



# 2024 IMPACT REPORT

*Impact ON...*





## Message from Riley

Dear Didion Friends and Partners,

It is a great honor to present Didion’s annual summary of the ways we’ve positively affected our communities, economy, teams, environment, and the world. It was especially satisfying to put together this year’s Impact Report because it illustrates that as we continue to grow, so do our opportunities to improve the world around us. We are grateful for your partnership in helping to make that happen.

The theme of this year’s report, “Impact ON,” highlights Didion’s continuous quest to support the things most central to our very humanity: helping our neighbors, being a reliable partner for local family farms, creating an environment where our growing team can thrive both personally and professionally, harnessing innovations to lessen the negative impact on our environment, and working with partner agencies to curb increasing threats of hunger around the globe.

In everything we do, every minute of every day, our mission to make an impact is always on. While we are proud of our work, we also know that so much more can be accomplished.

We hope you are proud, too, because without strong relationships and the shared values of our partners and teams, we would just be here quietly doing what we love: making corn ingredients. That is what makes this such a special collaboration...knowing that together, we make a difference.

Thank you for taking the time to browse our 2024 Didion Impact Report and thank you for making it all possible.

Riley Didion  
CEO



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## Impact ON: Our Lives

How often do we think about how our favorite cereal was made before we pour it into our morning breakfast bowl? Or how that chicken nugget or fish fillet got the perfect crispy breading on it?

As consumers, we very rarely think about where our food comes from or how it was made. We drive by farms and see cows grazing and corn growing or see delivery trucks transporting the products we buy, but it's likely a fleeting thought as we continue about our day.

At Didion, we take great pride in knowing our team members turn their hard work into ethanol, industrial products, and food ingredients to feed and fuel the world. We support our local farmers by being the connector between their hard work in the field and the high-quality corn ingredients in leading food brands on grocery store shelves. We partner with USAID and the USDA to fight world hunger. We fuel our country's transportation system with ethanol made from Wisconsin corn. The co-product from our ethanol facility provides a high-value feed for cattle and other livestock.

Pride starts in the farm fields near our facilities. Our network of local family farmers, or as we like to call them, partners, put long hours and resilient passion into growing their yearly corn crop.

Each kernel of corn contains beneficial fiber, minerals and vitamins and is part of hundreds of products we use every day. Whether it's food for our families or fuel for our cars, people outside of the manufacturing industry often don't know the global impact our milling and bioscience facilities have on our lives.

### Family Farms

Our network of producers put in long hours into growing the yearly corn crop.



Discover where  
Didion corn  
ingredients impact  
your daily life.

### Didion

Our team members turn their hard work into products that feed and fuel the world.



### Consumer Goods

You'll find corn ingredients in hundreds of products you use every day.





## Impact ON: Economy



**500+**  
Farm Partners



**156,000**  
Acres of corn



**27 Million**  
Bushels purchased  
by Didion each year



### Local Farm Partners Reinvest

Partners are able to invest in their farms and support their families and communities.

You may have heard that \$1 spent locally injects \$7 into the economy.

This couldn't be more evident than in the agricultural industry. When it comes to our partnerships with over 500 local corn partners and the number of bushels Didion purchases each year, it's easy to visualize the multiplying impact.

But our impact doesn't stop with the positive effect we can make on the economy. Through regular communications, educational events, site visits and our Daily Insights blog, Didion helps farm partners make sound decisions, implement new innovations and move toward best practices in the disciplines of sustainable and regenerative agriculture.



*Three generations of  
S&S Grain Farms:  
Alan Schroeder,  
Dick Schroeder,  
Austin Underdahl.*

S&S Grain Farms is a great example of the long-term, mutually beneficial partnerships Didion loves to foster. The third generation farm, celebrating its 52nd year in business, has supplied corn to Didion for 16 years. Thanks in part to that partnership, S&S is able to reinvest in its farm, including integrating technology and adding new grain bins.



**SCAN OR VISIT**

DidionInc.com/Daily-Insights  
to read our Daily Insights.



# Impact ON: Our Teams

If you've ever owned a business or managed a team, you know that retaining your best people is key to a successful team.

Didion is engineering ways to improve employee satisfaction and reduce attrition, resulting in a stable workforce and a stronger family-like environment. At the center of these cultural initiatives are

### 3 FUNDAMENTAL PREMISES:

ONE	Great people want to work with great people.
TWO	Team members want to know what is expected of them and perform best when there is high-quality training to show them what good looks like.
THREE	Having someone who cares about you at work matters.

## Here are some of the ways we're putting those ideas into action.

### New Team Members

From the moment they start the hiring process to stepping through the doors on their first day, we take a holistic approach in welcoming new team members to Didion.

"I feel supported."  
"Didion cares a lot about people."

New team members spend most of the first week getting a deeper dive into the company culture, core values and safety expectations. Leaders from multiple areas of the company, including the owners, stop by to share stories of the company's beginnings, vision for the future and how every team member plays a crucial role in the success of the organization. This isn't just a cursory overview; by the end of the week, we want each person to know they are now part of a family, they are valued and included, setting the tone for a fulfilling and engaging career ahead.

"Goes above and beyond to help me out."

After week one, we're also diligent about regular individual check-ins with a member of our Human Development team. The open conversations and genuine connections give team members an opportunity to ask questions, offer ideas, and talk about barriers where they need help which in turn improves our systems for future employees.

### Grow U

We are in year two of using a learning management system called Grow U, which has had a remarkable impact on educating our team on a range of topics, heavily focusing on Safety, Ethics, Compliance and Leadership Training. Many team members go above and beyond just the required and proactively look for learning opportunities. Grow U is leveraged as a vehicle for leaders to build and track role-specific training programs for their teams. As these programs mature, we will see new training innovations, optimum production inputs, improved performance, and most importantly, more fulfilled team members.

## Learning & Development

We have a diverse group of people who choose to have a career at Didion. We are honored by their decision to work with us and invest in each team member's learning and professional growth.



Educational opportunities are offered both through the company and with experts in the field. Our partnership with neighboring Moraine Park Technical College is a great example of how a collaborative approach can yield big results for our skilled trades team members. We also partner with Wisconsin-based The Management Association (MRA), which provides resources that include professional development and leadership training. Whether it is specific instruction on equipment we use at one of our facilities or providing opportunities for American Heart Association First Aid/CPR/AED certification, we turn to the experts to make training easy and accessible.



## SUPPORTING ALICIA'S PERSONAL JOURNEY

Alicia Hovorka recently reached a significant milestone that was five years in the making. She graduated from Mid-State Technical College as a maintenance mechanic journeyman. Hovorka completed the required 7,500 apprenticeship hours (on-the-job training) at Didion.

"They really collaborate with you toward your goals and where you want to be in the future," said Hovorka when asked about her experience at Didion. "My coworkers were patient with me while I was learning and went out of their way to teach me things. We are a small but mighty group and work well together."

"By investing in our apprentices, we are not only enhancing their personal growth but also ensuring the long-term success and innovation within our organization," said Corynn DeCosse, Human Development Manager. "Didion's commitment to continuous learning and development is one of the many aspects that makes the company a remarkable place to work."

Hovorka's journey continues both professionally and personally and she has a word of advice for others thinking about their next steps, "I've learned it's important not to limit yourself. You can do whatever you really love to do, no matter what it is."



## Impact ON: Our Community

So much of what Didion does, both here at home and around the world, is made possible by the partners who share our concern for others and the communities we live in. Our customers, vendors and local community members aren't just great partners; they are great *people*.

Fueled by the remarkable support these great people give to our annual Strong Communities Golf Outing, the Didion Foundation (Didion's philanthropic arm) brings awareness to important causes and serves as a catalyst for change to inspire others to make a difference in their communities.

Supporting our communities goes beyond just financial donations, however. We strongly believe in giving our time and talent, too. Didion team members are encouraged to spend time away from work supporting causes they care about while still getting paid through volunteer paid time off (VTO). This company-wide benefit results in hundreds of hours each year our team gives back to their communities.

Through the Foundation, Didion supports local emergency responders; agricultural programs for both youth and experienced farmer partners; healthy-living initiatives and feeding our neighbors; and scholarship programs to continue developing the next generation of producers, engineers, scientists, educators and much more.

To our partners  
and community leaders  
inspired to do more, thank you  
for caring. Thank you for your  
friendship. Thanks for sharing  
our core purpose: **Together, we  
make a difference.**

## We are proud to support our communities.

### HABITAT FOR HUMANITY donation and frame-up event

For the third year in a row, dozens of team members came together to build the frame of a new home for a deserving family.



### CHILI COOK-OFF

A little friendly competition went a long way with team members paying to take part in a chili cook-off, with proceeds being donated to the Cambria Area Food Pantry.



### FOOD DRIVE

Three local food pantries received food items and monetary support to help feed our communities.



### KIWANIS CHRISTMAS

In the spirit of the season, Didion rallied during the holidays to provide \$1,700 to the local Kiwanis Club for Christmas gifts.



### BLOOD DRIVE

The community and team members rolled up their sleeves, donating enough blood to save 240 lives.



### GOLF OUTING

Sharing our passion for making a positive impact in our neighborhoods and our youth, this fundraising event is the largest contributor to the Foundation's mission.



### CAMBRIA FRIESLAND FITNESS CENTER

A vision for better health and wellness for the community continues with Didion's contribution to upgraded equipment at the local school's fitness center.



### BREAST CANCER AWARENESS

Team members raised over \$8,000 to support breast cancer research and treatment at UW Carbone Cancer Center.



## Impact ON: Our Future



### Healthy Harvest

A recent Didion Foundation recipient, the Pardeeville FFA, provided an update on the ongoing impact the Foundation's support has had on the school's lunch program and encouraging students to make healthy choices.

We are very happy with our hydroponic system and really appreciate the Foundation's support for our project. **We have donated over 100 lbs. of lettuce to the High School Lunch Program this past year.** We grow three different varieties of lettuce in the system to provide students with different options. The lettuce is used in the salad bar and in wraps or sandwiches for the three high school lunch periods with a sign displayed to let students know the lettuce came from the "Ag Room." Students enjoy having the fresh lettuce in the salad bar, instead of the traditional iceberg lettuce that typically was found in the mix prior to our hydroponic systems. One student said, "I only get salad on the days when the hydroponics lettuce is on there because it tastes so fresh and delicious."

— Amanda Seichter, **Pardeeville FFA**



### The Next Generation: Interns

Through our partnership with some of the finest colleges in the country, we provide internships that give the brightest students an opportunity to not just learn, but to contribute to business operations in meaningful ways. Didion internships are not your typical "job shadow;" our interns bring ideas, design solutions, present to leadership and help implement new solutions. Interns have come from Kansas State, Iowa State, University of Wisconsin – Madison, University of Wisconsin – Platteville, University of Minnesota – Duluth, University of California Berkeley, and Purdue University.

Didion also participates in UW-Platteville's Women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Group, giving us an opportunity to learn and mentor at the same time.

Closer to home, we regularly attend career information events at local middle schools and high schools – a great opportunity to stay connected to the families and educators in our community and discuss the wide-ranging ways that Didion impacts our world.



### In Search of Insight

We value feedback. That's why we invest in third-party resources to get honest opinions from our interns. Here's a snapshot of the most recent survey completed by former interns.

#### Top three positive experiences at Didion:

1. Work environment/exposure
2. Networking
3. Projects/assignments

#### What made those three experiences so great?

- Created events outside of work to get to know coworkers on a more personal level.
- Really accepted me as part of the team.
- Let me do my own hands-on work.
- Brought me a new network of people that are supportive of me.

When asked if they would pursue another internship or full-time career with this company, 80% said yes. One respondent said they would because "the company is ever evolving and growing. There seems like a lot of potential to grow with the company."

Source: 2022 Internship Benchmark Survey, [agcareers.com](https://agcareers.com)



# Impact ON: Environment

If we care for the land, the land will take care of us. That’s why area producers implement a variety of best practices that enrich the soil and protect what mother nature has given us. From planting cover crops to leaving the soil undisturbed through no- or strip-till practices to customized nutrient management systems—producers focus on not only increasing yield but also protecting the environment. The attention to detail doesn’t end at the fence line of the farm. Didion takes the baton and carries that mission forward.

We live in a delicate ecosystem, making it crucial to take every possible measure to protect our environment. In a large-scale operation, like Didion’s, even small actions can collectively create a significant positive impact.



## Conservation Programs

Because the Didion Mill and Bioscience facilities are located just across the street from each other, transportation of corn product between those two facilities requires minimal emissions. And because our business model uses every part of every kernel of corn – 27 million bushels of it annually – there is almost no byproduct waste.

Didion is also implementing both heat and water recovery processes to “recycle” those vital resources in creative ways. Recycling and reusing water, for instance, significantly reduces the amount of additional water necessary to operate. Our closed-loop water circulation system means that water is conveyed to specific parts of the operation, rather than drawing fresh water for each area individually.

Meanwhile, the Bioscience facility captures surplus heat and turns it into either heating for other needs or additional electricity, lowering consumption and demand.

## Recycling

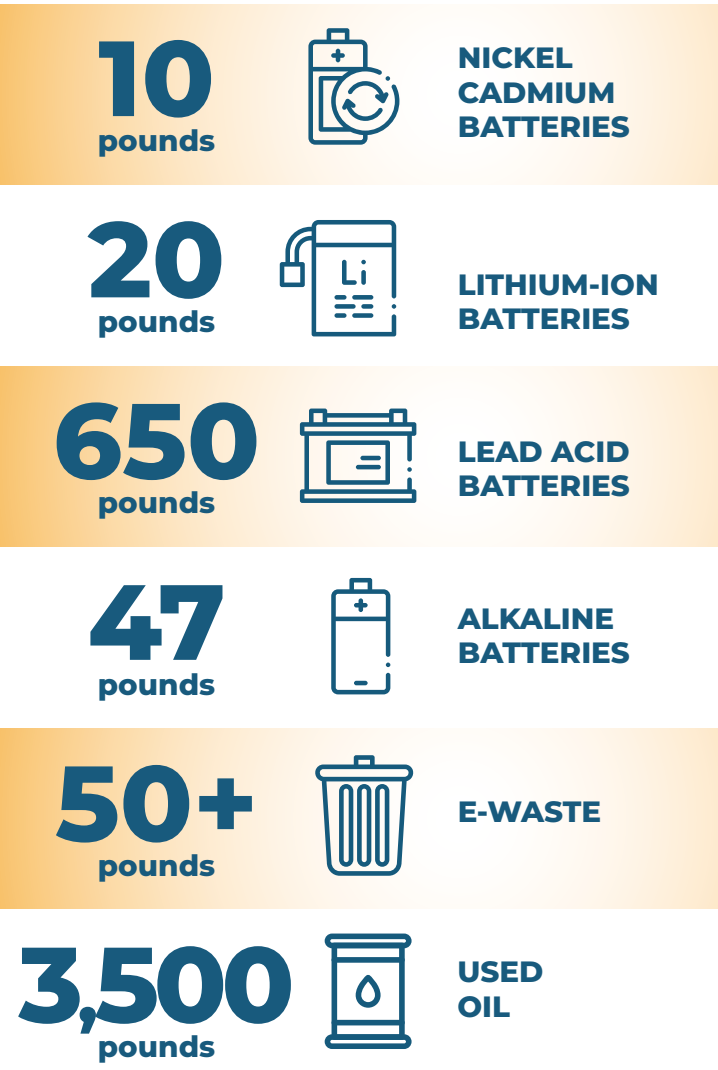
Recycling at Didion is more than a separate waste bin in the break rooms; it means identifying as many recyclable products as possible and disposing of those safely and responsibly. E-waste, batteries and used oil are all recycled at Didion to minimize the environmental footprint.

## Minimizing Emissions and Reducing Carbon Footprint

Didion has invested in process technologies that improve energy efficiency and reduce emissions. These technologies include more efficient fermentation and distillation processes, as well as the use of enzymes to enhance ethanol production while minimizing resource consumption. Additionally, Didion uses advanced pollution control equipment to decrease emission release, further contributing to our commitment to environmental sustainability.

Our Wisconsin-based producer relationships also play a large role in reducing emissions. Since most of our corn comes to us from under 100 miles away, hauling trucks need not spend hours or days on the road to deliver their product. By focusing on our local supply chain, we reduce the miles – and the carbon footprint – related to transportation.

## By The Numbers





## Impact ON: The World

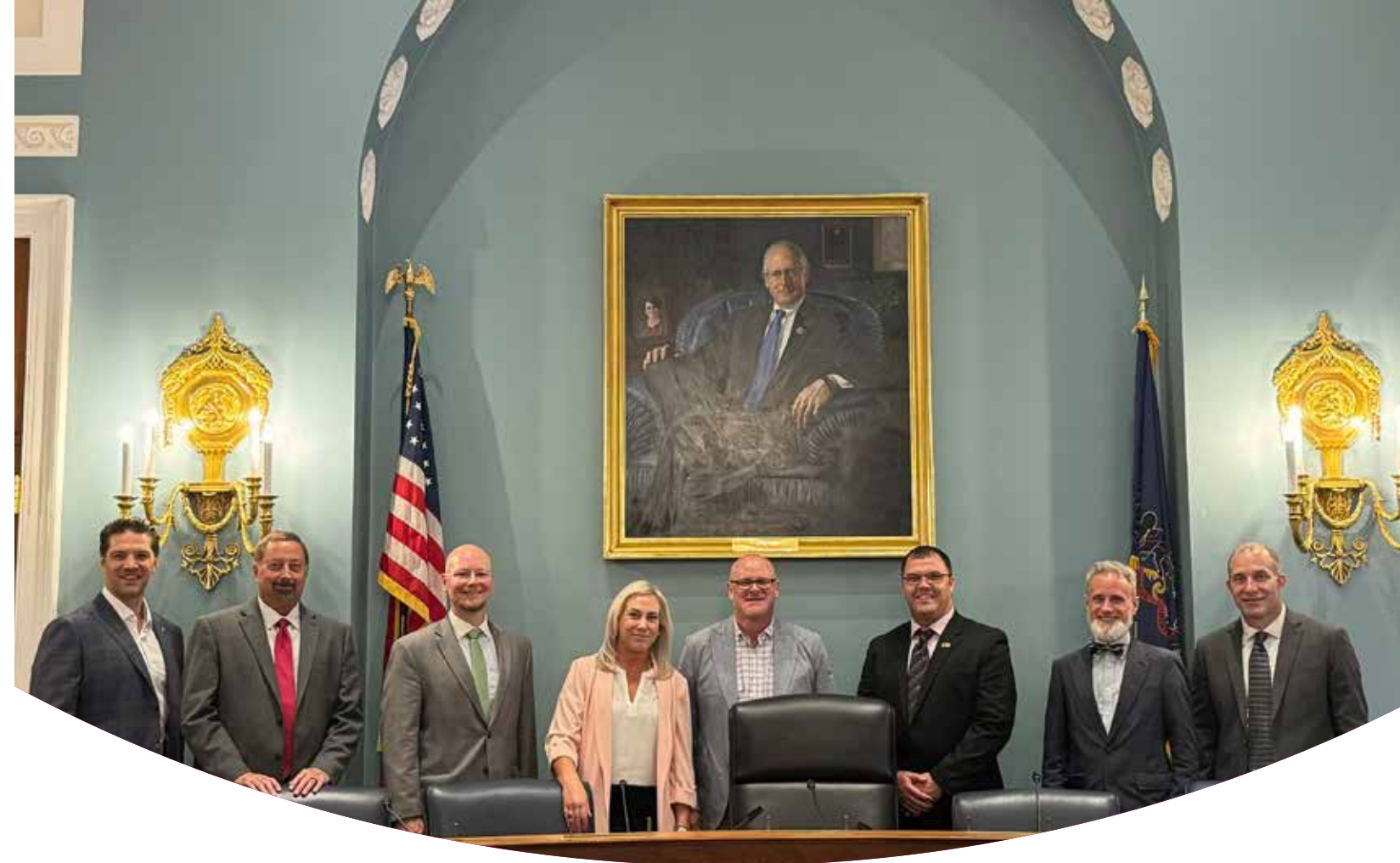
Since Didion's very early beginnings, our partnership with the USDA and the USAID program has been both rewarding and enlightening.

Around 733 million people globally faced hunger in 2023, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations State of Food Security and Nutrition report. Of that, nearly 350 million people suffered from acute food insecurity.

The war in Ukraine – one of the largest grain producing countries – has affected the global food supply. So, too, has the recent El Nino weather pattern, which has caused severe drought in many areas of South Africa. Certain countries have seen an influx of migrants that increases demand for food supply. The Democratic Republic of Congo now has 9 million people in need of emergency food aid; much of Didion's work is currently being directed there.

Thankfully, both Didion and the USDA stay closely aware of evolving needs around the globe. In 2024, we expect to produce and ship 550 million meals for those who need it most with products that contain enhanced nutrient formulations of corn and soy-based foods produced at Didion. There is no impact we could make that is more important than reducing suffering from famine and insufficient food supply.

You might be surprised to learn that smart packaging plays a large role in our ability to reliably deliver aid through the USAID program. Maintaining strong packaging seals and minimizing infestation are key to ensuring those in need receive the maximum amount of food with the highest quality.



Recently, Didion sponsored and presented alongside the USDA and USAID on this very topic at a University of Michigan School of Packaging Symposium. Jim Hepp, manager of one of Didion's plants focused on famine relief products, and David Silver, Director of Accounting and Finance who also serves as Didion's USDA Program Manager, presented some of Didion's new innovations for packaging of the Super Cereal Plus product – a high-nutrition staple within the USAID program – demonstrating the seal integrity of our packaging.

The Didion team also presented at a USDA workshop in Chicago on best practices for electronic record keeping and packaging integrity. Additionally, Riley Didion, Silver, and North American Millers' Association allies took part in a Washington, D.C. Food Aid Expo to promote education on the famine relief products manufactured at Didion's facilities.

The logistics of humanitarian aid are ever-changing. Didion is committed to innovating from product to packaging, reaffirming the company's decades-long partnership with USAID members and our steadfast pledge to feed the world.





## Wrapping It All Up



100% safety and compliance training completion



240 lives saved through blood donation drives



99% of new hires happy with their decision to come to Didion



550 million famine relief meals produced and shipped to developing countries



\$27 million bushels of locally grown corn purchased



450+ Paid volunteer hours 2023 – 2024 YTD



\$140,000 directed toward philanthropic initiatives



4,300 pounds of recycled e-waste, batteries, used motor oil







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