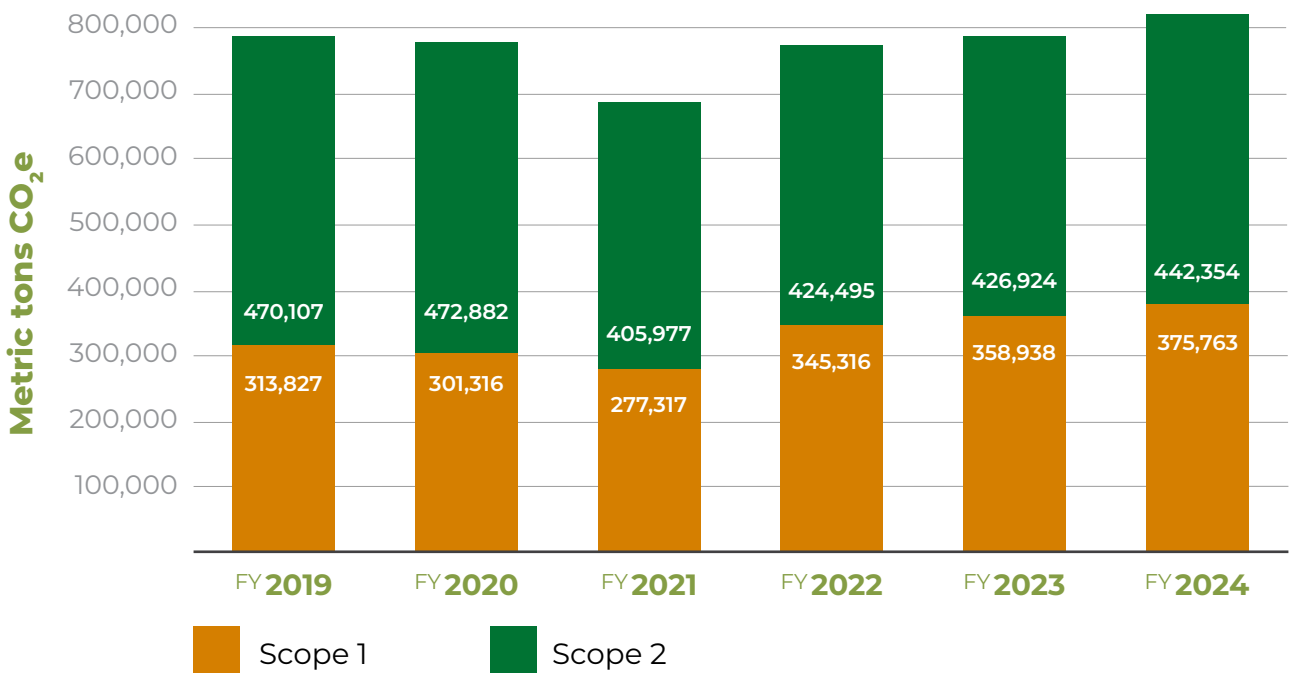
Assessing GHG Emissions

We’ve analyzed and validated Scope 1 and 2 emissions from our operations and Scope 3 emissions from our supply chain. As the chart on the far right shows, Scope 3 emissions account for the vast majority of our total emissions. We aim to improve the quality of this data over time, which will allow us to refine our strategy for greater impact and to set meaningful goals.

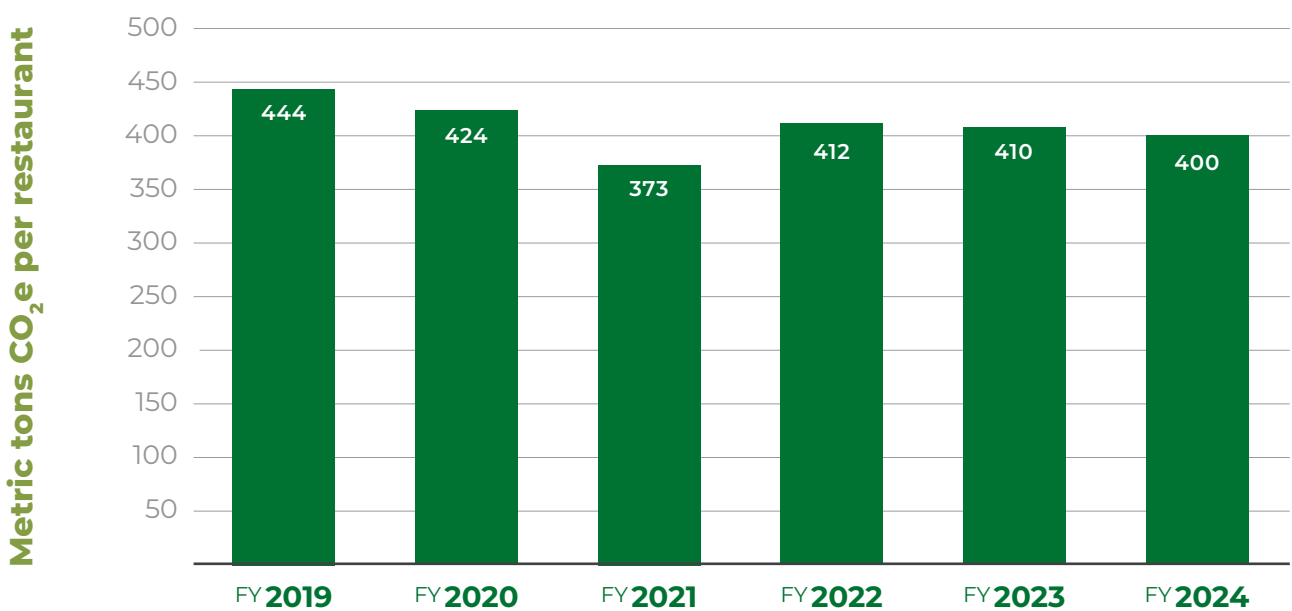
We also performed a detailed, third-party verified Scope 3 emissions inventory for all relevant upstream and downstream sources. Diligent assessment and transparent reporting on Scope 3 emissions are critical to developing a long-term strategy to collaborate with suppliers on solutions to environmental challenges. Darden’s Scope 3 emissions are calculated primarily by using best available life cycle assessments and emissions factors. Given the high portion of those emissions in Category 1, Purchased Goods and Services, we concentrate on these sources, particularly from beef production given that beef and dairy make up approximately 34% of all value chain emissions.

Darden is supporting our beef supply chain partners in increasing the measurement and disclosure of GHG emissions and making continuous progress in identifying and testing solutions for reducing the impact from production.

Scope 1 & 2 emissions

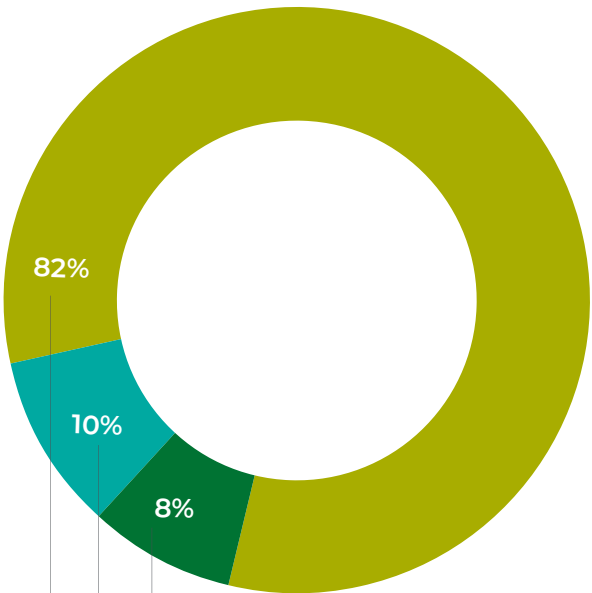


Scope 1 & 2 GHG intensity - per restaurant



Emissions profile

Based on FY22 data



Scope	MT CO ₂ e
Scope 1	345,316
Scope 2	424,495
Scope 3	3,512,851
Total	4,282,662

MT CO₂e = metric tons carbon dioxide equivalent.

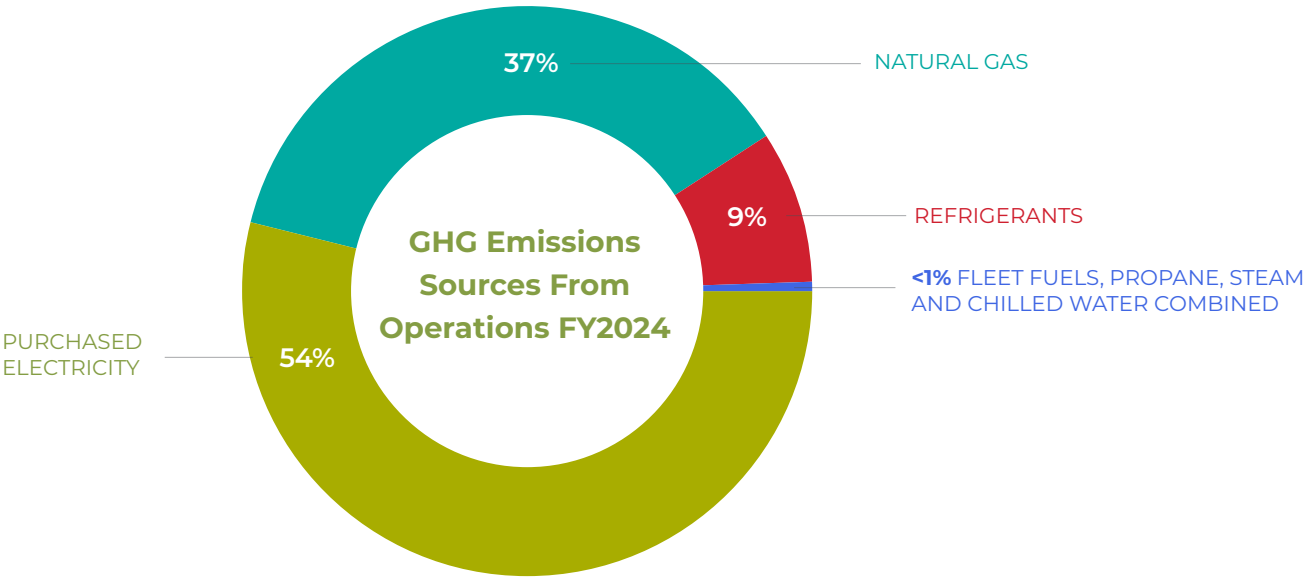
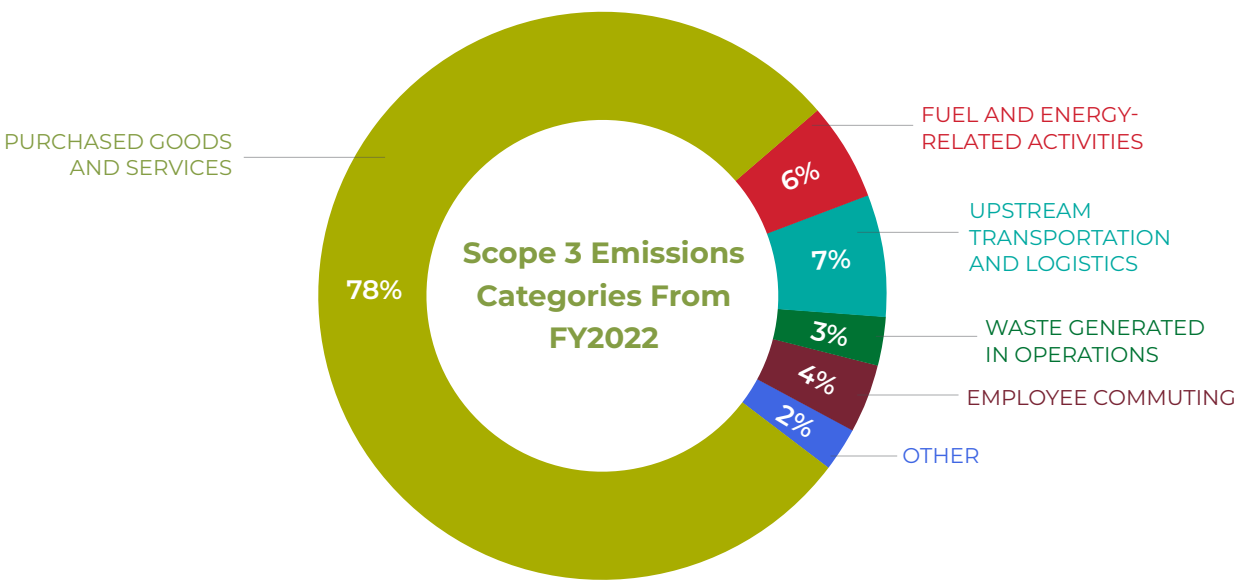
Scope 3 GHG Emissions Categories from our Value Chain

Based on FY22 data

Darden has screened its operations and supply chain for climate impacts periodically since fiscal 2022. The scope 3 emissions values below represent the latest inventory assessment. Darden will

continue to reassess our entire value chain climate impacts as data quality and accessibility improve over time.

Category	Emissions
Category 1 - Purchased goods and services	2,751,967
Category 3 - Fuel and energy-related activities	198,476
Category 4 - Upstream transportation and logistics	248,007
Category 5 - Waste generated in operations	91,334
Category 7 - Employee commuting	141,217
Other (Categories 2, 6, 12, 14)	81,489
Total	3,512,851 MT CO ₂ e (metric tons carbon dioxide equivalent)

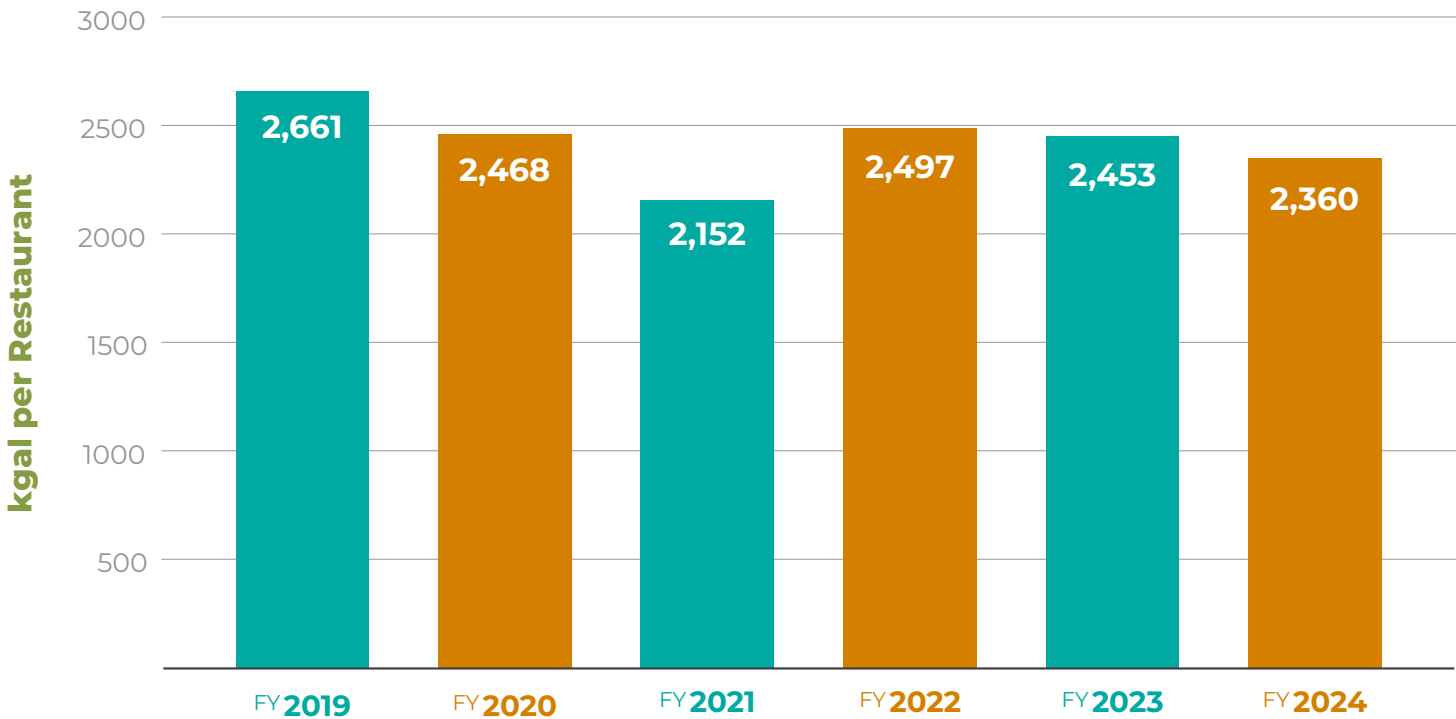


Water Conservation

Our restaurants use water to cook, clean, serve our guests and create inviting landscapes for our restaurants. Conserving this natural resource is critical. We have taken steps to optimize water use in our restaurants, including installing low-flow fixtures, touchless faucets and water-efficient landscaping. In fiscal 2024, we assessed the water stress risk across our operations in the United States and Canada and found that 36% of the water we consume is in regions with high or extremely high baseline water stress.



Water Intensity



Water Consumption

- 4.83 billion gallons of water used in FY24
- 303,280 Kgals of reclaimed water used in FY24

Our partners need water to irrigate crops and manage livestock for the meals we serve. So, in addition to effectively managing our direct water use, we are building a foundation to engage suppliers and partners in both reducing water usage and maintaining water quality. For instance, as members of the USRSB, we are exploring ways to assess water use and nutrient management in beef production.

Waste Management

We conducted detailed waste characterization studies to better understand waste streams in our restaurants and opportunities for diversion. We continue to track and monitor recycling rates across our restaurants and continuously evaluate opportunities to optimize waste diversion.

Organic waste is the largest single component of our waste stream, making up more than one-third of our total waste by weight based on Darden’s waste studies. This includes scraps generated during food preparation and guest leftovers. In addition to strengthening our forecasting efforts to minimize food loss, the

Darden Harvest program plays a crucial role in diverting food waste by donating unused food to fight hunger.

Darden restaurants manage diversion and recycling based on state and local ordinances for managing waste streams.

Waste Diversion in Fiscal 2024

17% approximate diversion rate*

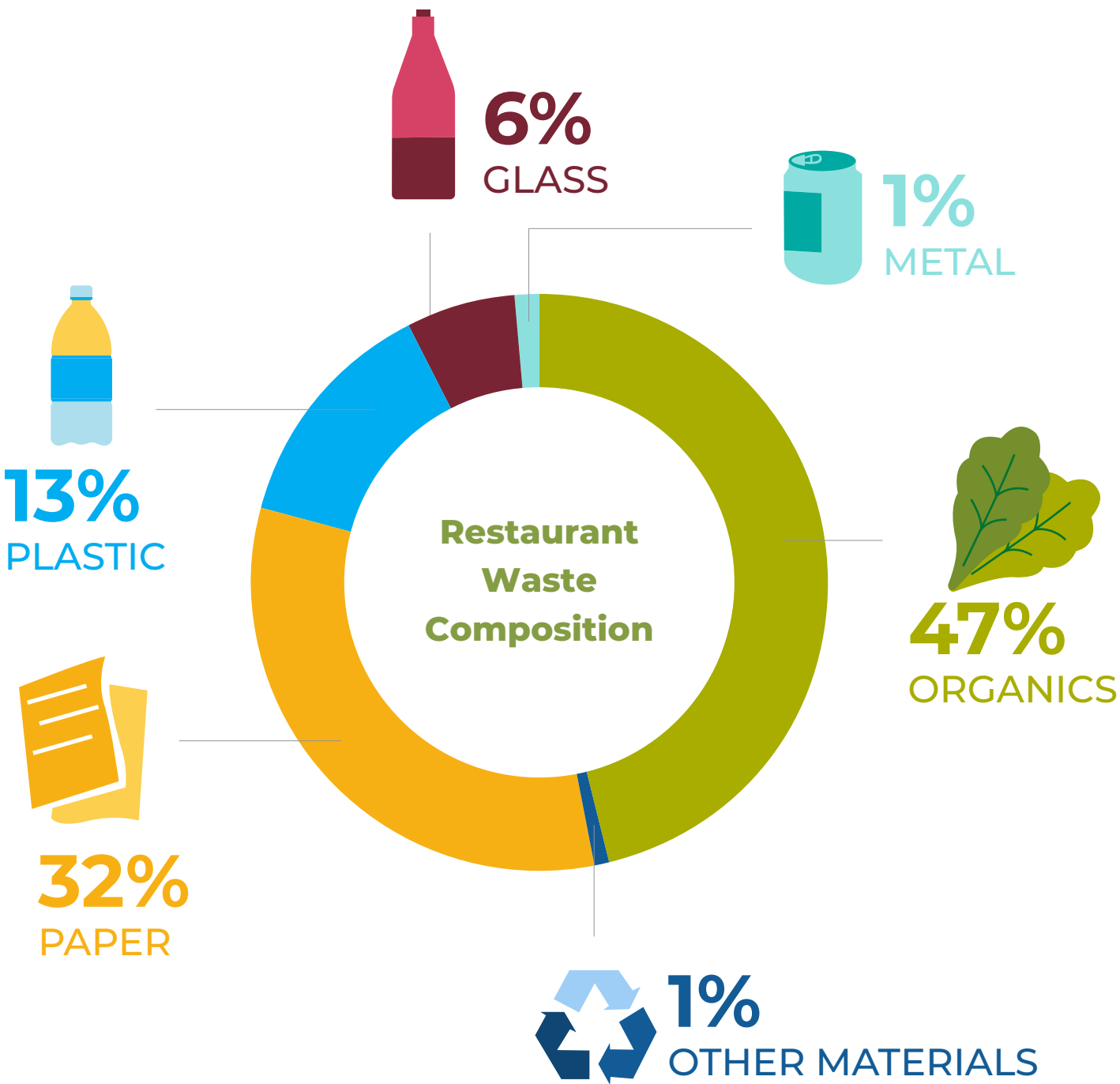
100% of restaurants recycle used cooking oil

69% of restaurants have solid waste recycling programs

5.4 million pounds of surplus food donated to nonprofits

*Represents landfill diversion rate at U.S.-owned and operated restaurants.

Waste estimates are based on vendor-supplied data. Does not include surplus food donations per SASB guidance.



Collaborating for Improved Outcomes

The complex and interconnected nature of environmental issues means no one organization can solve them alone. That's why we work closely with our suppliers and others in our industry to drive broader change and address specific issues. Darden is actively supporting progress with our supply chain partners in areas including the following concerns.

Understanding Deforestation and Land Conversion Risk

Certain commodities Darden buys as ingredients in menu items or packaging for restaurants, including beef, palm oil, soy, coffee, cocoa and wood fiber products, are linked to forest loss in some geographies. Since 2020, we have performed periodic deforestation screening of our supply chain and worked directly with suppliers to trace and certify commodities with deforestation risk.

Our assessment is based on two factors. First, we look at the region where a product was produced. For example, almost all of our beef comes from North America, which poses little to no deforestation risk related to grazing cattle. Second, we look at environmental sourcing standards and third-party environmental certification for items like wood fiber and palm oil. These certifications confirm that products come from sources with little risk, such as sustainably managed forests.

An assessment for fiscal 2023 determined that approximately 80% of Darden's spend on these commodities had low to no risk based on geography and/or environmental certification. Based on the 2023 screening, Darden performed a deeper dive into the remaining gaps that included traceability for livestock and aquaculture feed production, further processing of food and non-food products and other areas.

In fiscal 2024, we expanded the evaluation of our largest commodity with deforestation risk: beef. FAI Farms supported an assessment of our beef supply chain that evaluated both grazing lands and feed ration sources for all beef products. In fiscal 2024, 97% of Darden's beef supply was raised in North America in areas without deforestation risk. Darden has engaged direct and indirect partners in our supply chain to address the portion of our beef supply chain that is raised in Brazil. Our suppliers that source from Brazil provided documentation indicating their beef is not sourced from regions with deforestation risk.



Focusing on the Beef Industry

We support best practices in all sectors of the beef industry. These efforts are complicated by the many intricate steps in the beef supply chain – from raising cattle on a ranch, to finishing on a feedlot, to processing into various products to sell through the food service market, to Darden restaurants. As part of our commitment to continuous progress, we are also coordinating with our suppliers and contributing to efforts to reduce the environmental impacts of the beef production process while contributing to the economic development of beef producers.

Partnerships across the supply chain

The U. S. Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (USRSB) is a multi-stakeholder initiative developed to advance, support and communicate continuous improvement of the U.S. beef industry. USRSB envisions the U.S. beef value chain as the trusted global leader in environmentally sound, socially responsible and economically viable beef. Darden is a member of a USRSB working committee that meets monthly and participates in person several times a year, visiting beef producers to collaborate on opportunities to drive progress in assessment, transparency and continuous improvement.

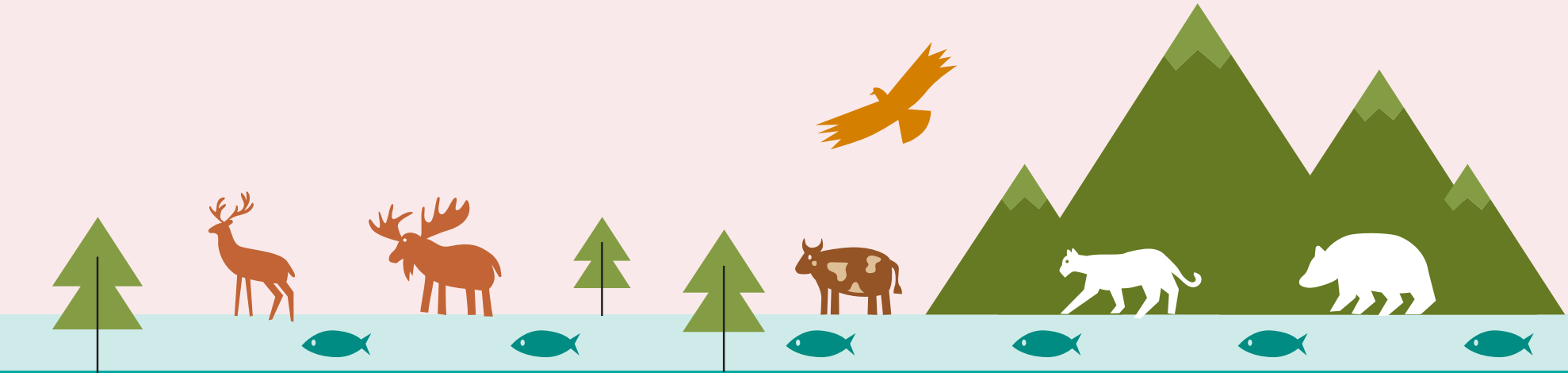
In 2023, Darden helped fund a cattle grazing research project developed through USRSB in partnership with Trust in Food. The beef supply chain needs foundational data to assess its environmental footprint and work toward solutions to improve it. The study focused on grazing management plans, which ranchers use to ensure cattle graze in a way that meets their nutritional needs but stays within the capacity of grasslands to be productive. Grazing management plans address many issues including access to water, nutritional supplementation, biodiversity, soil health, invasive plants and animals, access to grasslands for migratory birds and other animals, water run off mitigation and others. Darden supports efforts to improve grazing management plans to promote healthy grassland ecosystems.

CASE STUDY

The Darden Foundation Joins Forces to Restore Grazing Lands

The Darden Foundation provided grant funding to the Rocky Mountain Rangelands Program to restore grazing lands for wildlife. Partners included the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the Department of the Interior’s Bureau of Land Management, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Cargill.

The program aims to protect and restore wildlife habitat and biodiversity, address invasive species and ensure wildlife has room to roam. The agencies work closely with private landowners who voluntarily conserve and restore habitat for wildlife adapted to harsh climates that often require large open spaces. The projects have the potential to sequester up to 107,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents by 2030 to help promote climate resilience, in addition to enhancing conservation projects in this vital ecosystem.



Logistics Set Darden Apart

Behind the delicious meals served across our different brands is a large, sophisticated logistics network. Darden leverages both its scale and data intelligence to ensure needed food and supplies are delivered safely and on time to each of its more than 2,000 restaurants across the United States. Our network also helps to drive improvements through increased efficiency that results in fewer emissions and less waste while also playing a significant role in food safety.

One of the key differentiators in Darden’s logistics strategy is that we purchase food directly from the producers rather than from a restaurant distributor. This approach gives us greater control over the entire network and allows us to provide quality, efficiency and consistency to our restaurants while lowering expenses and improving service. Our scale gives us even more efficiency because we are able to service all of our restaurants and restaurant brands with dedicated delivery vehicles, drivers and support.

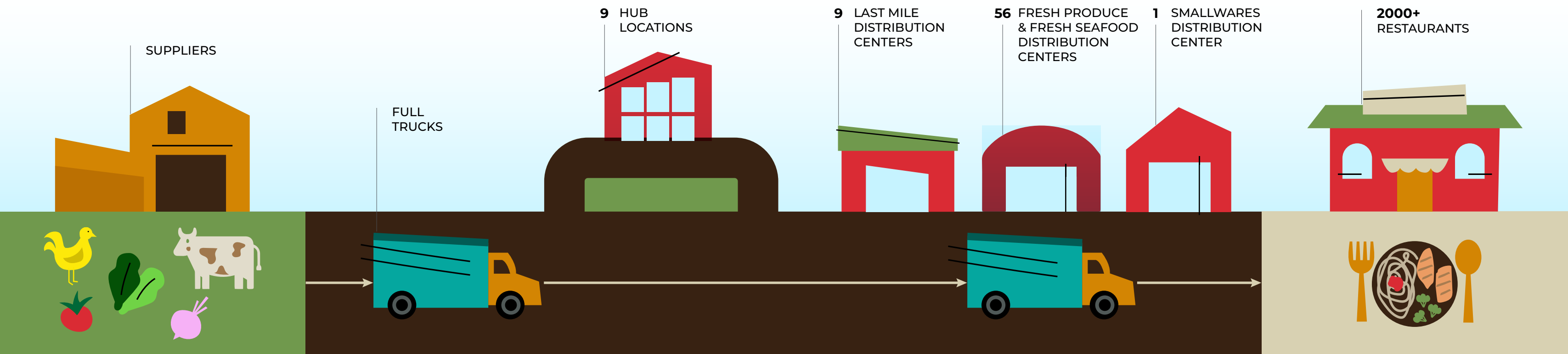
The level of control and oversight across our system also supports food safety and traceability. Darden's team members evaluate and confirm that our suppliers' food safety processes are working as intended.

Darden’s focus on improving efficiency in logistics also has environmental benefits including decreased emissions and waste. When our trucks are full and routed efficiently to serve our nationwide footprint, we use less fuel and

emit fewer greenhouse gases. We can decrease waste – particularly for perishables – when we can accurately forecast and order only what we need, when we need it.

Having more information about the products in our system gives us insight that allows for better decision-making and reduces risk. We use advanced technology to help us collect and analyze data for the 13,000 products that move throughout our network.

Distribution overview





PLATE

Our restaurants help create memories for families, friends and neighbors as they gather to celebrate life's big and small moments. Great food – which starts with quality ingredients – is central to this experience. Food safety is always our top priority, and we have best-in-class food safety and total quality programming in place at our restaurants and with our suppliers. We also take great care to understand where our ingredients come from and safeguard the treatment of animals in our supply chain.

Sourcing Food with Care

We value the trust our guests place in us, which is why we have best-in-class food safety and total quality programs in place at our restaurants and with our suppliers. We know that safe and quality ingredients are critical to maintaining that trust. We carefully source and prepare each component of the meals we serve.

To ensure that our high standards for quality ingredients are met, we work closely with our suppliers to understand where ingredients come from, how they are grown or produced, and how they are processed and distributed. While always prioritizing food safety, we also insist on using

ingredients that meet our high standards for quality, wholesome food.

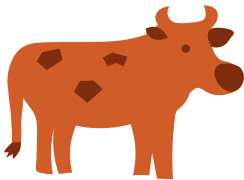
We provide our guests with information about nutritional content and allergens as part of our commitment to empowering our guests to make informed decisions about the food they eat.



DARDEN BUYS APPROXIMATELY



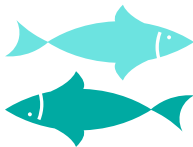
TOP ITEMS IN OUR FOOD BASKET



BEEF
24%



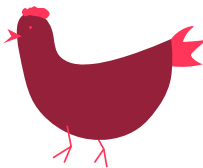
PRODUCE
11%



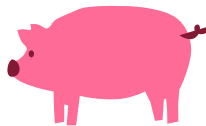
SEAFOOD
9%



DAIRY
9%



POULTRY
8%



PORK
2%

Based on spend in fiscal 2024.

Food Safety

Central to Darden’s rigorous food safety program are many safeguards in place to ensure the quality and safety of the food we serve. Our dedicated team of Total Quality experts maintains a program that spans our full supply chain and operations to support food safety and restaurant cleanliness.

Maintaining Total Quality

We do not take lightly the responsibility that Darden’s restaurants have in serving guests across the country every day. Our Total Quality program helps us maintain the trust that is placed in us – and it starts well before we put food on the plate.

Darden’s highly qualified Total Quality team includes food and nutrition scientists, Registered Environmental Health Specialists/Registered Sanitarians and former health inspectors. Beyond our own team, we regularly partner with local health officials and regulatory agencies on food safety issues and consult with industry experts on best practices.

We remain focused on maintaining food safety and food quality standards through every step of our supply chain. We work closely with suppliers to evaluate processes and products before we agree to purchase them, and we remain engaged to ensure that our quality specifications are continuously met. These specifications are based on the level of risk associated with each individual product or ingredient.

We also follow the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s comprehensive Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) food safety principles. These focus on preventing hazards that could cause food-borne illnesses, and we implement measures at every touchpoint from farm to fork to protect against potential risk to our guests and team members.



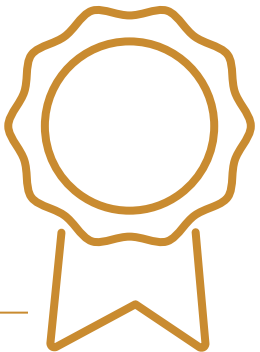
100% of our 2,000+ restaurants

are audited by a third-party every quarter to ensure that our food safety protocols are upheld. Out of 293 Class 1 FDA and USDA Food Recalls in fiscal 2024, only six impacted our restaurants.

Members of Darden’s Total Quality team are all **Registered Sanitarians** and **Environmental Health specialists**, a prestigious credential from the National Environmental Health Association.

90+%

of Darden suppliers are certified to the Global Food Safety Initiative.



Food Safety Throughout the Supply Chain



FARM AND PROCESSING

- Third-party audits to help ensure that our safety and quality standards are met and that our Animal Welfare Policy is upheld.



SUPPLIER

- Rigorous evaluations to verify food safety procedures and product quality.
- Partner accountability to our [Supplier Code of Conduct](#).



DISTRIBUTION CENTER

- Annual food safety audits by third parties.
- Daily monitored shelf life of all products in each distribution center. We have three separate groups evaluating inventory to be sure we are always serving fresh, safe, quality food and minimizing risk to our business.



RESTAURANT

- Thorough training on our robust food safety and restaurant cleanliness practices.
- Twice-daily in-depth walk-throughs by management.
- Quarterly third-party inspections at every restaurant.
- Technology that validates HACCP measures and enables real-time response by our Total Quality team when needed.

Industry Collaboration to Improve Food Safety

We collaborate with our industry peers to drive progress in food safety and to remain at the forefront of advancements including:



Conference for Food Protection, a nonprofit organization, invites input from members of industry, regulatory bodies, academia, consumer and professional organizations regarding food safety laws and regulations. Darden’s Total Quality team lends their expertise to the food safety standards development process and helps shape future guidance and regulation.



National Restaurant Association Quality Assurance Executive Study Group and Expert Exchange Gatherings convene food safety and quality assurance leaders in the restaurant industry. Darden participates in these work groups regularly to discuss the latest insights from the Food and Drug Administration, emerging issues, technological advancements and more.



International Association for Food Protection helps advance food safety worldwide through the ongoing exchange of information to protect the food supply.



National Retail Federation Food Safety Task Force provides a forum for members to share best practices on food safety. Most recently, Darden’s Total Quality leadership provided key input on the Food and Drug Administration’s proposed rule for traceability requirements on high-risk foods.



National Environmental Health Association is a professional network committed to advancing the field of environmental health.



Retail Food Safety Advisory Group plays a key role in advising the Association of Food and Drug Officials, National Environmental Health Association, Conference for Food Protection, and the National Association of County and City Health Officials. As an active participant, Darden helps represent the retail food industry in advancing retail food initiatives and activities to help decrease cases of foodborne illness.

Supporting Animal Welfare

We have a responsibility to ensure that animals are treated with respect and care in the process of providing the nutritious food that is served in our restaurants. We support science-based animal welfare outcomes, and we consult with academic and industry experts and organizations to remain aligned with best practices as they evolve.

Our goal is for Darden's suppliers to contribute to measurable improvements in animal welfare outcomes. These efforts are led by our Animal Welfare Council, which is comprised of a cross-functional internal team along with external industry and academic experts and consultants. Under the council's guidance, we work with our suppliers and industry peers to define appropriate metrics and to establish science-based frameworks in line with developments in validated welfare measurement methods.

Darden is careful to work with suppliers who share our commitment to animal welfare. We expect our suppliers to align with the internationally recognized principles of best care throughout the life of farm animals and to also provide a valid and verified animal welfare certification. For more details, see Darden's full [Animal Welfare Policy](#).

Each protein type presents different challenges and opportunities for the industry. The maturity of Darden's programs, including goal setting and measuring results, varies across protein types. In addition to our Animal Welfare Council, we collaborate closely with industry organizations that share our commitment to continuous improvement.

Another way that we stay aligned with the industry is through best-in-class training and certifications from the [Professional Animal Auditor Certification Organization \(PAACO\)](#). Serving as the authority on animal welfare auditing certification, PAACO trains and certifies auditors for the swine, dairy, poultry, beef cattle and feedlot industries. Several Darden Supply Chain leaders, sustainability professionals and members of the Animal Welfare Council have completed auditor training courses offered by PAACO.



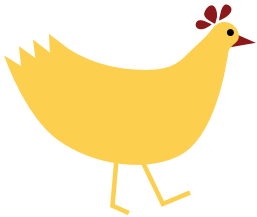
Assessing Animal Welfare

In fiscal 2024, Darden evaluated risks and issues in each of our protein commodity supply chains that covered environmental, economic, social and animal welfare focus areas. Subsequent prioritization of these risks and issues has established focused work with suppliers, supplier industry organizations and industry peers. We have strategies in place to support animal welfare across the key protein categories found on our menus. We also work closely with industry organizations to stay informed and to help support industry-wide progress.

Darden’s strategy to address risks in our supply chain includes direct engagement with suppliers and active participation in larger cross-sector industry organizations and collaborations.

Antibiotics Stewardship

Darden requires its land-based protein suppliers to comply with FDA guidelines and/or all applicable national regulations for antibiotics use. This means that antibiotics that are important in human medicine may not be used with farm animals for growth purposes, and those used by both humans and animals are only used to treat, prevent and control disease in farm animals under the supervision of a veterinarian. Darden believes in supporting best practices by farmers to address emerging threats from antimicrobial resistance.

	GOAL	2024 UPDATE	INDUSTRY PARTNER
 POULTRY	To drive improvements in poultry farming that result in healthy biological function, expression of natural behavior and humane processing.	Darden continued working to develop broiler chicken Key Welfare Indicators by engaging our suppliers. Darden has partnered with FAI Farms to support the data collection and analysis required to execute this pilot study.	 International Poultry Welfare Alliance
 EGGS	100% cage free egg products for owned and operated restaurants. International franchises are on pace to source cage free egg products by 2027.	We have achieved our goal – 100% of the eggs purchased by Darden are from cage free housing systems. Our international franchises are working to source only cage free eggs by the end of 2027.	 Roundtable for Sustainable Poultry and Eggs
 PORK	Source pork from suppliers with group housing systems for pregnant sows as defined by the American Association for Swine Veterinarians that also meet our culinary specifications, high quality standards, and accessible pricing requirements.	We worked with our suppliers and industry associations on topics including housing, other welfare focus areas and environmental management topics including GHG emissions, water usage and waste management. Approximately 56% of pork volume purchased by Darden was from suppliers with group housing for sows, based on a mass balance approach and input from our suppliers. For several of our pork products, Darden specifications require group housing.	   National Pork Board Meat Institute Protein Pact

Animal Welfare Council

Darden's Animal Welfare Council, established in 2019, leads our in-depth, data-driven approach to improving animal welfare and environmental stewardship across our supply chain. In addition to Darden's own experts, which includes PAACO-certified animal welfare auditors, the council includes leading academics and expert consultants who focus on the care of animals in food supply chains. In particular, they are focused on humane housing, avoidance of pain, slaughter practices, farm animal transportation and the responsible use of antibiotics.

Broiler Chicken Key Welfare Indicators

A key project undertaken by the Council is a multi-year effort to evaluate Key Welfare Indicators (KWIs) for broiler chickens at suppliers' facilities and to establish an ongoing process for measuring improvements. Our work builds on nationally recognized audit standards and international guidance on welfare indicators from the [International Poultry Welfare Alliance](#). These indicators include air quality and flock conditions on the farm, processing effectiveness, transport and handling safety issues, and chick comfort at the hatchery, among others.

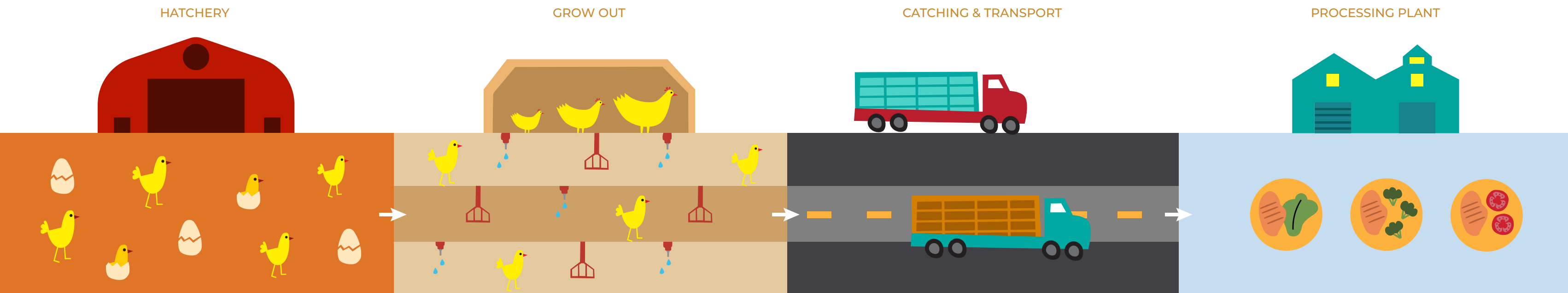
Beginning in 2022, we worked with experts to survey our suppliers to help identify the types of information available and feasible data collection processes. We conducted further analysis in 2023 to better understand the on-the-ground realities for our suppliers, and we used these insights to design

The cross-functional team from Darden includes leaders from total quality, sustainability, communications, government relations and legal. Critically, there are also supply chain purchasing managers who specialize in pork, poultry, beef, eggs and dairy. External Council members include academic experts along with multidiscipline expert advisors.

The Animal Welfare Council's efforts are focused by working groups, which are subsets of the full council. Each working group helps lead Darden's efforts to address specific issues related to each of our primary protein sources.

a pilot to begin collecting meaningful data from them. Launched in 2024, the pilot aims to establish a baseline that helps drive progress across our suppliers and our industry by measuring performance of outcomes-based KWIs from our broiler suppliers.

As a part of this pilot project, Darden is working with suppliers to measure key welfare indicators that reflect the health of the environment the birds live in, their quality of nutrition, and level of care from hatch to processing. These KWIs include metrics such as footpad scoring, leg bruising, broken or dislocated wings, dead on arrivals, acceptable bird placement, method of stunning, stun effectiveness, knife effectiveness and postmortem inspection.





DATA APPENDIX

About this Report

This Impact Report reflects Darden’s ongoing commitment to transparency by sharing our performance and efforts on issues that are important to our stakeholders and our company. Similar details, including our Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB) index have previously been shared on our website, most recently for fiscal 2024. In response to stakeholder feedback, this report marks a return to publishing this information in a compiled report format that includes our latest disclosures within the SASB framework. Unless otherwise noted, the data reflects fiscal 2024 results for our U.S. operations.

Information About Forward-Looking Statements

Forward-looking statements in this communication regarding our expected earnings performance and all other statements that are not historical facts, including without limitation statements concerning our future economic performance, are made under the Safe Harbor provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Any forward-looking statements speak only as of the date on which such statements are first made, and we undertake no obligation to update such statements to reflect events or circumstances arising after such date. We wish to caution investors not to place undue reliance on any such forward-looking statements. By their nature, forward-looking statements involve risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to materially differ from those anticipated in the statements. The most significant of these uncertainties are described in Darden's Form 10-K, Form 10-Q and Form 8-K reports. These risks and uncertainties include: a failure to address cost pressures and a failure to effectively deliver cost management activities, economic factors and their impacts on the restaurant industry and general macroeconomic factors including unemployment, energy prices and interest rates, the inability to hire, train, reward and retain restaurant team members, a failure to develop and recruit effective leaders, labor and insurance costs, health concerns including food-related pandemics or outbreaks of flu or other viruses, food safety and food-borne illness concerns, technology failures including failure to maintain a secure cyber

network, compliance with privacy and data protection laws and risks of failures or breaches of our data protection systems, the inability to successfully integrate Ruth's Chris Steak House operations into our business, risks relating to public policy changes and federal, state and local regulation of our business, intense competition, changing consumer preferences, an inability or failure to manage the accelerated impact of social media, a failure to execute innovative marketing and guest relationship tactics, climate change, adverse weather conditions and natural disasters, long-term and non-cancelable property leases, failure to execute a business continuity plan following a disaster, shortages or interruptions in the delivery of food and other products and services, failure to drive profitable sales growth, a lack of availability of suitable locations for new restaurants, higher-than-anticipated costs to open, close, relocate or remodel restaurants, risks of doing business with franchisees, licensees and vendors in foreign markets, volatility in the market value of derivatives, volatility leading to the inability to hedge equity compensation market exposure, failure to protect our intellectual property, litigation, unfavorable publicity, disruptions in the financial markets, impairment in the carrying value of our goodwill or other intangible assets, changes in tax laws or unanticipated tax liabilities, failure of our internal controls over financial reporting and other factors and uncertainties discussed from time to time in reports filed by Darden with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB) Index

Reporting to the voluntary SASB Restaurants Sustainability Accounting Standard Version 2023-12 enables us to communicate our progress in a transparent and standardized manner for investors and other important stakeholders. All data is for Darden’s fiscal year 2024 unless otherwise noted. In certain instances, a specific SASB topic may be discussed in our reporting, but we do not currently report progress on the corresponding SASB metrics. In these instances, we provide relevant data on the topic below and/or link to the corresponding document or website where these topics and any relevant performance data are discussed in greater detail.

We are committed to continuous improvement and are actively working to improve our data collection and coordination across the organization. We look forward to continuing to identify ways to strengthen our reporting processes and disclosures in the coming years.

A third-party assurance statement for relevant metrics in this table is included within this appendix.

TOPIC	ACCOUNTING METRIC	CODE	RESPONSE
Energy Management	(1) Total energy consumed, (2) percentage grid electricity and (3) percentage renewable	FB-RN-130a.1	(1) 2,843 GWh (2) 41% grid electricity (3) 0.03% renewable
Water Management	(1) Total water withdrawn, (2) total water consumed, percentage of each in regions with High or Extremely High Baseline Water Stress	FB-RN-140a.1	(1) 4,826,875 kGals (2) 36% in regions with High or Extremely High Water Stress
Food & Packaging Waste Management	(1) Total amount of waste, (2) percentage food waste, and (3) percentage diverted	FB-RN-150a.1	(1) 381,239 metric tons (2) Approximately 48% based on waste characterization studies at Darden Restaurants (3) 17% diversion rate at U.S.-owned and operated restaurants Managing Waste
	(1) Total weight of packaging, (2) percentage made from recycled or renewable materials, and (3) percentage that is recyclable, reusable, or compostable	FB-RN-150a.2	These data points are not aggregated in a manner consistent with the indicator guidance. Managing Waste



TOPIC	ACCOUNTING METRIC	CODE	RESPONSE
Food Safety	Percentage of restaurants (1) inspected by a food safety oversight body, and (2) receiving critical violations	FB-RN-250a.1	(1) 100% of Darden’s owned and operated restaurants are inspected by local health departments. They are also audited by a third party on a quarterly basis. (2) This data point is not currently publicly disclosed. Our Total Quality Department helps ensure that all restaurants provide safe, high-quality food in a clean and safe environment. Through rigorous supplier and risk-based product evaluations, we purchase only products that meet or exceed our product specifications. We rely on independent third parties to inspect and evaluate our suppliers and distributors. Suppliers that produce “high-risk” products are subject to a food safety evaluation by Darden personnel at least annually. We require our suppliers to maintain sound manufacturing practices and operate with comprehensive Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) food safety programs and risk-based preventative controls adopted by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. These programs focus on preventing hazards that could cause food-borne illnesses by applying scientifically-based controls to analyze hazards, identify and monitor critical control points, and establish corrective actions when monitoring shows that a critical limit has not been met. Third party auditors inspect each restaurant regularly throughout the year to assess food safety and sanitation practices. Our total quality team verifies the application of preventative controls through on-site support visits ensuring an effective and robust food safety system. Total quality managers provide support to operations staff with education and training in food safety and sanitation. The team also serves as a liaison to regulatory agencies on issues relating to food safety. Ensuring Food Safety & Quality 2024 Annual Report
	(1) Number of recalls issued and (2) total amount of food product recalled	FB-RN-250a.2	(1) Of 293 Class 1 FDA and USDA recalls, only 6 impacted Darden (2) This data point is not currently publicly disclosed. Ensuring Food Safety & Quality
	Number of confirmed foodborne disease outbreaks, percentage resulting in public health authority investigation	FB-RN-250a.3	There were 0 confirmed foodborne disease outbreaks during the reporting period. Ensuring Food Safety & Quality



TOPIC	ACCOUNTING METRIC	CODE	RESPONSE
Nutritional Content	Percentage of (1) meal options consistent with dietary guidelines and (2) revenue from these options	FB-RN-260a.1	These data points are not aggregated in a manner consistent with the indicator guidance.
	Percentage of (1) children's meal options consistent with dietary guidelines for children and (2) revenue from these options	FB-RN-260a.2	Several brands maintain different menus across their trade areas to reflect geographic differences in consumer preferences, prices and selections, as well as a smaller portioned, lower-priced children's menu. These data points are not aggregated in a manner consistent with the indicator guidance.
	Percentage of advertising impressions (1) made on children and (2) made on children promoting products that meet dietary guidelines for children	FB-RN-310a.1	These data points are not aggregated in a manner consistent with the indicator guidance.
Labor Practices	(1) Voluntary and (2) involuntary turnover rate for restaurant employees	FB-RN-310a.1	(1) Restaurant hourly employees: 80%; Consolidated restaurant management: 15.5% *Does not include Ruth's Chris Steakhouse. Darden's consolidated turnover rate for hourly team members during fiscal 2024 was 80%, one of the lowest rates in the restaurant industry. Each of our brands experienced a turnover rate during fiscal 2024 that was lower than the most recent relevant casual dining or fine dining turnover rate for their segment of the industry as reported in The People Report™ by Black Box Intelligence.™ 2024 Annual Report (2) This data point is not currently publicly disclosed.
	(1) Average hourly wage, by region and (2) percentage of restaurant employees earning minimum wage, by region	FB-RN-310a.2	(1) \$23.39 USD in the United States and Canada, inclusive of earned gratuity (2) This data point is not currently publicly disclosed. Investing in Their Success
	Total amount of monetary losses as a result of legal proceedings associated with (1) labor law violations and (2) employment discrimination	FB-RN-310a.3	These data points are not currently publicly disclosed.



TOPIC	ACCOUNTING METRIC	CODE	RESPONSE
Supply Chain Management & Food Sourcing	Percentage of food purchased that (1) meets environmental and social sourcing standards, and (2) is certified to third-party environmental or social standards	FB-RN-430a.1	(1) 100% of suppliers of land-based protein that handle animals have submitted third party animal welfare audits. (2) 100% of land-based protein suppliers that handle live animals passed third party animal welfare audits in FY24. Supplier Code of Conduct
	Percentage of (1) eggs that originated from a cage free environment and (2) pork that was produced without the use of gestation crates	FB-RN-430a.2	(1) 100% of all eggs purchased by Darden meet our specification that all egg products are from cage free housing systems. (2) Approximately 56% of all pork purchased by Darden was from suppliers with group housing for sows. Caring for Farm Animals Animal Welfare Policy
	Discussion of strategy to manage environmental and social risks within the supply chain, including animal welfare	FB-RN-430a.3	The sustainability of our food sources and restaurant operations is a key component of providing great service and food to our guests. During fiscal 2024, we remained focused on our climate strategy, restaurant sustainability metrics and Darden's Animal Welfare Council. We will continue to adapt our sustainability approach with development or enhancement of integrated and strategic priorities in the near term across the enterprise, from the food we source to the operation of our restaurants. Darden manages energy and water conservation within our restaurant operations and engages with our supply chain partners on sustainability topics including climate, deforestation and animal welfare. In fiscal 2024, Darden accelerated the reporting cycle for environmental metrics to be consistent with our financial results. Previously, environmental performance metrics were reported for the prior year.. Additional environmental indicators, including energy and water consumption, waste generation and diversion, as well as Scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions, are reported on our website at www.darden.com/our-impact/communities/sustainability. We shared Darden's Food Principles in 2016 to outline our commitment to guests in areas of sustainable sourcing, nutritional disclosure, food safety and animal welfare. Darden's Food Principles connect each of these strategic business efforts in a guest-centered platform, including sourcing and ingredient commitments to our guests. We have set commitments related to the following food attributes: animal welfare, chickens raised without medically important antibiotics, cage free eggs and gestation crate free pork. We continue to work with our supplier partners to make progress toward these commitments and we provide annual updates on our efforts in the Sustainability section of our website, www.darden.com. Building on our Food Principles, Darden established an Animal Welfare Policy that adopts an outcomes-based approach to continue to ensure high level of care for farm animals in the food supply chain. To implement this policy, we established an Animal Welfare Council consisting of leading academics and thought leaders with expertise in the care of animals in food supply chains. The Council advises and supports the Company on our efforts to advance strategy and implementation of an outcomes-based approach to animal welfare, from supplier collaborations to reporting improvements. More information about our sustainability strategy, our commitment to our guests on Food Principles and our progress to date is available at www.darden.com. Caring for Farm Animals Animal Welfare Policy Living our Food Principles



TOPIC	ACTIVITY METRIC	CODE	RESPONSE
Operations	Number of (1) entity-owned and (2) franchise restaurants	FB-RN-000.A	(1) 2,031 company-owned restaurants (2) 146 franchised restaurants
	Number of employees at (1) entity-owned and (2) franchise locations	FB-RN-000.B	(1) 191,000 team members (hourly and salaried) (2) This data point is not currently aggregated in a manner consistent with the indicator guidance We provide our EEO-1 report and additional details about our inclusion and diversity programs on our website at www.darden.com .

Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) Index

The Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) aims to develop voluntary, consistent climate-related financial risk disclosures for use by companies in providing information to investors, lenders, insurers, and other stakeholders. The following index highlights our key public disclosures on climate change, in alignment with the TCFD recommendations.

GOVERNANCE: the organization's governance around climate-related risks and opportunities.	
DISCLOSURE	RESPONSE
a) Board's oversight of climate-related risks and opportunities.	The Nominating and Governance Committee is charged with discussing and reporting to the Board annually on Darden's major risk exposures and management's risk monitoring and mitigation activities concerning environmental and social responsibility. Environmental performance, including energy and climate metrics, are reported to this committee annually.
b) Management's role in assessing and managing climate-related risks and opportunities.	Darden has a robust Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) process for strategically identifying, prioritizing and managing risks to our business, including climate risks, which includes regular and appropriate Board oversight. The Company's management maintains a robust enterprise risk management process, guided by oversight of the overall ERM process from the Audit Committee and risk management philosophy direction from the entire Board. The process also includes regular reports by management to the full Board on top risks identified by the process and periodic reports on other risks to relevant Committees of the Board. In the Company's Corporate Governance Guidelines, oversight of risks relating to environmental and social responsibility are allocated to the Nominating and Governance Committee, and the metrics reported by management and monitored by the Board are the source and structure for the metrics and data that management discloses externally. In fiscal 2024, Darden conducted a climate risk assessment for its operations and supply chain based on guidance from TCFD.

STRATEGY: the actual and potential impacts of climate-related risks and opportunities on the organization’s businesses, strategy, and financial planning where such information is material.

DISCLOSURE

RESPONSE

a) Climate-related risks and opportunities the organization has identified over the short, medium and long term.

Climate change, adverse weather conditions and natural disasters could adversely affect our restaurant sales or results of operations.

The long-term effects of climate change and global warming will result in more severe, volatile weather or extended droughts, which could increase the frequency and duration of weather impacts on our operations.

Adverse weather conditions have in the past and may continue to impact guest traffic at our restaurants, cause the temporary underutilization of outdoor patio seating and, in more severe cases such as hurricanes, tornadoes, wildfires or other natural disasters, cause property damage and temporary closures, sometimes for prolonged periods, which could negatively impact our restaurant sales or costs.

Climate change and government regulation relating to climate change, including regulation of greenhouse gas emissions, could result in construction delays and increased costs, interruptions to the availability or increases in the cost of utilities, and shortages or interruptions in the supply of or increases to the costs of food items and other supplies.

We may lose sales or incur increased costs if our restaurants experience shortages, delays or interruptions in the delivery of food and other products from our third party vendors and suppliers.

b) Impact of climate-related risks and opportunities on the organization’s businesses, strategy and financial planning.

Supply Chain

We have a limited number of suppliers and distributors for certain of our products and services. Shortages, delays or interruptions in the supply of food items and other supplies to our restaurants may be caused by severe weather; natural disasters such as hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, droughts, wildfires and earthquakes; macroeconomic conditions resulting in disruptions to the shipping and transportation industries; labor issues such as increased costs or worker shortages or other operational disruptions at our suppliers, vendors or other service providers; the inability of our vendors or service providers to manage adverse business conditions, obtain credit or remain solvent; or other conditions beyond our control. Such shortages, delays or interruptions could adversely affect the availability, quality and cost of the items we buy and the operations of our restaurants. Supply chain disruptions have increased some of our costs and limited the availability of certain products for our restaurants and may continue to do so.

If we increase menu prices as a result of increased food costs or remove menu items due to shortages, such responses may negatively impact our sales. If we temporarily close a restaurant or remove popular items from a restaurant’s menu, that restaurant may experience a significant reduction in sales during the time affected by the shortage or thereafter as a result of our guests changing their dining habits.

Regulation

We are subject to a variety of federal, state and local laws and regulations relating to the use, storage, discharge, emission and disposal of hazardous materials. There also has been increasing focus by United States and overseas governmental authorities on other environmental matters, such as climate change, the reduction of greenhouse gases and water consumption. This increased focus may lead to new initiatives directed at regulating a yet to be specified array of environmental matters. Legislative, regulatory or other efforts to combat climate change or other environmental concerns could result in future increases in the cost of raw materials, taxes, transportation and utilities, which could decrease our operating profits and necessitate future investments in facilities and equipment.

Severe Weather

Severe weather and similar conditions may impact sales volumes seasonally in some operating regions. The performance of individual restaurants may also be adversely affected by factors such as demographic trends, and severe weather including hurricanes.

Energy Costs

Our restaurants’ operating margins are also affected by fluctuations in the price of utilities such as electricity and natural gas, whether as a result of inflation or otherwise, on which the restaurants depend for their energy supply.

c) Resilience of the organization’s strategy, taking into consideration different climate-related scenarios, including a 2°C or lower scenario.

Darden is currently modeling opportunities and engaging supply chain partners, industry organizations and top thought leaders to support development of a strategy. We aim to develop a comprehensive understanding of how different scenarios may impact our operations and strategy.

RISK MANAGEMENT: how the organization identifies, assesses, and manages climate-related risks.

DISCLOSURE

a) Organization’s processes for identifying and assessing climate-related risks.

RESPONSE

Darden has a robust Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) process for strategically identifying, prioritizing and managing risks to our business, including climate risks, which includes regular and appropriate Board oversight. The Company’s management maintains a robust enterprise risk management process, guided by oversight of the overall ERM process from the Audit Committee and risk management philosophy direction from the entire Board. The process also includes regular reports by management to the full Board on top risks identified by the process and periodic reports on other risks to relevant Committees of the Board. In the Company’s Corporate Governance Guidelines, oversight of risks relating to environmental and social responsibility are allocated to the Nominating and Governance Committee, and the metrics reported by management and monitored by the Board are the source and structure for the metrics and data that management discloses externally.

In fiscal 2024, Darden conducted a climate risk assessment for its operations and supply chain based on guidance from TCFD.

b) Organization’s processes for managing climate-related risks.

Severe Weather

Darden’s severe weather task force supports our restaurants that are projected to experience severe storms. The safety of our team members and guests is our top priority, and that is why we have a dedicated team to help restaurants prepare for severe weather and reopen safely once it passes. This cross-functional Task Force works with a weather intelligence firm to forecast storm activity and model data to predict their impact on our restaurants.

This allows the Task Force team to provide 24/7 coordinated support for operations leaders and their restaurant teams across all our brands. The team includes experts from: Communications, Corporate Security, Facilities & Construction, Finance, Accounting & Payroll, Government Relations, Human Resources & Employee Relations, Information Technology, Supply Chain and Total Quality.

Regulation

Darden has publicly reported performance in key environmental focus areas including the greenhouse gas inventory for our operations (Scope 1 and 2) since 2020 in our annual reports on Form 10-K. We have reported key metrics including energy and water usage, waste reduction and diversion of food through our Harvest program on our corporate website since 2012, and we update those disclosures annually. We began disclosing estimates for emissions from our supply chain (Scope 3) on our corporate website in 2022. Darden has aligned its disclosures of environmental metrics with guidance from the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB 2018-10) for the food and beverage sector.

Energy Costs

Darden installed a 4,500-panel solar array on the roof of our Restaurant Support Center in Orlando, Florida. The panels have a generating capacity of 1.1 megawatts (MW) of energy.

Darden is reducing our carbon footprint and supporting the development of renewable energy in the communities where we live and work. In 2023, Darden became an anchor tenant for two community-based solar projects. We subscribed to 15 community solar farms across New York and Illinois that generate approximately 20 MW of renewable energy and help power our local restaurants.

c) How processes for identifying, assessing and managing climate-related risks are integrated into the organization’s overall risk management.

Darden has a robust Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) process for strategically identifying, prioritizing and managing risks to our business, including climate risks, which includes regular and appropriate Board oversight. The Company’s management maintains a robust enterprise risk management process, guided by oversight of the overall ERM process from the Audit Committee and risk management philosophy direction from the entire Board. The process also includes regular reports by management to the full Board on top risks identified by the process and periodic reports on other risks to relevant Committees of the Board. In the Company’s Corporate Governance Guidelines, oversight of risks relating to environmental and social responsibility are allocated to the Nominating and Governance Committee, and the metrics reported by management and monitored by the Board are the source and structure for the metrics and data that management discloses externally.

METRICS AND TARGETS: the metrics and targets used to assess and manage relevant climate-related risks and opportunities where such information is material.

DISCLOSURE

RESPONSE

a) Metrics used by the organization to assess climate-related risks and opportunities in line with its strategy and risk management process.

Energy consumption, energy consumption per restaurant, renewable energy generation and consumption, water consumption and waste diversion.

b) Scope 1, Scope 2 and, if appropriate, Scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions, and the related risks.

Darden currently measures annual Scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas emissions annually and Scope 3 emissions bi-annually. Beginning in FY22, Darden has utilized a third party to verify greenhouse gas emissions inventories and other environmental metrics.

c) Targets used by the organization to manage climate-related risks and opportunities and performance against targets.

Darden continues to assess our climate impacts and developing strategies accordingly.

Additional industry-specific metrics:

Total water withdrawn.

4,826,875 kGals

Total water consumed.

4,826,875 kGals

Percent of water withdrawn and consumed in regions with high or extremely high baseline water stress.

36%

INDEPENDENT LIMITED ASSURANCE STATEMENT



To: The Stakeholders of Darden Restaurants, Inc.

Introduction and objectives of work

Apex Companies, LLC (Apex) has been engaged by Darden Restaurants, Inc. (Darden) to provide limited assurance of its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and sustainability data for fiscal year 2024. This assurance statement applies to the data and information included within the scope of work described below.

This information and its presentation are the sole responsibility of the management of Darden. Our sole responsibility was to provide independent assurance on the accuracy of the reported data and information, and on the underlying systems and processes used to collect, analyze and review the information.

Scope of work

The scope of our work was limited to assurance over GHG emissions and sustainability data for the period June 1, 2023 to May 29, 2024 (the “Subject Matter”).

- Energy
- Waste
- Water
- Scope 1 GHG emissions
- Scope 2 (location-based) GHG emissions

Data and information supporting the sustainability data, Scope 1 and Scope 2 GHG emissions were primarily historical in nature.

Reporting Boundaries

The following are the boundaries used by Darden for reporting sustainability data:

- Operational Control
- Worldwide

Reporting Criteria

The reporting criteria for greenhouse gas emissions was the World Resources Institute (WRI)/World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) Greenhouse Gas Protocol Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard (Scope 1 and Scope 2).



The reporting criteria for sustainability data was the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB) Accounting Standard (Food & Beverage Sector: Restaurants)¹.

Limitations and Exclusions

Excluded from the scope of our work is any assurance of information relating to:

- Activities outside the defined verification period of Reporting Year 2024
- Activities outside Darden’s operational control

This assurance engagement relies on a risk based selected sample of data and the associated limitations that this entails. The reliability of the reported data is dependent on the accuracy of metering and other production measurement arrangements employed at the site level, which are not addressed as part of this assurance. This independent assurance statement should not be relied upon to detect all errors, omissions or misstatements that may exist.

Responsibilities

The preparation and presentation of the data and information are the sole responsibility of the management of Darden.

Apex was not involved in the drafting of the Report or of the Reporting Criteria. Our responsibilities were to:

- obtain limited assurance about whether the Subject Matter has been prepared in accordance with the Reporting Criteria;
- form an independent conclusion based on the assurance procedures performed and evidence obtained; and
- report our conclusions to the Stakeholders of Darden.

Assessment Standards

- We performed our work in accordance with Apex’s standard procedures and guidelines for external Assurance and International Standard on Assurance Engagements (ISAE) 3000 Revised, Assurance Engagements Other than Audits or Reviews of Historical Financial Information (effective for assurance reports dated on or after Dec. 15, 2015), issued by the International Auditing and Assurance Standards Board. Greenhouse Gas Emissions were verified in accordance with ISO Standard 14064-3 (Second edition 2019-4) Greenhouse Gases - Part 3: Specification with guidance for the verification and validation of greenhouse gas statements. A materiality threshold of ±5-percent was set for the assurance process.

Summary of Work Performed

As part of our independent assurance , our work included:

1. Assessing the appropriateness of the Reporting Criteria for the data and information;
2. Conducting interviews with relevant personnel of Darden and its consultants regarding data collection and reporting systems;
3. Reviewing the data collection and consolidation processes used to compile Subject Matter, including assessing assumptions made, and the data scope and reporting boundaries;

¹Version 2023-12



- 4. Reviewing documentary evidence provided by Darden;
- 5. Verifying a selection of the data and information to the corresponding source documentation;
- 6. Reviewing Darden’s systems for quantitative data aggregation and analysis; and
- 7. Assessing the disclosure and presentation of the data and information to ensure consistency with assured information.

Conclusion

Sustainability Data Statement

On the basis of our methodology and the activities described above, it is our opinion that:

- The sustainability data and information reported by Darden is presented in accordance with the Reporting Criteria and is, in all material respects, fairly stated.
- Darden has established appropriate systems for the collection, aggregation and analysis of quantitative data within the scope of this assurance.

GHG Emissions Statement

On the basis of our methodology and the activities described above, it is our opinion there is no evidence that the data and information:

- is not materially correct and is not a fair representation of the GHG emissions data and information; and
- has not been prepared in accordance with the WRI/WBCSD GHG Protocol Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard (Scope 1 and 2).

A summary of data within the scope of assurance for 2024 is attached.

Statement of Independence, Integrity and Competence

Apex is an independent professional services company that specializes in Health, Safety, Social and Environmental management services including assurance with over 30 years history in providing these services.

Apex has implemented a Code of Ethics across the business to maintain high ethical standards among staff in their day-to-day business activities.

No member of the assurance team has a business relationship with Darden, its Directors or Managers beyond that required of this assignment. We have conducted this verification independently, and there has been no conflict of interest.

The assurance team has extensive experience in conducting assurance over environmental, social, ethical and health and safety information, systems and processes, has over 20 years combined experience in this field and an excellent understanding of Apex’s standard methodology for the assurance of sustainability related assertions.



Thomas U. Jones, Lead Verifier
ESG Program Manager
Apex Companies, LLC
Tampa, Florida



Trevor Donaghu, Technical Reviewer
ESG Director
Apex Companies, LLC
Pleasant Hill, California

July 31, 2024

This assurance statement, including the opinion expressed herein, is provided to Darden and is solely for the benefit of Darden in accordance with the terms of our agreement. We consent to the release of this statement to the public or other organizations, but without accepting or assuming any responsibility or liability on our part to any other party who may have access to this statement.



Summary of 2024 Data Subject to Assurance

Metric	Units ²	2024
Energy		
Total energy	GWh	2,843
Grid electricity % of total energy	%	41.09
Renewable energy % of total energy	%	0.03
Waste		
Total waste	MT	381,239
Food waste	%	48
Diverted waste	%	17
Water		
Water withdrawn		
Total water withdrawn	Kgal	4,826,875
Water withdrawal in water stressed regions ³	Kgal	1,759,594
Water withdrawal in water stressed regions ³	%	36
Water consumed		
Total water consumed	Kgal	4,826,875
Water consumed in water stressed regions ³	Kgal	1,759,594
Water consumed in water stressed regions ³	%	36
GHG Emissions ⁴		
Scope 1 GHG emissions	MT CO ₂ e	375,763
Scope 2 GHG emissions (Location-Based)	MT CO ₂ e	442,354

² Unit abbreviations: Gigawatt hour (GWh), Metric ton (MT), Thousand gallons (Kgal), Metric ton of carbon dioxide equivalents (MT CO₂e)
³ High or extremely high water baseline stress regions.
⁴ Types of GHGs: CO₂, N₂O, CH₄, HFCs



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