

GAMEDAY CHALLENGE

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College Football Fans Recycle and Compost 1.5 Million Pounds of Material in 2013 Game Day Recycling Challenge

STAMFORD, Conn. (Nov.18, 2013) – From ballpark franks to French fries and bottled water to beverage cans, college football game days produce a large and valuable volume of recyclable material. Participants in the 2013 [Game Day Recycling Challenge](#) – the friendly recycling competition among U.S. colleges and universities – are seeking to increase recycling and composting at their games, to shrink their environmental footprint and broaden their sustainability efforts.

During this collegiate football season, more than 85 schools across the nation took on the challenge to collect cans and bottles, cardboard, food waste and more from the tailgate areas, stadium seating and concessions during at least one home game. Schools measured and reported their [results](#) along with game attendance for ranking in five categories.

The winners of the 2013 Game Day Recycling Challenge are:

- Waste Minimization Champion (Least amount of waste generated per attendee) – Central Connecticut State University
- Diversion Rate Champion (Highest combined recycling and composting rate)-Ohio State University
- Greenhouse Gas Reduction Champion (Greenhouse gas emissions prevented by diverting waste) - Franklin College
- Recycling Champion (Highest recycling per attendee) - Franklin College
- Organics Reduction Champion (Highest organics recovery per attendee) – University of Akron

More than just a competition, Game Day Challenge is an opportunity for participating schools to demonstrate to students and team supporters that recycling and reducing waste are not activities limited to the home or office. Many participating schools deployed teams of volunteers to collect cans and bottles from pre-game tailgaters. Other schools engaged their mascots, set up zero-waste stations inside the stadiums to collect food scraps and more, or arranged for special recycling messages to be announced during the game. Still others used the opportunity to celebrate and raise awareness of [America Recycles Day](#), which takes place on and around Nov. 15.

University of Wisconsin Madison's Office of Sustainability and Athletic Department led a team effort to make Game Day Recycling Challenge a success.

"Our GameDay experience this year was outstanding," said Frank Kooistra, coordinator for operations with the University of Wisconsin Madison office of sustainability. "We were able to call attention to the importance of recycling all during the week leading up to the game. Our student volunteers were energized and, with outstanding support from the Athletic Department, we were able to have significant media opportunities during the game."

The spotlight on recycling during University of Wisconsin Madison's game included several scoreboard messages, speaker announcements and a video clip that encouraged the fans in attendance to recycle.

Encouraging collegiate sporting events can save energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. During this year's competition, 6.4 million fans at 88 participating schools kept nearly 1.5 million pounds of game-day waste out of landfills, which prevented approximately 1,980 metric tons of carbon dioxide from being released. That's equivalent to removing over **8,800 passenger vehicles** from the road for a year.

The 2013 Game Day Challenge was administered by the College & University Recycling Coalition (CURC), Keep America Beautiful and RecycleMania, Inc., with support from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Many schools will bring their recycling game from the football field to the basketball court this winter to compete in the Game Day Basketball category of the [RecycleMania Tournament](#). RecycleMania is an eight-week, national competition in which schools compete to recycle the most not just at games, but also in dorms, dining halls and classrooms. Kicking off Feb. 2, the competition provides an opportunity for recycling coordinators, sustainability offices, and student groups to engage their entire campuses in recycling.

About the College & University Recycling Coalition

The College and University Recycling Coalition (CURC) is a membership-based nonprofit organization whose mission is to advance recycling and sustainable materials management at colleges and universities. CURC represents a vibrant community of recycling professionals in higher education on over 800 college campuses across the United States. CURC members connect with each other through an active email listserv and at gatherings in conjunction with state and national conferences. CURC provides support to collegiate recycling programs through technical assistance, education, and training, including a webinar series, annual workshops, and the development of best-practices manuals and toolkits. For more information, visit curc3r.org.

About Keep America Beautiful

Keep America Beautiful is the nation's leading nonprofit that brings people together to build and sustain vibrant communities. With a network of more than 1,200 affiliate and participating organizations including state recycling organizations, we work with millions of volunteers to take action in their communities. Keep America Beautiful offers solutions that create clean, beautiful public places, reduce waste and increase recycling, generate positive impact on local economies and inspire generations of environmental stewards. Through our programs and public-private partnerships, we engage individuals to take greater responsibility for improving their community's environment. For more information, visit kab.org and follow [@kabtweet](https://twitter.com/kabtweet) on Twitter.

About RecycleMania

RecycleMania launched in 2001 as a friendly challenge between Ohio University and Miami University to increase recycling on their campuses. The contest has expanded from two schools in 2001 to 523 colleges and universities in 2013 spanning all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Canada. Over an eight-week period, campuses compete to see which institution can collect the largest amount of recyclables per capita, the largest amount of total recyclables, the least amount of trash per capita, or have the highest recycling rate. For complete competition details, visit RecycleMania.org.

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