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NARA Celebrates National Rendering Day with Event at Birmingham Barons Game

BIRMINGHAM, AL, April 23, 2026 – The North American Renderers Association (NARA) celebrated National Rendering Day on April 21 with a community-focused event at the Birmingham Barons baseball game at Regions Field, highlighting the rendering industry’s commitment to sustainability and community engagement.

Held just ahead of Earth Day, National Rendering Day recognizes the essential role rendering plays in reducing food waste and supporting a circular economy. Rendering is a safe, essential recycling process that transforms unused animal byproducts and used cooking oil into valuable materials used in products such as animal feed, renewable fuels, fertilizers, and everyday goods.

Approximately 50% of an animal is not consumed by humans in North America, and rendering ensures those materials are put to beneficial use rather than ending up in landfills. By reclaiming materials that would otherwise go to waste, the rendering industry plays a critical role in reducing environmental impact, lowering greenhouse gas emissions, and maximizing the use of valuable resources. The Birmingham event brought together NARA members, local partners, and the community for an evening of education, engagement, and fun at the ballpark, while also recognizing the people behind the industry—those who work every day to support sustainability, strengthen communities, and ensure that nothing goes to waste.

The event was sponsored by BHT ReSources, a Birmingham-based rendering company with more than a century of history serving the Southeastern United States. Originally founded in 1900 as Birmingham Hide & Tallow Company, BHT has long been a leader in recycling and repurposing materials, embodying the principles of sustainability that define the rendering industry today. Adding to the significance of the event, Penny the Dog, the iconic sign at Regions Field, is an original Birmingham Hide & Tallow sign—making BHT ReSources’ sponsorship of the game especially meaningful.

Fans attending the game participated in a trivia contest, with the winner taking home a grill. Additional giveaways were available, and a concourse booth staffed by NARA and BHT team members offered interactive activities, educational information, and family-friendly fun. NARA’s Chairman, Michael Koewler, threw out the game’s ceremonial first pitch, and prior to the national anthem, the Birmingham Barons honored BHT ReSources’ President and CEO, Owen Vickers, who passed away on April 5, 2026, with a tribute followed by a moment of silence.

“Rendering is the original form of recycling and plays a critical role in today’s conversations around waste reduction and sustainability. Every day, our industry ensures that valuable resources are not wasted, but instead repurposed into new, useful products that support a more sustainable future. We were honored to have our longtime member, BHT ReSources, sponsor this event and help us celebrate the people behind this essential work. Events like this allow us to show appreciation for those in the rendering industry while also educating the broader community about the importance of rendering. We also extend our sincere thanks to the Birmingham Barons for hosting this exciting event and supporting local renderers,” said Kent Swisher, NARA’s President & CEO.

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About the North American Renderers Association

The North American Renderers Association (NARA) represents the interests of the North American rendering industry to regulatory and other governmental agencies, promotes the greater use and beneficial reuse of animal byproducts and UCO, and fosters the opening and expansion of trade between foreign buyers and North American exporters. In addition to its U.S.-based headquarters, the association maintains offices in strategic locations around the world. NARA publishes the bi-monthly trade magazine *Render* and provides research, policy development, and educational resources on rendering and recycling operations. For more information, visit www.nara.org