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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

# **University of Akron, Clemson University Football Fans Champions of 2017 GameDay Recycling Challenge**

*Nationally, College Football Fans Recycle, Compost Nearly  
2 Million Pounds of Waste during 2017 Season*

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (Jan. 3, 2018)** – While Clemson University came within a victory of making it to the College Football Playoff National Championship, it can claim, along with the University of Akron, the co-championship of the 2017 GameDay Recycling Challenge (GDRC), the national collegiate football recycling competition. The GameDay Recycling Challenge is produced through a partnership of the [College and University Recycling Coalition \(CURC\)](#), [Keep America Beautiful](#), [RecycleMania, Inc.](#), and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Clemson University was the national champion in the Total Recycling category, with 98,521 pounds of material recycled, composted or donated. The University of Akron was the national champion in the Diversion category (recycling, plus organics composting and recovery as a percent of total trash) with a 93.57 percent diversion rate. Clemson previously won the Total Recycling category in 2014, and came in second place in 2015 and 2016. The University of Akron wins the Diversion category for the first time after previously finishing in the top five, nationally, every year since 2013.

“Clemson set the bar high with last year’s GameDay Recycling Challenge, so beating our 2016 recycling numbers was both challenging and exciting.” said Clemson University Recycling Manager, Dave VanDeventer. “Participating in the competition is a way to push ourselves, and we are proud of how we improved upon last year’s system; we were able to decrease our labor hours and still increase our recycling rate. We would not have been able to achieve our GameDay recycling goals without the hard work of the recycling team and the support of the Clemson community.”

The GDRC pitted 70 colleges and universities in a fun and friendly competition designed to engage college football fans to see who could recycle the most and reduce the most waste. The competition reached 8.7 million fans at 181 games, based on reported stadium attendance numbers. Participating schools recycled or composted 2.06 million pounds of game-day waste during the fall season, which broke down to recycling over 1.5 million pounds of bottles, cans, paper, cardboard and other materials. In addition, more than 540,000 pounds of organic materials were composted or recovered,

including pre- and post-consumer food waste and compostable serviceware. These collective efforts prevented the emission of 2,410 MTCO<sub>2</sub>E (metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent) of greenhouse gases, equivalent to removing over 500 cars from the road for a year.

“GameDay Recycling Challenge is something my staff looks forward to participating in every year,” said Andrew Henry, University of Akron’s Manager Recycling, Grounds, Special Services, Parking and Athletic Maintenance. “We are using lessons learned during the challenge, such as the strategy used to increase composting during game-day events, and using them in other campus waste diversion initiatives.”

The GDRC ranks participating schools based on the quantity of recyclables, food organics and other materials diverted from the landfill at college football stadiums and tailgating areas. During the competition, schools tracked weights for individual games, with the totals used to rank schools nationally and by athletic conference.

The complete list of national and conference winners is available on the [GDRC website](#).

“Congratulations to the Clemson Tigers, Akron Zips and all the schools that participated in this year’s competition,” said Brenda Pulley, Senior Vice President of Recycling, Keep America Beautiful. “Beyond the waste recovered on game days, the full impact of these efforts comes from the fans who were encouraged to continue reducing, recycling and composting waste throughout the year.”

### **About the College & University Recycling Coalition**

The College and University Recycling Coalition (CURC) is a membership-based nonprofit organization whose mission is to advance recycling and sustainable materials management at colleges and universities. CURC represents a vibrant community of recycling professionals in higher education on over 1,000 college campuses across the United States. CURC members connect with each other through an active email listserv and at gatherings in conjunction with state and national conferences. CURC provides support to collegiate recycling programs through technical assistance, education, and training, including a webinar series, annual workshops, and the development of best-practices manuals and toolkits. For more information, visit [curc3r.org](http://curc3r.org).

### **About Keep America Beautiful**

Keep America Beautiful, the nation’s iconic community improvement nonprofit organization, inspires and educates people to take action every day to improve and beautify their community environment. Established in 1953, we strive to End Littering, Improve Recycling and Beautify America’s Communities. We believe everyone has a right to live in a community that is clean, green and beautiful, and shares a responsibility to contribute to that vision.

Behavior change – steeped in education, research and behavioral science – is the cornerstone of Keep America Beautiful. We empower generations of community and environmental stewards with volunteer programs, hands-on experiences, educational curricula, practical advice and other resources. The organization is driven by the work and passion of more than 600 Keep America Beautiful affiliates, millions of volunteers, and the collaborative support of corporate partners, social and civic service organizations, academia, municipalities, elected officials, and individuals. Join us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#). Donate and take action at [kab.org](http://kab.org).

**About RecycleMania**

RecycleMania launched in 2001 as a friendly challenge between Ohio University and Miami University to increase recycling on their campuses. The contest has expanded from two schools in 2001 to over 325 colleges and universities in 2017 spanning 46 states, the District of Columbia, and Canada. Over an eight-week period, campuses compete to see which institution can recycle the most and waste the least. The RecycleMania program is governed by a non-profit 501c (3) organization called RecycleMania, Inc. made up of a board of directors who are recycling and sustainability managers from a variety of participating universities. For complete competition details, visit [RecycleMania.org](http://RecycleMania.org).

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