

Dining Sustainability Report

2024-2025 Academic Year

Dining Services at the College of William and Mary
& ARAMARK Corporation

April 2025

Written and Compiled by Dining Sustainability interns

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About Us

William & Mary's campus-wide composting program is currently ranked second nationally for a school of our size. It is our goal to continuously improve upon our own success and implement better ways to improve our composting program and other initiatives related to food sustainability.

The program is run by the Dining Sustainability interns, a group of 18 undergraduate students employed by Dining Services. Interns bring unique perspectives from all domains of campus



majoring in Environment & Sustainability, Public Policy, Computer Science, Biology, Linguistics, Sociology, Geology, and Neuroscience. Dining provides an avenue to make sustainability accessible regardless of student interests and experience.

This year, the interns were led by Lead Interns Seneca RiceWoolf ('25) and Aayla Kastning ('26).

Compost

Public Composting program

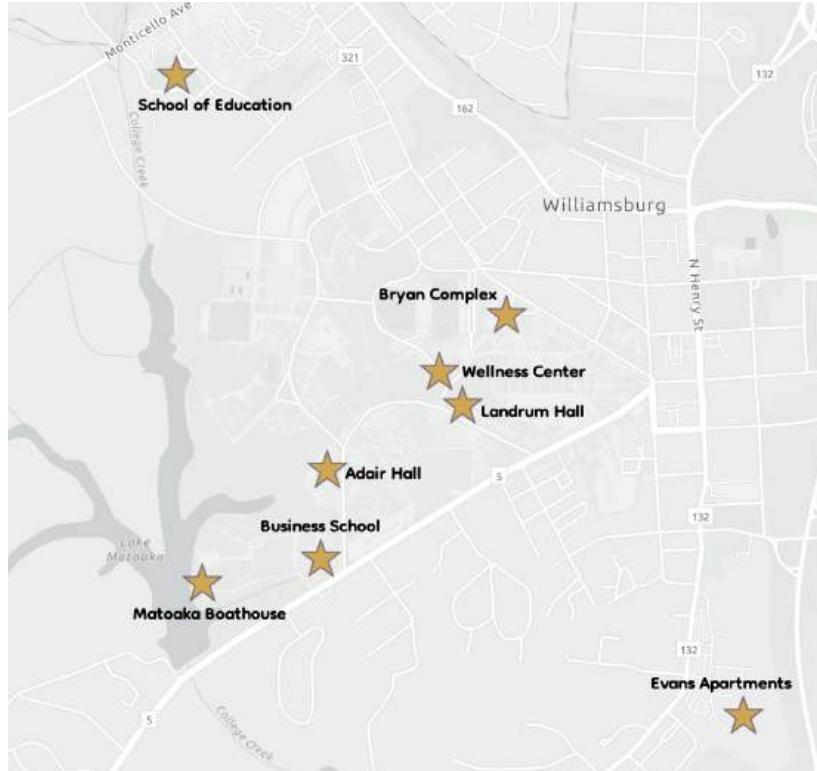
IN 2024, WILLIAM & MARY
DIVERTED **234,868 POUNDS**
OF FOOD SCRAPS &
ORGANIC MATERIAL FROM
LANDFILLS.

The estimated emissions saved were equal to...



The current public composting network consists of twenty-six 96-gallon compost bins located across campus at twenty-three sites. These bins are managed by the interns, who utilize a Green-Fee funded electric golf cart to move bins to and from loading docks, where they are emptied by NOPE Organic Compost Co, who transports the organic waste to McGill Regional Composting Facility in Waverly, VA. The compost bins can be found via the [digital compost map](#).

This year, we expanded the program significantly, **adding 12 new compost bins** to our inventory and adding 8 new compost sites. \$1,500 in funding was granted from Student Assembly to purchase 10 new bins, and \$320 in funding was approved through a Green Fee proposal to purchase 2 additional bins.



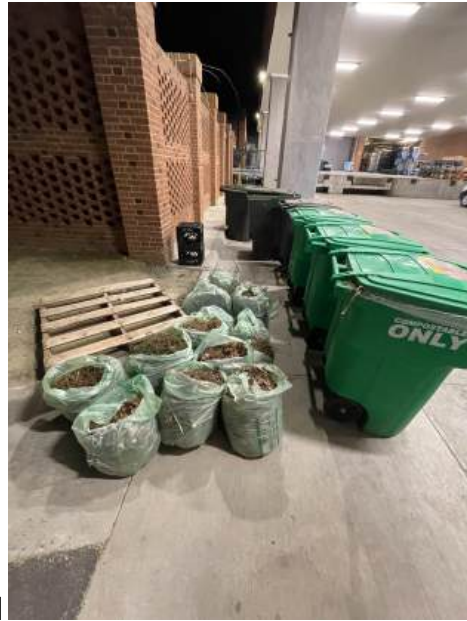
Map featuring new compost locations.

Compost Credits

Thirty-nine compost credits (equivalent to **1,560 lbs. of compost**) were distributed, at no charge, to the W&M campus garden, Williamsburg Community Growers, and student organizations including Botany Club, Minorities Against Climate Change, Compost Club, and the Wesley House.

Compost at Events

During the 2024-2025 academic year, thirty-three on campus events requested compost bins. One of these events included Day for Admitted Students, where Interns sorted prospective students and families' waste at lunch, while educating them on compost. In Fall 2024, the interns submitted a Green Fee proposal and were **awarded \$1,270 to expand compost capabilities at on-campus indoor events**. Ten 23-gallon compost bins were purchased for use solely at on campus events.



Off-campus Compost



To increase composting accessibility to students who live off campus, the interns collected household organic waste from **seventeen student households** every Sunday. To expand this program we are cooperating with a local ice cream shop, Kilwins, to reuse ice cream containers as compost receptacles!

Hydroponics

The dining interns have successfully produced **over 200 harvests, yielding more than 300 pounds of fresh produce across 45 plant varieties**, including leafy greens, herbs, and edible flowers. Growing food with a hydroponics wall uses 90% less water than a traditional farm through recirculating systems and requires no arable land, which helps reduce

deforestation and agricultural pollution. Additionally, it operates on a closed nutrient circuit that prevents runoff and significantly lowers fuel consumption by minimizing the need for packaging and transportation. The fresh produce is made available to students weekly in the Commons Dining Hall.



On November 1st, 2024, the interns visited the headquarters of Babylon Micro-farms in Richmond, VA. Interns toured the facilities and explored the horticultural process, data monitoring, and shipping logistics. Some highlights included seeing the William and Mary farms virtually and learning about the possibility for pollination science within the hydroponics design!

The unique tour gave us the opportunity to explore sustainability innovations and potential career paths at the intersection of science, technology, and community.



Outreach

Farm Fest

Farm Fest aimed to teach students about **why local food sourcing matters and how Aramark contributes to these systems.** In broad strokes, getting dining hall ingredients from Virginia and other nearby suppliers limits travel-related carbon emissions, supports local economies, and boosts community health with more fresh and in-season food. Aramark, William & Mary's dining hall provider, sources as many ingredients locally as possible using 4P foods. This organization connects us as students to 56 regional farms. To do so, Aramark spent more than 860k in a single year which supported local sustainable farming and vendors over traditional large suppliers.



In addition to **presentations with 4P and farmers market vendors,** Dining Sustainability interns ran activities included butter churning (with the dining hall's already locally sourced cream), a donut-on-a-string eating race

(using Column 15's Gloucester-based pastry vendor), and dyeing a tote bag using Commons hydroponics-grown flowers. We also facilitated an encounter with Annie the cow – a rescue animal from Life With Pigs and conversations with the owner of the sustainable Mockingbird Farmstead. Recognized Student Organizations volunteered to discuss on-campus sustainability efforts and how dining influences sustainability beyond our plates.

With **over 400 students in attendance**, Farm Fest was an influential (soon to be annual) education event.

Waller Mill Elementary Sustainability Club

Dining Interns mentor the Waller Mill Elementary Sustainability Club. This group of 15–20 students learn about earth science, waste disposal, and how to be a good neighbor! The long-running bi-weekly program allows interns to develop and administer youth curriculum to foster environmental ideals within younger generations.



Campus Clean-ups

Interns led cleanup events with different groups on campus to inspire sustainability efforts and make the campus a greener place. Groups included the Student Environmental Action Coalition (SEAC), Environmental and Animal Law Society (SEALS), W&M Law School Students, and club sports.



Fitwell Series

Dining Sustainability developed a curriculum for and implemented a series of Fitwell pop-up classes called Nourish to Flourish. The series spotlights local food systems and sustainable eating habits. For one session, interns welcomed a guest speaker from Williamsburg Community Growers who taught students about local community gardening efforts as well as the importance of fresh produce and fighting food insecurity in the Williamsburg area. Another session welcomed a chef from Aramark to lead a cooking class focusing on incorporating produce and local ingredients into meals that are accessible for students. Over 20 student participants at these pop-up events.

Swem Trivia

The William and Mary Swem Librarians host monthly trivia nights for students to participate in to win prizes and glory. At the April trivia night in 2025, Dining Sustainability interns were invited to write two of the rounds which were Earth Day themed. Questions included facts about recycling, compost, Earth Day history, waste in the United States, and more. Two Dining Sustainability interns were able to emcee these rounds and talk about Dining Sustainability as an organization. This was a great way for students to learn some sustainability and environmental trivia and open their minds to being

more environmentally conscious. In addition, they were able to learn about Dining Sustainability and what we do on campus.

Interns On The Street

To gauge general awareness of campus composting and sustainability initiatives, the interns interviewed students to educate students about what you can and can't compost. Two additional videos were created for the series and posted on the William and Mary Dining instagram page.

Food Waste Prevention Week

Through tabling in campus hotspots, food waste tracking events like Wipe the Waste, compost education events, and infographics in the dining halls, the interns educated students about composting and food waste at William and Mary.

Compost Education Week

Dining Sustainability partnered with the Office of Sustainability to host an Compost Education outreach campaign. This included compost education tabling and a talk from NOPE Organic Compost Co.



Sustainability for RSOs

Interns organized and led presentations for leaders of clubs and organizations on campus aiming to educate on how to host a sustainable event and ways for non-sustainability focused organizations to be more conscious of the impacts they have on the environment. The presentations frame sustainability as an intersectional initiative that everyone can participate in and include suggestions on various ways to implement

sustainability in an RSO setting such as sustainable event giveaway ideas and how to request a compost bin for an event with food!

Sustainability for New Students

Interns developed educational materials for new student orientation, collaborating with orientation staff to introduce sustainability initiatives on campus. These programs educate incoming students about recycling, composting, and other ways to engage with sustainability from day one. By working closely with orientation leaders, the interns aim to ensure all new students have access to resources and knowledge that empower them to live sustainably on campus. The goal is to inspire early involvement in sustainability-focused organizations and foster a lasting connection to environmental responsibility throughout their college experience.

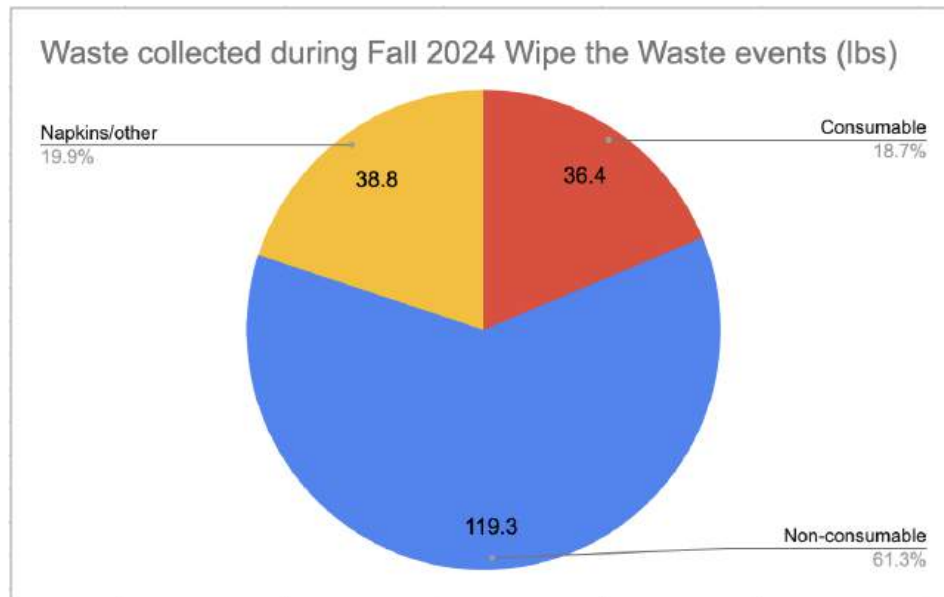
Wipe the Waste

Wipe the Waste events are tabling events that show how much total waste is generated per person during a meal period. During the course of a meal, all of the waste is sorted into three categories: consumable waste (untouched food), non-consumable food waste (leftover or partially eaten food), and napkins/other. The waste is collected throughout the duration of the event and is compared against the total number of guests.



The goal of these events is to clearly show the amount of unintentional and/or avoidable post-consumer food waste that is generated in a dining location. By clearly showing the amount of unintentional and/or avoidable waste we all generate, we can spark conversation about food waste as a

collective issue that consumers & dining providers can work together to solve. Not only do these events provoke thoughtful conversation and reflection around waste, but they also can be a tool for gaining culinary insight into the menu items we are serving (portion, seasoning, etc.).



Recycling

Interns provided recycling services to mitigate concession waste during the AMP 2025 spring concert. This successful effort opens the door for future and larger-scale collaborations with concessions at events inside Kaplan Arena.

We also collaborated with Athletics, Facilities, and the Office of Sustainability to **introduce recycling infrastructure to Zable Stadium, securing \$3,700 in Green Fee funding** to begin during the Fall 2025 football season.



Farmers Market Exchange

Dining Interns work weekly to facilitate dining dollar exchanges for farmers market tokens. More than \$10,000 in tokens were spent by students supporting local farmers, sustainable practices, and making fresh food accessible for undergraduates.

Campus Gardens

Dining Sustainability operates three garden plots in the Campus Gardens. We get our hands dirty growing produce for educational purposes and providing a site for environmental wellness.



Goals for 2025–2026

The interns are looking forward to continuing initiatives such as indoor event composting, Farm Fest, and Zable Recycling. We are excited to launch new projects, such as Zable Stadium Recycling, expanding off-campus compost, increasing accessibility to hydroponics, and collaborating with local food banks.