



Real Impact

Report 2025

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Committed to Impact Across Generations

For three generations, through innovation and conservation, the Sargento Family has improved people’s lives.

We intend to do so for generations to come.

Because as a family-owned, family-managed, family-focused company, we know that the best way to build long-term value is to care for our employees, business partners, customers, and neighbors like family.



Louie Gentine
CEO
Third-generation family owner

...
We’ve helped two generations of families invest in the equity and stability of homeownership.
...



...
We’ve helped feed two generations of families facing food insecurity.
...



...
We’ve helped educate our employees across generations.
...



Our Promise

We aspire to be America’s most innovative, best-loved, real food company.

How will we get there?

By keeping a promise, demonstrated by our values, that three generations of Sargento family have honored: to deliver high-quality, real food snacks and meal solutions and to care for our communities and each other.



2025 Impact at a Glance

People

-  **At least 2,962 hours** of company-led community service
-  **41 homes + 27,000 volunteer hours + \$2.9 million** donated to Milwaukee Habitat for Humanity since 1992
-  **\$213,000** in *Tipoff for Homes* donations since 2019
-  **10,000 pounds of food** collected at the *Touchdowns for Hunger* food drive
-  **\$1.95 million** in *Touchdowns for Hunger* donations since 2002

-  **3,200 meals** served to kids during *Double Helping for Hunger* Day of Action
-  **22 truckloads of cheese and food** (689,553 pounds) donated to area food pantries
-  **\$1.2 million** contributed during our annual *Living Your Giving* campaign benefiting the United Way of Sheboygan County (UWSC) and other community nonprofits
-  **128 employees earned college degrees** using \$602,433 (in aggregate) in tuition reimbursement assistance



Planet

-  **12.2 million gallons of water** saved across production facilities, reducing total enterprise usage by 8.3% based on our five-year average
-  **91.4% of solid waste*** generated by our owned facilities is diverted from landfill.
-  **We require our patron farms and dairy suppliers to be compliant** with National Dairy's FARM animal care standards. The FARM program (Farmers Assuring Responsible Management) works with farmers and dairy suppliers to ensure high-quality products and ethical standards.

*i.e., paper/fiber, glass, plastic, metal, and food

Product

-  **AA+ food-safety ratings by BRC** — the highest rating awarded by an independent auditor benchmarked to the Global Food Safety Initiative — across all four production facilities
-  **Launched Sargento® Natural American Cheese**, an award-winning alternative to processed cheese food
-  **Launched Sargento® Shareables** cheese-and-cracker trays and **Sargento® Cheese Bakes** premium crackers with Mondelēz International
-  **Introduced Seasoned Shreds**, cheeses blended in partnership with McCormick & Co, Inc. and its family of brands





Our Approach

We achieve long-term, sustainable impact by:

- Caring for our employees, neighbors, and customers
- Being good stewards of our planet’s natural resources
- Continually innovating products that improve people’s lives

These commitments — to People, Planet, and Product — define our responsibilities as a company.



75 volunteers pitched in for a week to build two homes.



Tipoff for Homes, our partnership with the Milwaukee Bucks, raised \$25,000.



Louie Gentine welcomes Tondra Knight, one of the first homeowners in 1992.

People

Sargento Founder Leonard Gentine Sr. recognized that to grow the Sargento Family, we needed to invest in not only our people but also the communities they come from.

For decades, we’ve upheld that tradition by partnering with local, state, and national nonprofits to expand affordable housing, alleviate hunger, and improve access to education.

Housing Our Neighbors in Need

For 33 years, we’ve sponsored home builds for Milwaukee Habitat for Humanity — the longest of any of the nonprofit’s corporate partners. Our relationship has helped families with lower incomes invest in the stability and equity of homeownership.

We celebrated our milestone 40th and 41st builds in July by bringing together 11 owners of Sargento-sponsored homes for a family reunion.





Fighting Hunger

Since the turn of the century, we’ve amplified our antihunger campaign by partnering with the Green Bay Packers. For every touchdown the Packers score, we donate \$2,000 toward hunger relief in Wisconsin. This season, *Touchdowns for Hunger* raised \$88,000. More recently, we’ve extended our outreach through partnership with the Milwaukee Brewers. For every double the Brewers hit, we donate \$200. This year *Double Helping for Hunger* raised a record total of \$57,400.

In October we kicked off our first *Touchdowns for Hunger* food drive with the Packers to collect nonperishable food for Paul’s Pantry. During our Summer Sizzle Day of Action with the Brewers, we served 3,200 lunches — including 122 at Merrill Park — to children who may otherwise go hungry when school is out.

This year St. Ben’s, the Milwaukee-based Capuchin charity that ministers to neighbors who are unhoused and underfed, honored us for 25 years of serving meals and sponsoring its annual Walk for the Hungry.



Brewers’ outfielder Sal Frelick hands out mitts at Merrill Park.



Green Bay Packers Offensive Lineman Donovan Jennings welcomes a young fan to Lambeau Field.

...

... ..

We donated 22 truckloads of cheese and food to area pantries.

... ..

... ..

***Touchdowns for Hunger* food drive at Lambeau Field collected more than 10,000 pounds of food.**

... ..

Scan to see the real impact of our Community Outreach.





Expanding Educational Opportunities

Tuition reimbursement assistance enables our employees — at any age — to pursue an advanced degree. This year, 128 employees earned degrees, tapping \$602,433 in available assistance. Calvin Abernathy, a long-time member of the Sargento Family who works the weekend shift as a material handler at our Plymouth plant, graduated from Lakeshore College with an associate degree in IT-Cybersecurity.

To increase job opportunities in our community, especially in the technical trades, we established **two new scholarships** for two-year degrees with an emphasis on maintenance and quality.

Our **CDL Truck Driving Apprenticeship** program ensures that the Sargento fleet can keep on truckin'. Three apprentices trained with seasoned drivers this year; two earned their commercial driver's license.



“
I’m glad my kids were
able to see how hard
I worked for this.

—Calvin Abernathy

”



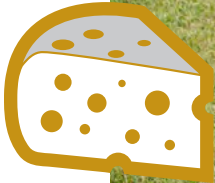
Scholarship recipient Ben Auch



Celebrating Employee Service

3,350 employees, retirees, and their loved ones attended our first-ever **Sargento Family Festival**, a Sheboygan County Fairgrounds event featuring live music, carnival rides and games, food trucks, lumberjack competitions, and a nighttime drone show that had mascot Sarge waving in the sky.

It was more than fun and games, however: The event raised \$4,510 for UWSC and delivered 806 pounds of food rescued from the festival to Sheboygan County Food Bank.





Recognizing Employee Service

Every year, the Sargento Family of employees opens their hearts and their wallets to participate in our annual *Living Your Giving* campaign benefitting United Way of Sheboygan County and other Wisconsin nonprofits. This year, UWSC recognized Sargento (for the third consecutive year!) with its **Most Generous Workplace award**, acknowledging eight straight years of million-dollar-plus campaigns. And Sargento employees gave generously in terms of their time, too: During UWSC’s 2025 *Day of Caring*, our employees provided 2,020 hours of community service.

At the annual **Service Awards banquet**, we honored 246 employees who reached employment milestones in 2025. There was laughter, dinner, and many strolls down memory lane while watching entertaining time capsule videos. Maintenance Technician James Abston received a standing ovation for his 45 years of service.



Stepping with SarGenerations Emerging Talent (SET)

We’re indebted to our **Employee Business Groups** for fostering community within our workplace and outside of it. The Multicultural Alliance at Sargento hosted a *Kicking for a Cause* kickball tournament that raised \$1,000 for the Northeast Wisconsin Hmong Professional Group. WINS, our Women’s Influence Network, sponsored a visit to our headquarters by the entire executive team of Milo’s Tea, a family-owned-and-run company based in Bessemer, Alabama. CEO Tricia Wallwork spoke of her journey as a woman in business; Sargento COO Michael Pellegrino, who serves on the board of Milo’s Tea, facilitated a discussion about collaboration and career development.





Planet

Improving people’s lives demands that we be good stewards of the environment. That’s why we have a team devoted to conserving water and energy, diverting waste from landfills, and cleaning up area highways.

We also hold our suppliers to high ethical and FARM standards. A National Dairy program, FARM specifies best practices in animal care, environmental stewardship, antibiotic stewardship, workforce development, and biosecurity.

In June 2025, during National Dairy Month, patron farmer Double Dutch Dairy hosted 3,586 people for Breakfast on the Farm, a 60-year state tradition involving dozens of farms across Wisconsin’s 72 counties. Farm Staples opened a new creamery on the farm and offered tours. And two of our other patron farmers — Orthland Dairy Farm and KressHill Dairy — made the news.



Scan the QR code to see these Wisconsin farmers in action



...

91.4% of solid waste* generated by our owned facilities is diverted from landfill.

...

*i.e., paper/fiber, glass, plastic, metal, and food



Product

“The best American cheese.”

That’s what food experts¹ had to say about Sargento® **Natural American Cheese** — a 10-years-in-the-making innovation we launched in March 2025.

Unlike typical American cheese, which is a processed cheese food, ours is 100% natural cheese. Which is why *People* magazine named it one of the best new dairy products in grocery stores last year and *Prepared Foods*’ Spirit of Innovation Awards tagged it with honorable mention in its R&D Teamwork-Innovation category.

It’s just the latest in a 70-year history of category-defining product launches.

This year we also introduced **Seasoned Shreds**, our melty cheeses infused with seasonings from McCormick & Co, Inc. and its family of brands. Seasoned Shreds delivers the kick consumers crave in cheesy faves like mac ’n’ cheese. Just ask the hundreds of people who got free samples from the Cheese Wheeler, our brand-building food truck, during Milwaukee’s annual Summerfest.

And in partnership with Mondelez International, we launched two cheese-and-cracker combos: **Shareables**, ready-to-serve, resealable trays of cheese and crackers that make small gatherings easy, and **Cheese Bakes**, crackers baked with Sargento® cheese.



FSI team

Our Food Service and Ingredients (FSI) business unit had a record-setting 2025 performance, driven by a strategic shift to get closer to the customer.

The team strengthened partnerships with top food manufacturers, food service operators, and other businesses to drive growth for Sargento. With the “Closer to the Customer” approach, the team went deeper on collaboration with partners who value quality, service, and innovation as much as we do.

The result? For the first time in its history, FSI surpassed half a billion dollars in net sales, despite a challenging food industry and restaurant environment.

“When our customers appreciate the quality of our product and our best-in-class service levels, innovation, and expertise,” says FSI VP of Sales Joy Judski, “that’s how we earn their trust and drive a record performance.”

1. Yahoo Life, “I Asked 3 Food Experts To Name the Best Cheese—They All Said the Same Brand,” August 22, 2025.



Helping Us Keep Our Commitments

Our Board of Directors makes the strategic decisions that allow us to honor our commitments to People, Planet, and Product.

This year, the Board welcomed two new members: Chris Hood, retired President of Kellogg North America, and Peter Whitsett, retired Executive Vice President of Merchandising and Marketing for Meijer.

With the Board’s expert counsel and leadership, Sargento will continue to find ways to build long-term value for all its stakeholders.



*From left to right:
David Fuhrmann, Lou Gentine, Louie Gentine, Gail Lione, Trish Lukasik,
Chris Hood, Josh Gentine, Peter Whitsett, Kristin Strehlow*

Three Generations of Cheese Innovation

1949

Plymouth Cheese Counter. Based on the success of his mail-order cheese business, Leonard Gentine Sr. converts a carriage house on his property into a specialty-cheese retail store.

1953

Joe Sartori and Leonard Gentine Sr. launch Sargento, combining their names and their know-how to bring Americans real mozzarella, provolone, Parmesan, and Romano cheeses in ready-to-purchase portion sizes.



1955

Leonard and design partner Bill Lindstedt innovate a vacuum-seal plastic package that allows cheeses to last longer, pioneering prepackaged sliced natural cheese.



1958

Leonard, Bill, and Norman "Bud" Dick prototype a cheese shredder, making meal preparation faster for millions of homemakers and transforming the cheese industry.

1964

Leonard persuades his partner Joe to sell him his stake in the company. Joe stays on as Leonard's adviser — and lifetime friend.

1969

Leonard and longtime associate Chuck Strobel adapt a metal pegboard system used for lunch meats to display Sargento cheeses, revolutionizing the dairy aisle into what shoppers take for granted today.



1972

Sargento moves its headquarters from the retrofitted canning factory in Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin, back to Plymouth. Cutting and packaging continues in Elkhart Lake.

1981

Sargento's Board of Directors unanimously elect Leonard's son Lou president of the company — a role he would ably perform for the next 32 years.

1986

Lee Gentine, a second-generation leader, spearheads the implementation of a resealable Zip-Pak that would make it easy to reseal the cheese package after it was opened. This is the first perishable food item to be placed in a resealable package.

1988

Sargento introduces MooTown® Snackers for kids — and parents — on the go.

2001

Sargento pioneers the slide closure, a packaging first that wins the company a WorldStar Award for Packaging Excellence.

2006

100 Sargento employees win the largest jackpot in Wisconsin lottery history: \$208.6 million. Only four do not show up for work the next day.



2012

CEO and Chairman Lou Gentine receives the National Cheese Institute Laureate Award, 21 years after his father Leonard won it.



2013

Louie Gentine succeeds his father Lou as head of Sargento, 32 years to the day after Lou succeeded his own father, Leonard. While holding true to the family's people-first traditions, Louie modernizes the company's operations and its products.

2019

Deloitte ranks Sargento Foods, Inc. No. 20 on its list of the 75 largest private companies in Wisconsin in recognition of its outstanding sales revenues.

2021

Sargento launches Sargento® Balanced Breaks® Cheese & Crackers Snacks in partnership with Mondelez International in a groundbreaking partnership to bring RITZ®, TRISCUIT®, and WHEAT THINS® snack crackers to an on-the-go container with Sargento's real cheese.

2022

Baker Cheese joins the Sargento Family, advancing the company toward its vision of becoming the most innovative, best-loved real food company.



2023

As part of its vision to become the most innovative and best-loved real food company, Sargento launches the Real Impact platform, which encapsulates the company's continuing charitable initiatives in community engagement, sustainability, and quality production.



2024

- Louie Gentine is appointed Chairman of the Board.
- Fun! Balanced Breaks® snacks and flavored Sargento® String Cheese launch.
- Mac McEvoy retires after 27 years.
- Kristi Jankowski retires after 25 years.



2025

- Natural American Cheese launches to rave reviews and awards.
- Sargento rebrands its platform with The Sargento Family Promise.
- Sargento builds its 40th and 41st homes for Milwaukee Habitat for Humanity.
- With the Packers, Sargento holds its first food drive at Lambeau Field.
- Chris Hood and Peter Whitsett join Sargento's Board of Directors.









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Making a Lasting Difference — Thanks to YOU

A big shout-out to ...

Our employees, for helping us care for our neighbors and the planet;

Our customers, for helping us work toward our vision of becoming America's most innovative, best-loved, real food company;

Our suppliers, for helping us keep our promise of providing customers with high-quality, real, natural cheese;

Our community, for inspiring us to go above and beyond. You're there for us, and we will always be there for you.

