



2022/2023

Impact Report



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A Message From the CEO

Dear Employees, Customers, Community Members, Shareholders, and Other Stakeholders,

In our inaugural sustainability report, we highlighted our Central Impact program, the root of which is our commitment to the long-term view that our economic health – the success of our business – is inherently linked to protecting our planet, cultivating our communities, and empowering our employees. Since the start of our journey to make a difference and drive positive change, Central has made meaningful strides to nurture happy and healthy homes by bringing innovative and trusted solutions to our consumers and customers.

Guiding us through our next phase of growth, we have begun embedding sustainability into our daily operations and tracking progress towards our sustainability goals. As we wrote to our shareholders in our fiscal 2023 Annual Report, one of the hallmarks of our sustainable progress is our Cost and Simplicity program. As part of our multi-year journey to simplify our

business, rationalize our footprint and streamline our portfolio, we not only expect to increase margins and generate more fuel for organic growth and accretive M&A, but also to enhance our social responsibility and environmental stewardship.

“Since the start of our journey to make a difference and drive positive change, Central has made meaningful strides to nurture happy and healthy homes by bringing innovative and trusted solutions to our consumers and customers.”

In this report, we are pleased to share more and spotlight examples of our commitments in action.

- **Protecting our Planet** – Across the organization, our teams continued to reduce carbon footprints and other environmental impacts. For instance, we added post-consumer recycled plastic to some of our pouches, containers and jugs, saved trees by switching to electronic bills of lading, and because every drop counts, implemented drip irrigation for some of our live plant growing sites.
- **Cultivate our Communities** – To steward the environmental impact of our products beyond just the manufacturing stage of the lifecycle, our teams continued to source ecologically friendly inputs and optimize distribution freight routes. Mindful of the social responsibility we have to our communities, beyond financial and in-kind donations, employees across our organization also generously donated their time to community causes that matter to them.
- **Empower our Employees** – Ensuring all employees remain valued and supported, we've continued to invest in improvements to the occupational health and safety of our teams, further the education and professional development support they receive and foster a culture of inclusion where all of our colleagues have an opportunity to thrive.

These are just a few examples of our collective desire and ongoing efforts to make a difference. We look forward to maintaining our momentum and sharing future accomplishments with you.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Niko', with a stylized, cursive script.

Niko Lahanas
Chief Executive Officer
Central Garden & Pet

01

OUR

BUSINESS



Central at a Glance

WHO WE ARE

Headquartered in Walnut Creek, California, Central Garden & Pet is a publicly traded consumer goods company incorporated in Delaware. Our common stock and Class A common stock are listed on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the symbols "CENT" and "CENTA," respectively.

Central is home to a leading portfolio of more than 65 beloved pet and garden brands including Amdro®, Aqueon®, Cadet®, C&S®, Farnam®, Ferry-Morse®, Four Paws®, Kaytee®, Nylabone® and Pennington®.

Central has more than 40 manufacturing and 50 sales and distribution facilities across the United States. In addition, we operate a small number of facilities outside of the United States, including in Canada, China, Mexico, and the United Kingdom.

With approximately 6,700 employees, primarily across North America, strong manufacturing and distribution capabilities, and a passionate, business unit-led entrepreneurial culture, we are on a continuous journey of growth — in our organization, industries and communities.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

Home. A place of comfort, shelter and connection with the ones you love. No matter how big or small, home is at the center of our lives.

At Central, we provide quality products for anywhere you call home — from the house to the yard, from the stable to the city center. Our consumer and professional brands include pet supplies, like treats, toys, bedding and wellness products, as well as lawn and garden consumables, such as grass and packet seed, fertilizers, weed and pest control. We strive to offer forward thinking, innovative solutions to help pets live healthier, gardens bloom bigger, and communities grow stronger.

Home is central to life — we are central to home.

Central to Home Strategy

OUR PURPOSE

To nurture happy and healthy homes.

OUR MISSION

Lead the future of the garden and pet industries...
one blade of grass and one wagging tail at a time.



OUR VALUES

Our values, created by leaders across the organization, are the cornerstone of our culture, and they are at the root of every decision we make – we call them “The Central Way.” We believe having a strong set of values provides a foundation for employees and strengthens how we all work together.

We Do the Right Thing

- We are built on integrity, honesty and trust
- We treat everyone fairly and with respect
- We value safety, sustainability, community, diversity & inclusion

We Strive to Be the Best

- We lead our markets and measure ourselves internally and externally
- We are committed to operating excellence and continuous improvement
- We challenge the status quo and embrace change

We are Entrepreneurial

- We empower our people to run the business
- We are agile and prioritize progress over perfection
- We act like owners and hold ourselves accountable for our results

We Win Together

- We collaborate and have a “Best for Central” mindset
- We believe in competitive advantage and scale benefits as an enterprise
- We communicate openly and transparently

We Grow Every Day

- We invest in our people and encourage career development
- We innovate and grow our portfolio
- We focus on our consumer and customer

We are Passionate

- We love our pet and garden categories and our brands
- We show up every day to make a positive impact
- We care about our team and treat each other like family

STRATEGIC PILLARS

Our Central to Home strategy is based on five pillars that help institutionalize sustainability in a holistic way and drive long-term value for our stakeholders.



Consumer

Build and
grow brands
consumers love



Customer

Win with winning
customers and
channels



Central

Fortify the
Central
portfolio



Cost

Reduce costs to
improve margins
and fuel growth



Culture

Strengthen our
entrepreneurial business
unit-led growth culture



The Central pillar of our Central to Home strategy focuses on strengthening our portfolio, supplementing our organic growth with acquisitions and venture investments, and ensuring a safe, responsible and sustainable future for all.

Embedded in this pillar is our Central Impact program, which is our commitment and approach to corporate sustainability.

Brands, Products and Markets

As a market leader in the pet and garden industries, Central has proudly nurtured happy and healthy homes for over 40 years, by bringing innovative and trusted solutions to consumers and customers.

Our Pet segment includes:

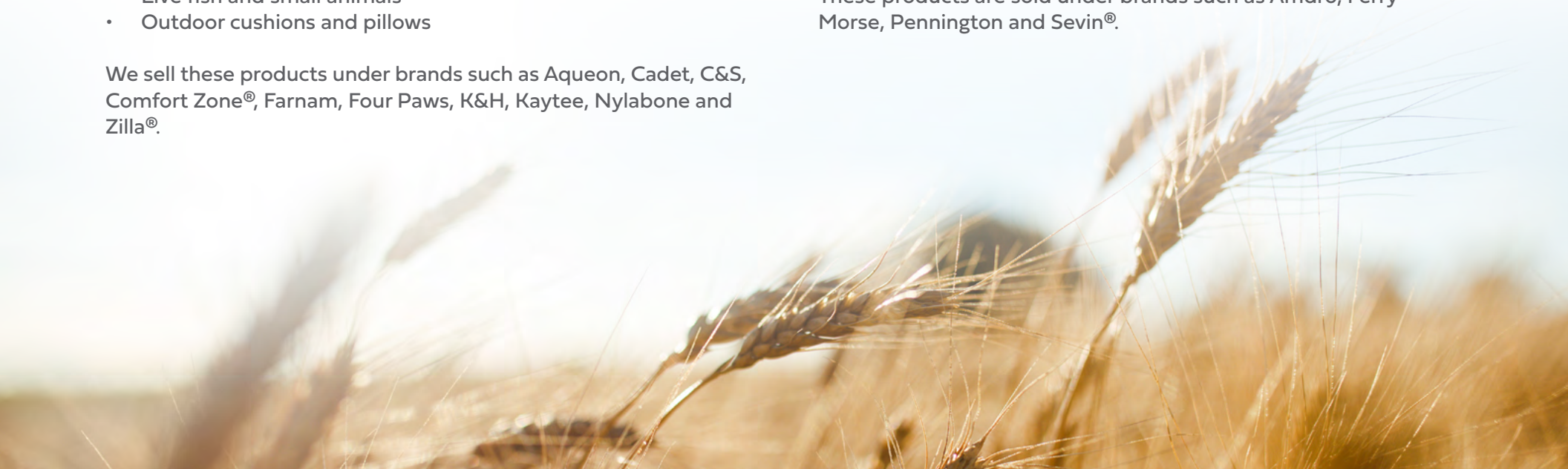
- Dog and cat supplies, such as dog treats and chews, toys, beds and containment, training pads, waste management and grooming products
- Supplies for aquatics, small animals, reptiles and pet birds including toys, enclosures and habitats, bedding, food and supplements
- Products for equine and livestock, animal and household health and insect control
- Live fish and small animals
- Outdoor cushions and pillows

We sell these products under brands such as Aqueon, Cadet, C&S, Comfort Zone®, Farnam, Four Paws, K&H, Kaytee, Nylabone and Zilla®.

Our Garden segment includes lawn and garden consumables such as:

- Grass seed
- Vegetable, flower and herb packet seed
- Wild bird feed, bird houses and other birding accessories
- Herbicide, insecticide and pesticide products
- Fertilizers
- Live plants

These products are sold under brands such as Amdro, Ferry-Morse, Pennington and Sevin®.



Economic Performance

CORE FINANCIALS

Central's net sales for each of its fiscal years 2022 and 2023 were approximately \$3.3 billion. Information about our financial performance can be found in our Annual Report on Form 10-K, available at www.central.com.

The success of our business — our economic performance — is inherently linked to protecting our planet, cultivating our communities, and empowering our employees.

SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS

We believe in creating innovative products that help pets live healthier, gardens bloom bigger, and communities grow stronger. Some of our sustainable products include:

- Arden OceanTex outdoor cushions and dog beds with UV-resistant, recycled fabric made from ocean-bound fishing nets and plastic bottles.
- Ferry-Morse wildflower seed mixes that attract pollinators, such as bees, butterflies and hummingbirds.
- Pennington Smart Seed, which saves up to 30% water compared with ordinary grass seed.

COST AND SIMPLICITY PROGRAM

In fiscal 2023, we advanced our plans to reduce our impact, simplify our business and improve our efficiency across the organization by rationalizing our footprint, streamlining our portfolio, and improving our cost structure more significantly. Focal points span procurement, logistics, manufacturing, portfolio optimization, and administrative costs. As a result, we expect to increase margins, generate more fuel for organic growth and accretive M&A, and enhance our social responsibility and environmental stewardship.

Information about our Cost and Simplicity program can be found in our quarterly and annual financial reporting, available at www.central.com.



Innovation & Intellectual Property

We hold numerous patents in the United States and other countries and have several patent applications pending. While we consider our patent portfolio advantageous to our business, we do not regard any particular patent as essential to our operations. In addition to patents, we have multiple active ingredient registrations, end-use product registrations, and trade secrets. Moreover, we own numerous trademarks, service marks, trade names and logotypes, many being registered. For those not registered, we rely on our common law trademark rights.

Workforce Profile

In 2023, Central had approximately 6,700 employees, primarily across North America, including 400 temporary or part-time employees. We also hire a substantial number of additional temporary workers for the peak lawn and garden shipping season of February through June to meet increased demand during the spring and summer months.

The majority of our full-time employees are paid as exempt, salaried employees. The majority of our temporary employees are paid on an hourly basis.

Except for approximately 100 employees located at our facilities in Puebla, Mexico and Brandon, Canada, none are represented by labor unions.

We remain focused on understanding and ensuring we are retaining our talent. In 2023, the attrition rate of our non-seasonal full-time and part-time workforce was approximately 39%, compared to 36% in 2022. Our average workforce tenure was 11 years for our salaried workforce and six years for our hourly workforce.



Central Impact Program

Corporate sustainability has been rooted in our DNA since our founding in 1980. With our purpose being to nurture happy and healthy homes, we are focused on working towards creating stronger communities, a more diverse and well-rounded employee experience and more efficient operations.

Driving corporate sustainability initiatives is not only imperative to our future, but integral to our current operations. Building on the in-depth stakeholder assessment and initial scoping exercise we undertook in 2020, executing our Central Impact program has continued to yield positive results for our stakeholders, such as:

- Our consumers, and the communities where they live, through philanthropy and more sustainable products.
- Our customers, by ensuring a resilient and secure supply chain.
- Our employees, through learning and development programs, diversity and inclusion initiatives, and safe working environments.
- Our operations and the environment, by reducing waste and our impact on the planet.

This report showcases how sustainability actions we have taken and progress we have made since our inaugural report are reinforcing our core values and feeding into our Central to Home strategy.



Our Sustainability Goals

PROTECT OUR PLANET BY EMBEDDING SUSTAINABILITY IN OUR PROCESSES AND PRODUCTS

Our business has a broad footprint across the value chain, from materials sourcing and manufacturing to our logistics network and consumer-facing packaging. Upstream, we continue to find ways to operate more efficiently, such as by making use of cleaner energy and seeking ways to prevent and reduce waste. Downstream, considering the use phase of our products, we support our customers and consumers in their journeys to help protect the planet.

Focusing on ten critical areas, we have begun embedding our sustainability goals into our daily operations and tracking our progress towards them as we pursue our next phase of growth.



ENERGY & GREENHOUSE GASES

Consistent with the Paris Agreement, aspire to net zero greenhouse gas (GHG) by 2050. Work concurrently to improve our operational efficiency, procure cleaner energy, and explore how to reduce GHG with suppliers, customers and our other external stakeholders as market preferences and the regulatory environment evolve.



WATER

Decrease wastewater and increase recirculation and other water conservation and efficiency initiatives, reducing the amount of water we must withdraw relative to the amount of product we produce.



BIODIVERSITY

Increase support of pollinators — from providing wildflower seeds and the live plants upon which they depend to distributing products and tools that aid in their protection, such as pest controls.

CULTIVATE OUR COMMUNITIES BY GIVING BACK AND PROVIDING BETTER PRODUCTS

We support the communities where our consumers, customers and employees live and work — through philanthropy, volunteering and helping our customers be better community stewards.



PHILANTHROPY

Evolve the way we contribute donations to support causes that matter to our employees, such that we maximize our impact.



EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING

Increase support for our employees to give back to the communities in which they and their families work and live.



PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP

From procuring sustainable materials to developing eco-friendly packaging, keep increasing the sustainable characteristics of our products to help consumers and customers be better stewards.

EMPOWER OUR EMPLOYEES BY PROVIDING A SAFE AND INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE

We strive to provide a safe working environment, build a team based on diversity and inclusion, and otherwise help our employees flourish and grow.



HEALTH & SAFETY

Continue to refine policies, procedures, and measures that help keep our employees healthy and safe and lower our total recordable incident rate year over year.



DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Make Central a more diverse and inclusive workplace, increasing the representation of minority constituents in our workforce, such as women in leadership positions.



LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

Expand our education programs and curricula, as well as our leadership development opportunities, to help our employees enhance their capabilities and reach their full potential.

Highlights

FISCAL YEARS 2022 AND 2023

33
million

pounds of recycled paper material in our Kaytee small animal bedding.

100
million

gallons of water use avoided through utilizing drip irrigation systems at our outdoor perennial farms compared to using traditional sprinkler irrigation.

19
metric tons

of greenhouse gas (GHG) saved by compressing Wee-Wee® training pads resulting in 12% less container space.

12
million

pounds of waste diverted from the landfill to be sold and repurposed from our bird feed, such as husks and hulls sent to local feed operations.

80
thousand

sheets of paper saved annually by switching from printing and faxing to electronic bills of lading across our distribution centers.

1.5
million

dollars annually in monetary and product donations to communities and charitable organizations.

23
million

pounds of recycled polyester fiber in our blow fill and polyester batting used in our outdoor cushions, pillows and dog beds.

22
percent

reduction in safety incidents in fiscal 2022 and 20% in fiscal 2023 thanks to improved safety measures at multiple sites.

11
hundred

fishing nets turned into UV resistant, recycled Oeantex fabric for outdoor cushions, pillows and dog beds.

400
courses

educational courses taken annually by our employees on our learning platform, Learning Central.



02

PROTECTING OUR PLANET

As a leader in the pet and garden industries, we are deeply invested in terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, and committed to helping our customers and consumers care for the environment. Because of that, environmental stewardship is an integral part of our business strategy for long-term growth. Four primary areas on which we focus are:

- Energy & Greenhouse Gases
- Water
- Waste
- Biodiversity

Driven largely by our innovation, supply chain and facilities functions, as well as our partnerships with forward-thinking organizations, we generate many opportunities to do good by doing right.

Energy & Greenhouse Gases

From our pet businesses in New Jersey, Texas and Wisconsin to our garden businesses in Georgia, Massachusetts and Missouri, we are continuously improving the quantity and quality of our energy consumption in our owned and leased facilities.

The consumption of the most material type of energy for the sites within the material boundary we defined – namely, electricity and natural gas consumption for our largest owned and leased operations sites – was 112,959 MWh in 2022 and 405,000 MWh in 2023*. For the same boundary, our Scope 1 and Scope 2 greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions were 96,339 tCO₂e in 2022 and 95,000 tCO₂e in 2023. We also disclose GHG emissions information via the Carbon Disclosure Project (“CDP”).

Many of our locations have moved away from propane, diesel or gasoline powered forklifts. Today, more than 60% of our forklifts are electric, and each electric forklift is saving up to 7 tCO₂e per year. We have increased automation to make manufacturing lines more efficient and reduce process emissions. We have invested in startup companies that are using alternative protein sources such as crickets, or produce vegan dog treats, which further reduces our Greenhouse Gas emissions.

FOUR PAWS REDUCES GREENHOUSE GASES

Four Paws, a leading brand in our New Jersey-based Dog & Cat portfolio, offers simple, yet innovative products to keep pets happy, healthy – and clean. The portfolio includes outdoor waste pickup, shampoo and grooming tools, supplements and Wee-Wee® Pads, liners and diapers. Our pads are made from ethically sourced and sustainably harvested pulp and tissue. They are non-toxic, plant-based and free from phthalates, latex, and Bisphenol A (BPA).

We produce our Wee-Wee products overseas, then transport them in large shipping containers across the ocean. To reduce our carbon footprint, the team compressed the training pads, driving a 12% reduction in the amount of container space needed. In turn, that reduced 18,675 kgCO₂e per year, or the equivalent of taking almost 4,900 cars off the roads.





Jane Unger

Marketing and Corporate Responsibility
Dog & Cat

Jane Unger has been with Central's Dog & Cat business for over ten years. Splitting her time between marketing and corporate responsibility, she focuses on the philanthropic efforts and sustainability communications of the Dog & Cat business unit.

“The energy and greenhouse gas (GHG) intensity – that is, energy consumption and GHG emission relative to the amount of our product throughput – are great examples of our commitment to environmental stewardship. Since 2021, Nylabone, Four Paws, and Cadet have consumed roughly the same amount of energy while tripling production output. We’ve moved to LED lighting and motion sensors, and in addition, we are leveraging our solar energy production system and implementing hybrid electric-molding machines.”



Water

Landscape irrigation in the United States is estimated to account for nearly one-third of all residential water use, totaling nearly 8 billion gallons of water per day. And the US Environmental Protection Agency estimates that as much as half of the water used is wasted due to evaporation, wind, or runoff caused by inefficient irrigation methods and systems.

Groundwater resources supply 35% of the drinking water in the United States — and support the farms that feed us. But that's not all: Groundwater cools the data centers that keep the internet running and drive industries including energy, mining and manufacturing.

Our businesses use water. Our businesses provide consumers with products that require water. With water becoming an ever more critical resource, we are continually innovating to help preserve our local environment, sustain our economy and minimize the effects of drought and water shortages that we are facing today. Our mindset is the entire value chain — from industrial manufacturing and our facilities to the third-party providers with whom we partner. We are addressing water systemically, from our NexGen research facilities to our live plants business and beyond.

NEXGEN RESEARCH COLLECTS AND STORES RAINWATER

NexGen Plant Science Center is our research unit dedicated to researching, developing, and testing new innovative grass seed and controls products. In 2022, we upgraded the buildings on our NexGen campus in Albany, Oregon to facilitate the collection and storage of rainwater. Based on average rainfall in the Willamette Valley, the rainwater capture system has the potential to collect 180,000 gallons of water annually – enough to fill 2,250 standard bathtubs with water. In addition, the facility can store up to 45,000 gallons of rainwater, significantly reducing our impact on groundwater supply.

DATA CENTERS USE A LOT OF WATER — WE USE LESS THAN MANY OTHERS USE

For data processing and storage, most of our in-house data is hosted by Switch, a vendor that prioritizes sustainability and the world's most precious resource: water. For example, Switch identifies and leads water improvement projects in the communities where they operate, running their five North American campuses on 100% recycled water. Through industry partnerships, Switch worked over three years to help pioneer proprietary technology to eliminate chemicals from cooling systems, increase efficiency by over 400%, and save more than 155 million gallons of water.

BELL NURSERY MAKES EVERY DROP COUNT

Water is essential to plant life and is a critical input to nursery crop production. The amount of water a plant nursery needs depends on many factors, including the type of irrigation system, the size of the growing area, and the type of plants. As a supplier of a variety of live plants, including trees, shrubs, annuals, perennials and tropicals, Bell Nursery is committed to sustainability holistically. Bell's network, which includes local plant growers, family farms, company-owned fields, and greenhouses, not only aids pollinators, but ensures that plants travel less distance to arrive at retail partners, decreasing fuel usage and GHG emissions while supporting local economies. Moreover, two of its facilities operate on 100% wind generated power. And by switching from sprinkler to drip irrigation at perennial farms, to grow more than 5 million perennials, Bell has reduced water usage by 100 million gallons annually.

CENTRAL SPECIALTY PET RECIRCULATES WATER

Improving water usage can come in many forms, whether through updated procedures or modern technology. Our Specialty Pet business manufactures market-leading fish tanks and reptile habitats. As part of our aquarium-making process, we wash large sheets of glass to remove any oil, dust or residue, so that they are safe to use as a home aquarium. To reduce impact, we invested in glass-washing machines that now filter and recirculate water, rather than purge and dispose of each cycle. The new machines avoid the consumption of tens of thousand gallons of water annually.

“We avoided 100 million gallons of water through utilizing drip irrigation systems at our outdoor perennial farms compared to using traditional sprinkler irrigation.”

— Cole Magnum, VP of Operations, Bell Nursery



Waste

A large share of items that people use on a daily basis, including packaging, bottles, and papers, ends up in landfills or open dump sites, putting pressure on the environment and wildlife habitats. There are three primary ways to tackle the problem:

- Produce less waste
- Use more recycled material
- Find ways to use or sell waste

At Central, we do all three. For instance, the Nylabone team eliminated blister packaging from its chew toys, Central Home Brands used ocean-bound plastic to develop high-quality proprietary material for dog beds and outdoor cushions, and our Central Specialty Pet business sold some of the waste it produces. And we have ensured knowledge of these solutions has been shared with other internal groups and our R&D and operations functions.

KAYTEE PRODUCTION WASTE BECOMES INPUT FOR OTHER PRODUCTS

With Kaytee, Central Specialty Pet offers a complete line of products, from food, treats, and bedding to toys, habitats, and accessories. To ensure the best nutrition for small animals and birds, incoming grains, such as black oil or striped sunflower, safflower, corn, milo, and millet, are cleaned to remove any extraneous material. This process, called screening, produces a harvesting byproduct including leaves, cracked grains, husks, stems and light seeds. In 2022 and 2023, the team repurposed almost 5,400 and 6,700 tons of screening, respectively, as a nutritious additive for farmers to use for livestock and farm animal feed.

ECO-FRIENDLY PACKAGING ACROSS PET AND GARDEN BUSINESS UNITS

Post-consumer recycled content, or PCR, is material that is made from the items that consumers recycle every day, such as aluminum cans, cardboard boxes, paper, and plastic bottles. These materials are typically collected by local recycling programs and shipped to recycling facilities to be sorted into bales, based on the material, then melted or ground into small pellets for molding into new items. PCR plastic material is used for a variety of finished products, including packaging for several of our pet and garden products.

BELL NURSERY

Bell, our live plants business, utilizes plastic containers and cardboard to safely transport the millions of annuals, perennials, trees and shrubs to our retail partners' stores. To reduce our impact on the environment, the business recycles about 500,000 pounds of plastic every year. This includes plastic from industry partners that is sent to recycling partners to be reground and molded into new products, as well as more durable plastic trays, planters, and hanging baskets that are being returned to Bell, then sanitized for reuse.

PENNINGTON

In fiscal year 2022, our Madison, Georgia-based lawn and garden brand, Pennington, began including post-consumer recycled materials in its Rejuvenate plant food pouches. In fiscal year 2023, Pennington Grass Seed followed, by adding PCR plastic to its Wildflower and Smart Seed Clover + Grass packaging. The total weight of the post-consumer recycled plastic was 3,264 pounds in 2022 and 25,783 pounds in 2023. For comparison, a standard 16.9 ounce single-use plastic water bottle contains approximately 0.3 ounces of plastic. By adding PCR plastic to its pouches, Pennington reused the equivalent of almost 600,000 water bottles in two years.

NYLABONE

Based in New Jersey, our flagship brand, Nylabone, offers chew toys, long-lasting edible chews and dental solutions for dogs of every age, breed, shape and size. Striving for more sustainable operations, Nylabone has been driving continuous improvement in its manufacturing process and within its facilities for years. Recently, the team initiated two projects to further reduce the packaging materials for its dog chew toys. Eliminating excess corrugated material, such as cardboard, resulted in saving the equivalent of about 1,100 trees and 450,000 gallons of water per year. To lower the amount of plastic used in its packaging, the team broadened the approach it initially applied to its Gourmet Style line, saving the equivalent of over 900,000 water bottles annually across all new products.

Biodiversity

Biological diversity, or biodiversity, which encompasses all living organisms, including plants, animals, microorganisms, and the ecosystems they form, is rapidly declining. Biodiversity is essential for the functioning of ecosystems, the well-being of human societies, and the overall health of our planet. We help preserve biodiversity by supporting pollinators, educating people on saving habitats and enabling our customers to plant flowers, vegetables, shrubs and trees.

KAYTEE ANIMAL FOUNDATION – SAVES HABITATS OF WILD BIRDS

The Kaytee Animal Foundation's mission is to enhance people's knowledge and enjoyment of small companion animals and wild birds. Funded through individual contributions and Kaytee, part of our Wisconsin-based Central Specialty Pet business unit, the organization furthers the education, conservation and research of small companion animals and wild birds locally and globally.

Wild birds warn us of dangers in our streams and rivers, they connect us daily to the beauty and mystery of nature's web of life, and help protect our world's food supply by consuming huge quantities of pest insects. For example, barn swallows can eat up to 60 insects per hour.

Some songbird populations have decreased, and habitat loss on breeding grounds, changes in their environment resulting from climate change, and other factors play a key role in the decline of bird populations. For example, in Wisconsin, grassland and northern forest birds have suffered significant declines, including Connecticut Warblers, Western Meadowlarks, and Evening Grosbeaks.

To foster the next generation of veterinarians, each year, the Kaytee Animal foundation awards five scholarships to students who demonstrate excellence in avian and exotic animal medicine.





PROTECTING POLLINATORS, OUR FOOD, AND THE PLANET

Of the 1,400 crop plants grown around the world producing our food and plant-based industrial products, almost 80% require pollination by animals. Nature's critical pollinators, such as bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds, transfer pollen from flower to flower, helping them reproduce.

From urban to rural, cold to hot, wet to dry, and everything in between, pollinators are one of the most important classes of animals on the planet, laying the foundation for healthy ecologies. According to the United Nations Environment Program, of the 100 crop species that provide 90% of the world's food, more than 70 are pollinated by bees. In North America, honeybees alone pollinate nearly 95 kinds of fruits, such as almonds, avocados, cranberries and apples, in addition to commodity crops like soy.

A SYSTEMS APPROACH TO SUPPORTING POLLINATORS

Across our two segments, Pet and Garden, we both directly and indirectly support pollinators. Whether it's cultivating and selling live plants that strengthen pollinator biomes, offering effective pest controls for mites destroying beehives, or active beekeeping, we pride ourselves on doing our part to stabilize and grow this important part of our ecosystem.



Our Green Garden business ships hundreds of thousands of wildflower seed packets that cater to pollinators, allowing our consumers to support bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds in their own gardens.



Live plants sold through Bell Nursery, including perennials, blooming tropicals, butterfly bush and beebalm, support a variety of pollinators.



Hummingbirds fly flower-to-flower promoting the pollination processes. Our Pennington and Kaytee nectar concentrates support the growth of the hummingbird population.



Varroa mites attack and feed on honeybees, and are now found in nearly every hive in the United States — our Professional business aids in protecting these hives by manufacturing Varroa mite control.



DoMyOwn, our direct-to consumer eCommerce platform, sells protective suits to those engaged in beekeeping.



Through brands such as Amdro and Ironite, we sell pollinator-friendly, neonicotinoid-free controls that target pests that destroy beehives.

03

CULTIVATING OUR COMMUNITIES

We are committed to supporting the communities where our customers and employees live, work, and play through philanthropy, employee volunteering and product stewardship.

Reinforced by our focus on the home, we continue to develop deep relationships with various local and national organizations with funding, product donations and time. And from our approach to product stewardship, we strive to make our brands better for our consumers, customers and the environment.

Philanthropy & Employee Volunteering

Charitable giving at Central is part of our company culture. In the past two years, our pet and garden teams gave \$1.5 million in either funds or in-kind products, and donated their time to various organizations, including:

- Best Friends Animal Society
- Animal Rescue Foundation
- ASPCA
- National Animal Supplement Council
- United States Association of Reptile Keepers (USARK)
- Habitat for Humanity
- Home Depot Foundation
- Make-A-Wish
- Children's Hospital of Michigan



CENTRAL SPECIALTY PET ROCKS THE BLOCK

In 2023, Central Specialty Pet, our aquatics and small animal business unit, partnered with the Greater Fox Cities Area Habitat for Humanity. Bringing together residents, municipalities and community partners, Habitat for Humanity's Rock the Block community events complete exterior home repairs for low-income homeowners as well as community-based projects. These improvements help beautify neighborhoods, increase property values and neighborhood safety, and have a ripple effect on all homes in targeted neighborhoods.

Based in Chilton and Franklin, Wisconsin, Central Specialty Pet donated to the 20th Rock the Block community event in Chilton and employees volunteered their time to work on building, critical repairs, and landscaping for the first home built.

“At Habitat for Humanity, we are driven by the vision that everyone needs a decent place to live, and we are thrilled to work with Central to continue this mission. We look forward to expanding our partnership and working together to reach more communities and families in need.”

— Amy McGowan, Director, Development at Habitat for Humanity International

Paula and Hailey Finding Home

Paula's daughter Hailey was born with several severe, life-long diagnoses. With the state of housing affordability, Paula was struggling to find a home that was safe and accessible for Hailey. Because of Habitat and its supporters, Paula and Hailey got the opportunity to have a safe, affordable, Hailey-friendly home... a home that works for their family.

“I look forward to safety in the home, having enough outlets for all her medical machines, not tripping over cords, and having room for all of Hailey's supplies. Home is a safe haven, where family comes together. A place where you can be yourself. My goal of being a homeowner is not for me, it is to give my daughter a safe place to call home.”

— Paula, New Habitat Homeowner





NEXGEN PLANT SCIENCE CENTER DONATES VEGETABLES

In partnership with leading universities and private enterprises, our NexGen Plant Science Center operates almost 250 acres and six greenhouses of farms and facilities across the country, researching and developing new and innovative grass seed and controls products. Every year, as a byproduct of their growth trials, they produce around 2,500 pounds of pumpkins, cucumbers, beans, corn, and other vegetables that they donate to local food pantries in Oregon.

CENTRAL SERVICE CENTER SUPPORTS “SEE SPOT WALK” EVENT

The largest and oldest animal welfare organization and veterinary charity in the state of Idaho, the Idaho Humane Society, advocates for the responsible care and welfare of animals in the Treasure Valley and beyond. Every year, in early October, animal enthusiasts participate in dog contests, set out on the 1-mile dog walk, or sample vendor products during the See Spot Walk fundraiser event. Since 2013, our Boise, Idaho-based Central Service Center has not only provided financial support, but its employees have volunteered time handing out product samples from our business units, such as NUBZ dog treats, Adams skin ointment, Comfort Zone tote bags and K&H dog beds.



NYLABONE PARTNERS WITH THE NATIONAL DISASTER SEARCH DOG FOUNDATION AND AMERICAN HUMANE

Retired military dogs deserve our extra gratitude and support after serving our country. American Humane’s Military Working Dog Reunification Program helps reconnect retired military dogs with their former handlers. In 2022, Nylabone provided financial support to help cover transportation and veterinary costs to ensure these K-9 veterans get the comfortable retirements they deserve.

Founded in 1996, the National Disaster Search Dog Foundation is on a mission to strengthen disaster response in the United States by rescuing and recruiting dogs and partnering them with firefighters and other first responders to find people buried alive in the wreckage of disasters. In the aftermath of the Maui, Hawaii wildfires in August, 2023, Nylabone sent thousands of chew toys to aid the rescue dogs that were deployed in finding and saving missing residents.

“Every dog needs loving support, especially those that serve our country. We’re proud to support organizations such as National Disaster Search Dog Foundation and American Humane with monetary and chew toy donations.”

— Glen S. Axelrod, SVP, Dog & Cat

Product Stewardship

As a manufacturer of consumer-packaged goods, we seek to minimize any potential negative environmental or social impact our products might have on nature or people throughout the stages of the product's lifecycle. Across our portfolio, this includes:

- Sourcing ecologically friendly inputs for our products across our portfolio, from recycled materials to ingredients for food products that harm neither animals nor the environment
- Reducing corrugated materials and plastic packaging for our Nylabone chew toys
- Using perfluorinated compounds (PFC)-free water-repellent fabric treatment for our Arden outdoor cushions, ensuring chemicals don't wash off of into the groundwater
- Replacing tractor trailers and box trucks with more fuel efficient ones
- Employing route modeling and electronic bills of lading across our pet and garden businesses
- Making it easier for our customers to use less water with Pennington Smart Seed grass seed

Throughout this report, you can find examples of how we are sourcing more sustainable materials, how our consumers are having less impact when using our products, and how they are finding beneficial reuses for products at end of life.



CENTRAL HOME BRANDS HARNESSES RECYCLING

Each year, Central Home Brands manufactures and sells millions of outdoor cushions, pillows and dog beds. Inspired to create products that make a positive impact, the team uses recycled materials wherever it can. They source roughly 18 million pounds of recycled Blow fill and 4.5 million pounds of polyester fibers to create the polyester batting in our products.

Central Home Brands is also proud of the various printed and solution-dyed polyester fabric products it makes from recycled plastic bottles. Central produces roughly 2 million yards of such fabric each year. With one yard of fabric requiring 28 plastic bottles, the team diverts roughly 50 million plastic bottles from landfill each year.

In addition to recycled plastic bottles, our Oceantex™ fabric also uses recycled ocean-bound plastics and fishing nets. Each year, the approximately 80,000 yards of Oceantex fabrics we produce recycle the equivalent of roughly 1,100 fishing nets.

Ensuring our final products are also shipped more sustainably, Central Home Brands uses corrugated boxes made from partially recycled fibers.



KAYTEE TURNS LANDFILL-BOUND PAPER INTO A CLEAN AND COZY PRODUCT

To thrive, hamsters, rabbits, guinea pigs, and other small animals require many elements within their habitats. Bedding is one key element. Since bedding must be changed regularly, pet parents have traditionally relied on using wood chips and other throw-away items.

Kaytee — our leading small animal, wild bird and pet bird brand — developed a proprietary formula for clean and cozy small animal bedding. Using leftover paper scraps and excess production materials from the household cleaning industry, the team creatively sourced to produce a superior product. In the past two years, the product inputs they have procured have diverted nearly 12 million pounds of paper material bound for landfill.

The resulting absorbency and manageability also gives the product a springy characteristic, enhancing the characteristics for the animals while decreasing the stickiness and increasing the ease of cleaning for the owners.



CENTRAL LOGISTICS IS SAVING TREES, ONE SHEET AT A TIME

Historically, our pet and garden businesses were printing and faxing at least four sheets of paper for every shipment. Central Specialty Pet socialized the idea of switching to electronic bill of lading, or eBill, to reduce the environmental impact of our transportation and logistics. Having the same legal value and replicating the functions of an original bill of lading, eBills eliminate paperwork, postage costs and delays or disruption to move important documents between shippers and receivers and other parties. By implementing an eBill system along with tablets at our distribution centers, we are now saving more than 80,000 sheets of paper annually.



OPTIMAL VEHICLE DESIGN AND DRIVING PRACTICES

Optimized vehicle design and driving behaviors are two factors critical to the success of sustainable transport. The rise of smart sensors and vehicle automation are helping more drivers minimize idle time, fuel consumption, emissions, and other forms of waste, enabling more efficient speeds, acceleration rates, and the like.

At Central, aiming to both maximize productivity and minimize impact, we monitor driver status through automated logging devices that record driving time, location, and engine power, as well as hard-braking incidents, acceleration rates, and idle time.

CENTRAL VENTURES FUND INVESTS IN START-UPS AT THE CUTTING EDGE OF PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP

Our venture fund is dedicated to discovering and nurturing entrepreneurial start-up companies that add value to the pet and garden industries. Through Central Ventures, we have made minority investments in two companies that have a heightened focus on sustainability: Finn Wellness and Back to the Roots.

FINN WELLNESS

Finn Wellness develops dog health supplements free of cheap fillers and harmful additives. The soft chews are manufactured in a U.S.-based, current Good Manufacturing Practice (cGMP) compliant facility that is Safe Quality Foods (SQF) certified. In addition, Finn Wellness is “certified plastic negative,” as it recovers twice as much plastic from the environment as it uses in its packaging. The company also partners with local animal shelters, such as by donating a portion of its proceeds to help with their rescue efforts and supplying them with Finn supplements to help keep the shelter dogs healthy.

BACK TO THE ROOTS

Back to the Roots has evolved from a college kitchen experiment into an organic gardening passion, with a mission to help reconnect new generations back to foods and their origins. More than five million families have grown organic food using Back to the Roots 100% organic non-GMO gardening kits, soils, plant food and live plants, seeds and seed packets, including seeds that attract pollinators. A certified B corporation, the Oakland, California-based company meets high standards of social and environmental impact.



04

EMPOWERING OUR EMPLOYEES

Employee well-being is a key part of creating a sustainable business and a sustainable culture. We strive to achieve this largely by focusing on occupational health & safety, diversity & inclusion, and learning & development.

Maintaining a culture of safety enables us to deliver world-class results. We set high standards for safety and record, report, investigate root causes, and identify corrective actions for all incidents. Each year, we also set new annual safety targets and identify supporting investments.

We are also a better company when we bring together diverse perspectives and backgrounds. We have created and expanded programs and opportunities to drive a more diverse workforce and support an inclusive environment across our business.

Finally, we believe every employee has the potential to enhance their skills, advance their career, and grow as human beings. From instructor-led to self-directed training and other development methods, we invest in our employees because it's both critical to our success and the right thing to do.

Health & Safety

OUR COMMITMENT

We are committed to providing all employees a safe and healthy workplace. Our corporate policies and guidelines emphasize our commitment to ensuring safety and preventing and mitigating risks.

In 2023, we implemented our global health and safety policy across the organization, promoting our mission to prevent all injuries.

- We value safety above all else
- Nothing we do is worth getting hurt
- Our goal is zero safety incidents
- Every incident is preventable, at work and at home
- We are all empowered to act on safety
- We celebrate our safety successes

To keep nurturing our safety culture, we make clear that we expect all employees and contractors to act in accordance with our policies and report any risks and/or opportunities to management.

OUR GOAL IS ZERO SAFETY INCIDENTS

Thanks to improved safety measures, training, and facility automation, we reduced our company-wide total recordable incident rate by 22% in fiscal 2022 and 20% in fiscal 2023 compared to the prior year.

Highlighting our success, 10 of our locations have had no lost work time injuries for over a year.

- Controls in Greenfield, MI – Since June 2018
- Controls in Matson, WA – Since June 2018
- Controls in Chico, CA – Since June 2018
- K&H in Surprise, AZ – Since March 2022
- DoMyOwn in West Valley City, UT – Since November 2022
- DoMyOwn in Lawrenceville, GA – Since November 2022
- Green Garden in Compton, CA – Since February 2023
- Green Garden in Richmond, CA – Since February 2023
- Green Garden in Norton, MA – Since February 2023
- Green Garden in Lockbourne, OH – Since February 2023

CENTRAL SPECIALTY PET IS ALL ABOUT EMPLOYEE HEALTH

Our Specialty Pet business manufactures market-leading fish tanks and reptile habitats, which requires increased lifting and reaching for many jobs. Across locations, from lift-assist equipment to compression mats under workstations and other improvements, the business unit has conducted ergonomic assessments to design optimal working conditions.

In addition to new hire training, our manufacturing facility in Chilton, Wisconsin also holds monthly wellness events and offers flu shots, annual physical wellness checks, and blood panels. Our location in Franklin, Wisconsin provides on and offsite support for employee health and wellbeing during and outside of work hours, including stretching and massage therapy. And our Fort Dodge, Iowa-based facility offers employee physicals to support job training improvements and role hardening that reduce risks and job-related injuries.

“We were able to reduce company-wide recordable incidents by 22% in fiscal 2022 and 20% in fiscal 2023 over prior year due to improved safety measures, training, and automation at our facilities.”

– Devin Shivers, Director, Health, Safety & Environment



Diversity & Inclusion

We believe it is important to build a pipeline of diverse talent throughout our organization. Our recruiters partner with hiring managers to ensure our job descriptions are inclusive and appeal to all applicants, and we cast a wide net in posting our positions, including to employment development centers. In the coming years, we will continue to expand our internship and college recruitment program. With a focus on diversity to bring in students from all backgrounds and experiences, we will further develop our pipeline of future talent.

We are committed to growing a stronger Central community by increasing our understanding and appreciation for each other's diverse backgrounds and experiences. Learning Central, our online learning portal, provides employees with educational resources related to diversity and inclusion. In addition, we recognize national and international heritage and history months along with cultural observances.

A key priority of our Diversity & Inclusion efforts is amplifying opportunities for women. Together with our Women in Leadership Council, our recruiters ensure female leadership representation on interview panels at the Director and above level.

In 2022, we formed the Women in Leadership Council (WIL), comprised of female leaders from across the organization whose purpose is to foster an inclusive culture in which women are well represented, valued, empowered, and advancing into leadership. In 2023, the Council held its first virtual summit, "Women are Central to Growth," enabling Central's women leaders to connect with and glean insights from other inspiring women leaders, internal and external, from a range of backgrounds, industries, and functions.



ADVANCING WOMEN INTO LEADERSHIP



Reina Lewis

Regional Sales Manager,
Agricultural Products,
Central Life Sciences

At Central Life Sciences (CLS), Reina Lewis is responsible for overseeing and managing distribution accounts while also prospecting for new business with producers. Her ongoing thirst for expanding her knowledge and becoming a better ambassador for agriculture led her to be selected for the 2022-2024 Governor Dolph Briscoe Jr., Texas Agricultural Lifetime Leadership (TALL) program.

“Although agriculture producers only make up 2% of the U.S. population, they are a very diverse group. The opportunity to understand more aspects of the industry only improves my ability to serve our customers,” Reina says.

Established on the ideals of leadership, issue and policy awareness, and basic agricultural principles, the program strives to prepare men and women for the challenges faced by agriculture in the future. After being nominated by a CLS teammate, Reina was selected to be one of just 24 leaders invited to the two-year program. Along with participants from every

sector of agriculture across all parts of Texas, Reina attended expert-led seminars, on-site tours, and met with over 1,000 business and government leaders at the local, state, national, and international levels, honing her understanding of organizational decision-making and the role of political institutions in agriculture.

“I realized that each individual you meet gives you an opportunity to learn something new. The program allowed me to cultivate relationships that expand my knowledge and will continue to enhance my development and allow me to also give back to my teammates.”

“I couldn’t have done it without the support of my colleagues, who have prioritized teamwork for success. Not only did my managers encourage my participation in the program, but my colleagues stepped up when I had to travel during program sessions. I was incredibly fortunate to have this opportunity. I hope that I am able to share the experience by nominating another Central employee in the future.”

Reflecting on the program, Reina sums it up by saying: “I took away more than just a greater understanding and appreciation of agriculture and its impact on society as a whole. I also gained lifelong connections and skills that will only further my growth.”

CENTRAL VENTURES FUND INVESTS IN PROMISING WOMEN FOUNDED START-UPS

While the share by volume of deals has almost doubled since 2008, women-founded startups accounted for 2% or less of venture capital funding invested in Europe and the United States in 2023 according to data provider Pitchbook.

Through our venture fund, Central Ventures, we have placed minority investments in three promising entrepreneurial start-ups that were founded by women — Jiminy's, Bright Planet Pet and Green Gruff.



Led by Ann Carlson, Jiminy's is using insect protein to make sustainable dog food and treats. Insects, such as crickets and grubs, require far less feed and water compared to traditional protein sources like cows or pigs. Since inception, the Berkeley, California-based company saved over 700 million gallons of water and averted more than 11,000 tons of greenhouse gases — all while utilizing less land to grow the protein that dogs consume.



Katherine Ellison started Bright Planet in 2020 after recognizing a market need for sustainable and innovative vegan treats for dogs. Based in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the company makes 100% plant-based dog treats that taste and smell like real meat while resulting in up to 90% less carbon emissions and using up to 68% less water than comparable meat-based treats. Last year, Bright Planet switched to 30% post-consumer recycled bags, saving thousands of plastic bottles from ending up in landfill.



Founded by Renah Persofsky five years ago, Green Gruff is dedicated to producing sustainable dog supplements and treats. Using 100% post-consumer recycled jars, Boca Raton, Florida-based Green Gruff has recycled the equivalent of over 1 million plastic bottles. The all-natural organic products include both CBD and non-CBD lines and are being produced in facilities powered by solar energy producing 2 million KWh per year, minimizing the company's carbon footprint.



Learning & Development

EMPLOYEE EDUCATION

We continue to invest in our team members by expanding our learning and development programs. Learning Central, our dedicated online learning portal, continues to be a valuable resource for all employees to advance their knowledge and skills. Providing hundreds of self-paced e-learning, instructor-led training opportunities, and employee-shared resources, the portal enables employees to participate in educational experiences relevant to their focused areas for growth. The platform also hosts our compliance training.

In addition, we support our employees' educational goals and career development by providing company-paid tuition reimbursement through our Education Assistance Program. Employees pursuing a professional certification, bachelor's or master's degree at an accredited program receive tuition benefits. Since 2011, Central has supported over 170 employees pursuing academic degrees or professional certifications.

MENTORSHIP

The Central Mentoring Program signals our commitment to develop strong and diverse future leaders. While the 2022 inaugural cohort engaged close to 40 mentees, each paired with a more senior level leader for monthly meetings to foster leadership development, career planning, and cross-functional relationships, the 2023 cohort grew to include more than 50 mentee/mentor pairs.

As the program continued to evolve in 2023, the Learning & Development team, together with the Women in Leadership Council developed the Women's Leadership Mentoring Track as an option for program participants. The new track focused on topics such as career planning, strategic thinking, organizational savvy, work-life balance, and networking.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

In support of our philosophy that everyone at Central is a leader, regardless of their position or level, we continued to expand learning and training opportunities for all employees. In 2023, we launched "Basecamp", a 2.5 day in-person course designed to strengthen supervisory skills for first-line supervisors and those new to managing others. In its first year, more than 150 supervisors successfully completed the course.

In 2023, we also developed the "SuperVision" Webinar Series to equip people managers with knowledge and skills to be more effective in their job. Each monthly session covers a different leadership topic and gives attendees actionable steps to apply in their work. The sessions covered topics such as upskilling and reskilling, performance feedback, collaborative leadership and team development.

"At Central, everyone has the potential to be a leader. This philosophy guides our programs as we continue to expand development opportunities for our employees. Our learning culture is taking root, and it's exciting to see this momentum as employees take ownership of their growth, build relationships across the company, and contribute to our business results."

— Julie LeBlanc Director, Learning & Development, Corporate Human Resources

SUPPORTING EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT – EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Central encourages professional development through outside study by offering financial assistance with education related expenses. The purpose of our Employee Assistance Program is to support our employees in the development of skills and knowledge necessary to make a continuing contribution to Central in current and future roles while improving organizational effectiveness and productivity.



Ryan Wallace

Finance Manager, Grass Seed
and Branded Controls

During his time at Central, Ryan has been responsible for assisting the business unit's Finance Director with forecasting and operational planning. In addition, he provides comprehensive financial support and analytics to senior leaders of the Grass Seed and Branded Controls business units.

To build on the foundational knowledge from his undergraduate degrees and professional experience at Koch/Georgia-Pacific and Central, Ryan felt it important to round out his education with a master's degree leveraging Central's Education Assistance Program.

"The Employee Assistance Program was a significant factor in my pursuit of the MBA," said Ryan. "During the program, my supervisor and I regularly talked about topics I was learning and the work I was doing as part of the curriculum. More importantly, I was promoted to my current position, Finance Manager".

As he continues to pursue his career goals, leaders have given Ryan a lot of opportunities to work on areas of interest and further development, such as presenting to large groups, storytelling through analytics, financial modeling, and project planning for the annual operational plan. Ryan recently graduated with his MBA and enjoys taking on new projects. "The program provided me with a better perspective of today's professional environment and the keys to driving change for the future."

"The Employee Assistance Program was a significant factor in my pursuit of the MBA."



Byron Whitney

eCommerce Operations Manager,
Central Home Brands

Byron's career path can be broken up into the time before Dallas Manufacturing Company ("DMC") and after. Before he started at DMC in August 2013, he worked in various entry level roles in the Food and Beverage industry. As he gained knowledge and experience, he moved into roles with progressively more responsibility. After answering an ad in his local newspaper, he started as night shift supervisor in shipping at DMC.

When Central acquired DMC in December 2015, his career progressed, as he was promoted to second shift production supervisor, second shift manager, Project Engineer and then Maintenance Manager. When DMC's manufacturing was moved into the Arden outdoor cushion facilities, he transitioned into his current position of Ecommerce Operations Manager at Arden.

Byron reflected, "I have always had the unquenchable desire to be my best self and grow through books, podcasts, and seminars. Moving into roles with more responsibility, enrolling in college was a natural next step. I worked very closely with a very supportive plant leadership team to align my course selections with changing roles and responsibilities. Even as plant leadership changed, I always received unanimous support to continue with my educational pursuits."

"The variety of classes required for my degree program has broadened my view of my potential at Central. Learning more about the various roles in our business through educational series like "Level Up" has helped me understand that many of the skills I learned in the classroom are transferable to different business settings. During this final leg of my current educational journey, I have been focusing on skills that will help me in my current role. Sharpening my Spanish language skills this semester will pay instant dividends with my team in Sanford."

"I worked very closely with a very supportive plant leadership team to align my course selections to with changing roles and responsibilities."



Bailey Anderson

Sr. Manager, Process Engineering,
Central Life Sciences

Bailey began her career as an engineering intern with Central Life Sciences while pursuing her Biochemical Engineering degree at the University of Georgia. After graduating, she joined Central full-time as a Process Engineer and has been promoted to Sr. Engineering Manager, managing a team of seven Chemical and Mechanical Engineers.

A mentee in the 2023 cohort of the Central Mentoring Program, Bailey reflects “The program has greatly enhanced my leadership skills by offering valuable insights and guidance, while also exposing me to other facets of the business. It has also improved my connectivity with stakeholders across Central, enabling me to make more informed decisions in my work.”

Following her experience in the Central Mentoring Program, Bailey is pursuing an advanced degree with the support of the Education Assistance Program.

“I chose to pursue my Executive MBA as it aligns perfectly with my long-term goals. The timing was right being that it’s just me and my husband (and of course my dogs and horses) but no kids yet, so I could be fully committed to an MBA Program! The advice I received through Central’s Mentorship and Buddy programs encouraged me to aim for a world-renowned program like Northwestern. Without this advice, I probably wouldn’t have applied! I have received nothing short of strong enthusiasm and support from Central’s leadership team in aligning my educational and career goals and will always be thankful for mentorship programs such as these!”

“The program has greatly enhanced my leadership skills by offering valuable insights and guidance, while also exposing me to other facets of the business.”

05

GOVERNANCE

At Central, we believe effective corporate governance fosters an environment of business integrity and accountability, both of which are key to driving long-term growth and maintaining the trust and confidence of our shareholders.

Corporate Governance Practices

Our corporate governance practices are designed to provide a strong framework for the Board of Directors to fulfill its duties of care and loyalty to the shareholders and the company. As part of these duties, the Board exercises its business judgment in overseeing strategy, business performance, the integrity of the financial statements, risk management, compensation policies, succession planning and compliance with legal and regulatory requirements. The Board oversees corporate governance practices to help ensure that Central operates with integrity as it continues to grow and create shareholder value.

Our current corporate governance practices include:

- Annual election of all directors
- Having a majority of independent directors
- Separating the role of Chairman and CEO
- Having a Lead Independent Director
- Regular executive sessions of the independent directors without management directors or management present
- Independence of all members of the Audit and Compensation Committees of the Board
- Commitment to bringing fresh perspectives and expertise to the Board

Our Board

Central has three standing committees: Audit, Compensation and Investment; and two informal committees: Executive and Talent, Capabilities & Succession. Each committee functions pursuant to a written charter adopted by our Board. The entire Board fulfills the function of the Nominating Committee.

Information about our Board is available on our website www.central.com.

Ethics & Compliance

Central has earned a reputation as an industry leader with outstanding service, quality products and strong corporate values. We have a commitment to excellence in what we do and how we treat people. In this competitive market, our reputation is one of our most valuable assets. The ability to maintain this reputation is a direct result of our employees and the choices they make every day. To sustain this reputation, every Central employee must live our six values:

We do the right thing

We win together

We strive to be the best

We grow every day

We are entrepreneurial

We are passionate

Creating trusting relationships internally and externally is critical in building and maintaining our business. Actions must reflect uncompromising integrity, ethical decision-making and professional behavior to sustain the relationships we have worked so hard to develop. Anything less takes away our competitive edge and contradicts our core values.

Central's first value is "We Do the Right Thing." Ethical behavior by all employees is critical to our long-term success. This is foundational to the way we conduct ourselves in all our business transactions and how we have built our reputation in the industry, with our customers and with our employees.



Our Code of Ethics applies to all of our directors, officers and employees and is available at Central's website. Titled "The Way We Do Business," the Code of Ethics is a statement of our values and expectations of appropriate behavior for all employees, officers and directors. Beyond clarifying gray areas and providing guidance on both simple and complex ethical dilemmas, it is intended to help:

- Build trust internally and externally
- Increase awareness and dialogue regarding key ethical issues
- Guide decision-making
- Provide employees resources to report concerns and seek guidance
- Encourage employees to speak up if they experience or witness suspected misconduct

Adherence to Central's Code of Ethics is a condition of employment. Employees must familiarize themselves with the Code of Ethics and periodically acknowledge in writing that they have reviewed and will comply with it and report any suspected unethical or illegal conduct of which they become aware.

Central has a 24/7 toll-free Alert Line and email for anyone to file an anonymous report of suspected unethical or illegal conduct. All reports are reviewed and investigated as appropriate. Every effort is made to maintain the confidentiality of such investigations, and the anonymity of the reporting person, if requested. If the allegation of unethical or illegal behavior is substantiated, appropriate disciplinary action and/or corrective action will be taken. Central strictly prohibits retaliation against any person reporting a concern in good faith or cooperating with an investigation.



Risk Management

Central has a formal process to identify, assess, report, manage and mitigate significant risks to the company. This process includes an assessment of the likelihood that identified risks will occur, and the potential impact to the organization should identified risks materialize. For the most significant risks, we determine whether the risk can be mitigated, or if it may only be monitored. For risks that may be mitigated, we develop mitigation plans with specific business owners and action plans.

The Audit Committee of our Board of Directors annually reviews and discusses the comprehensive enterprise risk management analysis prepared by management. Management also provides an interim update to the Audit Committee once during the year or more frequently should a new, potentially material risk emerge.

Data Protection & Cybersecurity

We are committed to the privacy and security of our own information and that of our employees, suppliers, customers and consumers. Central complies with all applicable data protection laws. We continuously monitor our information technology systems for security risks. Our Chief Information Officer is responsible for management of cybersecurity and ensuring that the enterprise security program achieves the appropriate risk-based security posture. The Audit Committee of our Board of Directors oversees cybersecurity risk and receives periodic updates during the year about how management is mitigating cybersecurity risk throughout the enterprise. We conduct regular security awareness training, which includes assessing employees and support contractors. Focused training is also provided on an as-needed basis to address specific risks and threats.

Supply Chain

Central's success is highly dependent upon the efforts and contributions of our suppliers who help us deliver value to our customers by providing the highest quality products, delivered on time and at the best value.

Our suppliers are our partners in this commitment, with proven capabilities and adherence to quality, cost and schedule commitments. We strongly believe that critical processes and product characteristics must be controlled statistically to produce repeatable products that consistently meet or exceed requirements at reduced cost.

We are committed to conducting business in an ethical manner and expect our suppliers to have the same level of commitment and act with integrity in all facets of our business and supply chain management.

Central holds itself to the highest ethical standards and takes pride in a reputation of trust, integrity and accountability among key stakeholders, including employees, suppliers, agents, customers and shareholders. Our Code of Ethics, "The Way We Do Business," outlines and reinforces our commitment to ethical behavior at every level and we strive to develop partnerships with suppliers that share our values.

Our Policies

We have formal written policies that address conflicts of interest, gifts and entertainment, health and safety, insider trading, data privacy, discrimination and other areas of risk. We periodically train our employees on these and other governance topics, including cybersecurity.

Political Disclosures

As outlined in our Code of Ethics, "The Way We Do Business," Central does not make political contributions.

06

REPORTING

Management Approach

DEFINING REPORT CONTENT

To prioritize the issues of most importance to our stakeholders, we worked with our external sustainability partner Green Diamond to assess disclosure topics.

Our assessment focused on identifying, prioritizing and validating topics from sources such as our leadership team, working groups, at large staff, investors, customers and other external stakeholders; recognized industry organizations such as the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), United Nations (UN), Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB) and Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosure (TCFD); and findings from market research and peer benchmarking studies.

In determining the structure and content of this report, we focused on weighing the materiality, practicality and risk of disclosures. Finally, for each topic, we determined the boundary of applicability. For instance, our manufacturing, warehouse and distribution sites, which tend to have more physical area, more personnel and more intensive processes, reflect the material portion of our energy and water consumption. Our fiscal 2023 energy consumption includes our live plant production sites. They were not included in fiscal 2022.



MATERIAL ASPECTS & BOUNDARIES

Though not necessarily all-inclusive, following is a list of select topics, Central identified in the process of defining its report content, organized to align with the Global Reporting Initiative and other standards:

Corporate

Ethics and Integrity, Governance Structure, Brands, Products and Services, Markets Served, Facilities, Countries of Operation, Workforce, Collective Bargaining, Supply Chain, Stakeholder Engagement, Data Protection

Economic

Economic Performance, Revenue from Sustainable Products

Environmental

Energy & Greenhouse Gases, Water, Waste, Biodiversity

Social

Diversity & Equal Opportunity, Local Communities, Occupational Health and Safety, Training and Education, Employment

This report provides a summary of the sustainability performance and practices of Central and its consolidated operating businesses as of September 30, 2023.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

This report now includes energy consumption and related greenhouse gas emissions as part of our live plant production sites. This report does not contain a restatement of the energy consumption in prior periods.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Our business is centered on continuous improvement; we believe it drives sustainability. We tie this to people, planet and profit:

People

A culture of continuous improvement that incorporates, expects and empowers people to define and pursue achieving measurable improvement goals in their career plans, performance reviews, recognition, and rewards.

Planet

An increasing focus on sustainability, one that continues to integrate both social and environmental aspects into the operations of the business.

Profit

An obsession with continuous improvement across the rest of the value chain to create quality products that help pets live healthier, gardens bloom bigger, and communities grow stronger.

Stakeholder Engagement

Our stakeholder groups, as of September 30, 2023, include the following:

- **Employees:** Central and its business units had approximately 6,700 employees primarily across North America.
- **Customers:** Our customers include major and independent brick & mortar and online retailers. We are one of the largest pet supplies vendors to Costco, Walmart and Petco, among the largest lawn and garden consumables vendors to Home Depot, Walmart and Lowe's, in the food, drug and mass merchandise channels, and a leading supplier to independent pet retailers in the United States.
- **Consumers:** The ultimate consumers of our goods include pet owners and indoor and outdoor gardeners.
- **Communities:** Central's principal North American facilities consist of over 40 manufacturing and 50 sales and distribution facilities.
- **Suppliers:** Central buys raw materials, component parts and finished products from a wide range of suppliers primarily in North America, and to a smaller extent from suppliers in China and Mexico.



Reporting Profile

REPORTING FRAMEWORK

We believe in the purpose and imperative of reporting on sustainability. As an industry leader, we are committed to sharing our progress in a transparent manner in order to continue to move the business forward.

REPORTING PERIOD

Unless otherwise specifically noted, this report focuses on corporate governance, reporting approach, and economic, social and environmental performance during the fiscal years 2022 and 2023 (September 26, 2021-September 30, 2023).

DATE OF PREVIOUS REPORT

The inaugural report was published September 22, 2022.

REPORTING CYCLE

We plan to publish reports on a biennial basis but expect to provide interim updates and news.

REPORT CONTACT

Central welcomes feedback. If you would like to comment on the report, please email us at impact@central.com. Additional information about Central, including our business segments, our brands and our 2023 Annual Report on Form 10-K, is available at www.central.com.

CONCEPT AND REALIZATION

Central Garden & Pet with the support of Green Diamond.

PRINTING

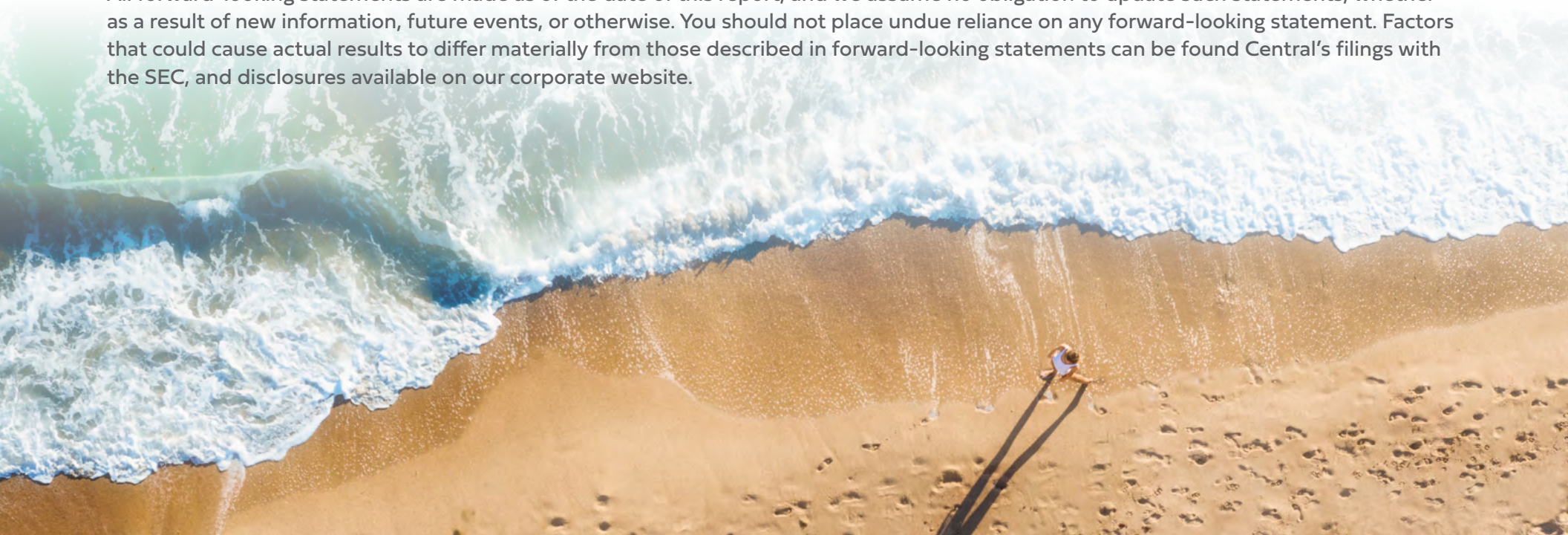
We have decided to publish this report solely as an electronic document.

Forward-Looking Statements

The statements included in this report share our views on our corporate sustainability initiatives with our key stakeholders, and to further enhance our collective understanding of corporate sustainability issues.

Certain matters discussed in this report are “forward-looking statements” within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended. These forward-looking statements are based on information currently available to us and on management’s beliefs, assumptions, estimates, or projections and are not guarantees of future events or results. Because such forward-looking statements involve risks and uncertainties, changes in circumstances and assumptions that are difficult to predict and are often beyond our control, our actual results may differ materially from the predictions in these forward-looking statements.

All forward-looking statements are made as of the date of this report, and we assume no obligation to update such statements, whether as a result of new information, future events, or otherwise. You should not place undue reliance on any forward-looking statement. Factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from those described in forward-looking statements can be found Central’s filings with the SEC, and disclosures available on our corporate website.





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