



**GRAND VALLEY
STATE UNIVERSITY®**

**OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY
PRACTICES**

Sustainability Month Report 2025





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Volunteering at the SAP

This fall, the Sustainable Agriculture Project (SAP) invited students and community members to join its weekly volunteer hours and explore the practices of sustainable farming.

Volunteer sessions take place on Fridays from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m., where participants help with a variety of ongoing projects on the farm. It's a hands-on opportunity to learn about sustainable food systems, organic farming methods, and many other aspects of sustainable agriculture.



SAP Farmstand

During harvest season, the SAP sets up a campus farm stand, offering fresh produce to students, faculty, staff, and community members.

Open from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. near the Cook Carillon Clock Tower, the stand features seasonal fruits and vegetables along with items like flower bouquets and homemade honey—all sourced directly from the farm.

Proceeds help sustain SAP's work by funding farm supplies and supporting the care of the on-site beehives.



Demo Garden

On May 17, 2018, the Sustainable Agriculture Project Crew created a demonstration garden, as an extension of Grand Valley's SAP.



The garden continues to grow each year, this season featuring winter seed, arugula, and vibrant mums. The garden serves as both a hands-on learning space and a tool to raise awareness about the SAP.

SAP Class Visits & Tours

The SAP welcomes classes from all departments to schedule a visit or tour. Members of the wider GVSU community are also invited to explore the farm.

As part of sustainability month, students visited GVSU's SAP farm to learn about pollinators, seed saving, and sustainable farming practices. Through hands-on activities such as exploring beehives, sampling honey, touring the farm, and creating seed balls, students gained a deeper understanding of how nature works to grow and support our food production. The experience highlighted the importance of sustainable agriculture, local food systems, and the role of pollinators in maintaining healthy ecosystems.



Harvest Party

This year's Harvest Party at the SAP was hosted by the GVSU Farm Club and the Office of Sustainability Practices. Following an afternoon of volunteer hours, the celebration kicked off with games, music, food, and plenty of fall sunshine. A clothing swap was also featured, giving attendees a chance to exchange gently used items and promote sustainable fashion. We love this annual tradition that brings students, staff, and community members together to celebrate our SAP harvest!

A special thanks to the Folk Music Club for providing amazing music during the event.



Zero Waste Football Games



Recycling, Compost, & Landfill

Each year, our office collaborates with campus and community partners to reduce waste at home football games.

Volunteers help guests sort their items at stations around Lubbers Stadium, making sure recycling, compost, and landfill materials go in the right bins.



Groups & Numbers

This year, we had help from Omicron Delta Kappa, Student Senate, Women's Club Lacrosse, STAGE, Beekeepers, and the Laker Food Co. Green Team. Our great groups of volunteers helped make this year a success. Together, we diverted a total of 1,148 lbs. of waste from landfills!



Climate Change Education Solutions Summit

This three-day event featured interactive workshops, collaborative discussions, and impactful presentations.

The Office of Sustainability Practices was represented on the Planning Committee and also participated in the Climate Expo.

The keynote was given by Dr. Jes Thompson, AVP for Sustainability at Northern Michigan University. Her talk was titled, “Change from Within: Rethinking Education During A Climate Crisis.”





Honey Bottling with the GVSU Beekeepers

The GVSU Beekeepers hosted several honey bottling events, giving students, staff, and community members the chance to purchase honey made right at the farm.



This year, the Beekeepers partnered with the Farm Club and SAP's canning workshop, offering participants the opportunity to bottle honey while also learning canning techniques. During this event, the group canned cherry tomatoes and made fresh salsa!



Annual Energy Competition

Each year, the campus residence halls compete to save the most energy. Each building will be competing against their own 3-year average. This competition is part of a broader campaign to encourage behavior change in students.

North Campus Winner: Devos (84%)

South Campus Winner: South E (83%)

Central Campus Winner: Niemeyer East (84%)

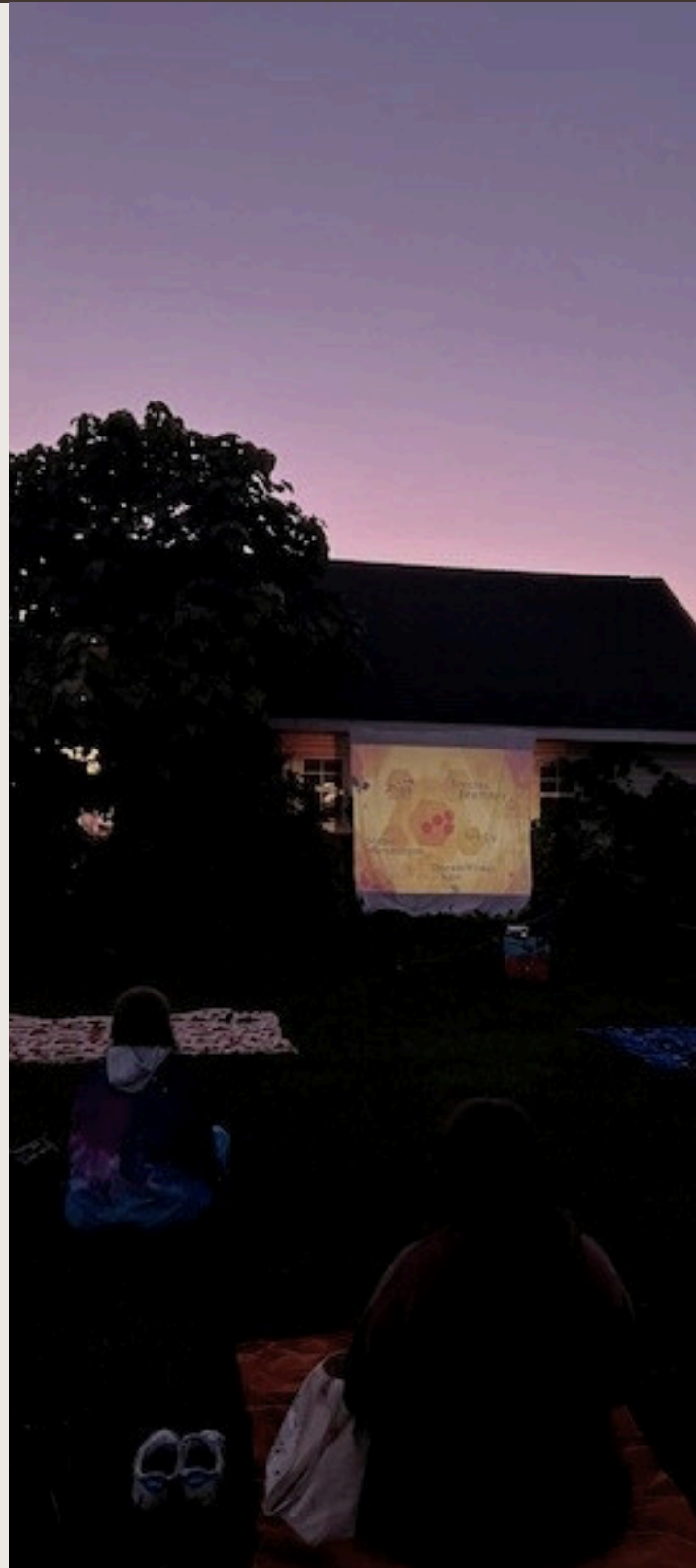
Overall Numbers:

Saved 4% compared to the 3-year average, which amounts to 44,039 kwh of electricity!



SAP Movie Night

Students enjoyed a cozy movie night at the GVSU SAP, surrounded by the calm atmosphere of the farm. The event offered a fun and relaxing way to unwind while connecting with peers and the natural environment.



Seedball Workshop



Students participated in a hands-on seed ball making activity led by the SAP farm manager. Using native seeds and soil, participants created “seed bombs” designed to help restore disturbed areas at the SAP with plants that support pollinators and other wildlife.

The event offered a fun and interactive way to learn about habitat restoration and native plant biodiversity, with each participant receiving GVSU swag as a thank you for their help.



Costume Swap

Students took part in a costume swap event, donating gently used costumes and props in order to pick out new items. The event encouraged creative reuse and waste reduction by giving costumes a second life rather than sending them to the landfill. Participants enjoyed refreshing their looks in a fun and sustainable way!



Farmer's Olympics

Students joined local farmers for the annual Farmer's Olympics, a fun and lively event hosted by the SAP and the GVSU Farm Club. Participants teamed up to compete in friendly farming themed challenges like crate stacking and squash launch, celebrating the hard work and success of the 2025 growing season. The event concluded with a community potluck, bringing together students, staff, and local farmers to share food, laughter, and appreciation for sustainable agriculture.





Sustainability Ranking

GVSU was named as a Top Green College by Princeton Review. Topping its own 2025 ranking, Grand Valley ranked No. 13, continuing to lead the charge of sustainability practices in Michigan. The rankings showcase schools that have a strong foundation in sustainability, both in curriculum and campus life.

As stated by Yumiko Jakobcic, the director of sustainability, “It is a nod to those who paved the way for a sustainable future years ago and those working now, often behind the scenes, to carry that work forward. It is also a tribute to our students who advocate for sustainability, take courses to expand their thinking and who practice it in their daily lives. It is proof that sustainability is the Laker way of life.”



Thank you!

The Office of Sustainability Practices extends our gratitude to everyone who helped make this month-long celebration possible. It's always inspiring to see our community come together in support of sustainability.

Your participation, dedication, and support are vital to our mission, and we look forward to continuing to grow sustainability knowledge and practices across the GVSU campus.

Stay Connected



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