

Adding 140 jobs in Sioux Center

Patrick Cudahy, Inc. has announced a \$13.5 million expansion of its Golden Crisp Premium Foods facility in Sioux Center that will double processing capacity and add 140 new jobs when completed next January.

The Golden Crisp plant currently employs 210 workers producing fully-cooked microwave bacon. Bill Otis, Cudahy president and chief operating officer, said, "Fully-cooked bacon is one of the fastest-growing products in our industry."

Cudahy's acquisition of the Sioux Center plant was assisted by the Iowa Department of Economic Development (IDED) in 2003.

"Smithfield Foods is very proud of Patrick Cudahy's aggressive efforts to expand its operations to meet customer needs, and to create new jobs for the Sioux Center area in the process," said C. Larry Pope, president and chief operating officer of Smithfield Foods, the parent company of Cudahy. "We also salute the hard work and dedication of Golden Crisp's employees, who made this investment in the community possible," Pope said.



Golden Crisp, the Cudahy operation in Sioux Center, celebrates expansion two years after IDED assisted the acquisition of the plant.

IDED sparks \$81 million Denison expansion

After qualifying for tax benefits from Iowa's Enterprise Zone program, Farmland Foods announced an \$81 million expansion of its pork processing facility in Denison. When construction is completed late next summer, 219

new jobs paying nearly \$14 per hour will be added to the 1,500 member workforce producing fresh pork, hams and bacon.

Construction is underway on a 165,000 square foot addition to the state-of-the-art Denison facility, which will allow for additional processing capacity for smoked sausage, ham slicing and hot dogs. The expansion also will provide space for the processing of an additional 1,150 hogs per day, raising the plant capacity from the current 9,200 hogs per day to 10,350 per day.

"Demand for Farmland products has steadily increased. Our customers appreciate the difference in quality – this has a lot to do with the people we have in Denison," said George Richter, president and chief operating officer of Farmland Foods.

"This expansion will contribute to the economic stability of Denison, and we're very pleased about that," Richter said. "We're proud of the workforce here and Farmland



Architect's sketch of the new 165,000 square foot addition to Farmland Foods in Denison, which is located in an Iowa Enterprise Zone.

looks forward to being a part of the Denison community for a long time to come."

"Smithfield Foods is proud of its presence in Iowa and its contributions to the state's economy," said C. Larry Pope, president and chief operating officer of Smithfield Foods. Smithfield is Farmland's parent company.

"We have 3,884 employees in the state with a payroll last year of \$116 million. With our acquisition of Farmland Foods and strong internal growth, in just the last three years we have added 1,787 employees and \$54 million to our Iowa payroll," he said.

"Farmland Foods is our largest employer and a valued member of our business community. We are very excited about the prospect of another 219 jobs in Denison," said Mayor Ken Livingston. "Farmland has made major contributions to a better quality of life in our community and this announcement is great news for our economic development efforts

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IDED finances training for advanced manufacturing

In the massive 750,000 square foot Guardian Industries (Guardian) float glass manufacturing facility in De Witt, clear float glass, safety tempered glass and mirrors are produced for construction and commercial customers throughout the upper Midwest.

In the highly automated facility, silica sand and other raw materials are transformed to glass following an 18-hour manufacturing process. The materials are mixed and introduced into a furnace where they are melted at 1500° C.

The molten glass then flows into a bath of molten tin in a continuous ribbon. The glass and tin do not mix and the contact surface between the two materials is perfectly flat.

After leaving the molten tin float, the glass is slowly cooled at controlled temperatures until it reaches room temperature.

Now in its 10th year of operation, the 285-employee facility operates seven days a week, 24 hours a day to produce more than 600 metric tons of glass each day. And, according to Bill Jacobyansky, Guardian maintenance manager, getting optimum productivity out of each employee and machine is a must.

“We are one of 24 Guardian facilities and one of 260 float glass facilities in the world,” he says. “If we don’t produce the highest quality product at competitive prices our competition certainly will.”

As global barriers to trade continue to be dismantled, Iowa manufacturers find themselves confronting scores of aggressive new competitors from every corner of the world every day. These global competitive pressures are forcing companies to find ever more efficient ways to produce goods and services, and to extract more productivity from their workforce and manufacturing systems.

Always looking for opportunities to keep his workforce highly trained and productive, Jacobyansky is excited about Guardian’s sponsorship of a “first-of-its-kind” advanced technical program developed at Eastern Iowa Community College (EICC).

The new EICC program will train students and workers in the science of intelligent machines known as Mechatronics. Mechatronics is a word first coined in Japan some 30 years ago.

“Mechatronics has come to denote a synergistic blend of mechanical engineering, electronic control and systems thinking in the design of products and manufacturing processes,” says Mark Shroeder, EICC director of business and industry.

“Our mechatronics program will allow us to better meet the training needs of employers and their workers in our area.”

Ron Serpliss, dean of EICC agrees. “This advanced technology program is a response to the growing demand by manufacturers in our area for technicians with interdisciplinary fundamentals and skills in mechanical systems, electrical systems and computer systems.”

EICC received an Accelerated Career Education grant of \$366,000 from the Iowa Department of Economic Development to develop and fund the program.

Day and evening classes will include self-paced courses, along with hands-on and one-on-one work with instructors. Students and workers will be able to study and receive training in mechanical drives, fluid power, electrical motor control and robotics.

“The college is adding a whole new dimension of training that’s geared to work around people’s work schedules,” says Jacobyansky. “We will certainly encourage employees to increase their skill sets with the mechatronics technology program, as well as look at graduates of the program to come work for us.”

Mechatronics is the synergy among mechanical, electrical and software engineering to bring about optimum performance of machines and processes. At EICC, synergy is the result of a public-private partnership that delivers vital workforce training, while advancing the ability of Iowa companies to compete in the global economy.

Rubbermaid expands Centerville plant

Rubbermaid is moving machinery and equipment to Iowa from a closed plant out of state and remodeling the Centerville facility to expand production there. The \$10.2 million project will create 20 jobs at an average wage of \$11.64 per hour. The Iowa Department of Economic Development approved the project for Enterprise Zone tax benefits.



Centerville will begin manufacturing injection molded shelving and storage units in the late fall. The company was also considering other states for the production.

Plant manager Kevin Wiskus, said, “I’m very excited about what this means for Rubbermaid’s future in Centerville. I want to thank all those involved in bringing this additional business to our Centerville Operations. Appanoose Economic Development Corporation, Appanoose Investment Corporation, Alliant Energy and the Iowa Department of Economic Development were very cooperative and generous with their support.”

Rubbermaid molds plastic products for home storage, food storage, laundry, closet organization and refuse removal. The company has manufactured in Centerville since 1985.

California technology firm to begin Iowa operations

Westec InterActive, the pioneer provider of video surveillance systems, will open a monitoring center in West Des Moines by early October 2005 with plans to hire more than 100 people. The Iowa Department of Economic Development has awarded \$500,000 from the Community Economic Betterment Account (CEBA) to locate the new information solutions business. Technicians at the West Des Moines center will monitor video feeds from security cameras located at business locations of Fortune 500 companies throughout the United States. Surveillance technologies help leading restaurants, retailers and other companies improve operations and profits through intelligent business monitoring services. Westec has a customer base of 1,550 locations in the United States. Other Westec offices are located in Florida, Maryland, Texas and California, where the company is headquartered.

New value adding enterprise

With completion of a new \$4 million organic flax processing facility in the northwest Iowa community of Cherokee, the state of Iowa could see its farmers returning to their roots and converting more acres to the production of flax.

“It’s a classic back-to-the-future business scenario,” says Mark Schuett, who oversaw construction of the flaxseed oil plant.

“Flaxseed was a crop grown abundantly in Iowa years ago. Today, a handful of farmers are growing flax again. We hope these numbers will catapult over the next few years.”

Flaxseed oil contains omega-3 fatty acids. The American Heart Association recommends the consumption of these essential fatty acids from fish and plant sources to reduce the risk of heart disease.

The Cherokee production plant is a partnership between the nation’s leading organic dietary supplement manufacturer—Spectrum Organic

Products of Petaluma, California—and BIOwa Nutraceuticals, which is owned by Mark Schuett.

Spectrum believes the plant is the world’s largest facility dedicated to processing organic, plant-based essential fatty acids. “We are currently processing 60 tons of flaxseed each day,” says Schuett. “As we grow the business we have the capacity to double that output.”

“We view this as a perfect marriage of agriculture and manufacturing,” says Neil Blomquist, Spectrum president and CEO.

“We’re Californians partnering with native Iowa farmers and business people. We believe this investment is planting a new sustainable economy for the future.”

The \$4 million plant received a \$250,000 award from the Iowa Department of Economic Development.

“State-of-the-art is an abused term in manufacturing today, but this plant more than lives up to this claim,” says Schuett.

And with the Cherokee opening of Spectrum’s 10,000 square foot flaxseed oil plant, Iowa farmers are turning back a page in the history books to help them achieve a more profitable future.



SPIN-OFF WINS GRANT FOR NOISE-REDUCTION TECHNOLOGY

An Iowa State University spin-off company has won a \$440,000 grant from the National Science Foundation to develop its unique noise-reduction technologies.

Vibroacoustics Solutions, Inc., is developing a smart material that has passive and active noise-reduction capabilities. The material is made from a composite of polymer and natural fibers such as hemp. It can help control noise in products such as home appliances, doors and office furniture as well as agricultural and construction machinery, automobiles and aircraft.

“There is a multi-billion dollar market for the products to which our technology can be applied,” said Atul Kelkar, a company co-founder, the company’s chief technology officer and a professor of mechanical engineering at Iowa State.

The company will use the two-year award to develop a prototype and pursue collaborations with Iowa companies such as Maytag, HNI Corporation and Deere & Company.

“Our technology will help these Iowa companies develop innovative products with reduced noise and vibration,” Kelkar said. He also said commercialization of the technology could provide a natural fiber market for agricultural crops grown in Iowa.

The company was founded in late 2003 by Kelkar and Ken Budke, a dentist from Cedar Falls, Iowa. The company has also received assistance from Pappajohn entrepreneur centers at Iowa State and the University of Northern Iowa. And, it has recently moved from office space at the Iowa State University Research Park to an office in Ames.

CALENDAR

- Oct. 4 Bridges to Excellence Conference
Scheman Bldg, Iowa State University
- Oct. 12 – 14 World Food Prize International Symposium
Des Moines
- Nov. 10 Venture Network of Iowa forum
Statewide ICN Locations

IOWA
life | changing™

Iowa Department of
Economic Development
200 East Grand
Des Moines, IA 50309

PRSR STD
POSTAGE
PAID
Des Moines, IA
Permit No. 1195

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New patent for Ames technology company

BioForce Nanosciences--which has received financial assistance from the Iowa Department of Economic Development--has been issued a key patent by the U.S. Patent Office on breakthrough virus detection technology.

U.S. Patent # 6,897,015 covers the company’s novel ViriChip™ system that detects, captures and characterizes disease causing and other viruses.

“ViriChip represents a breakthrough in the rapid, sensitive and non-destructive detection of viruses,” noted Dr. Saju Nettikadan, Bioforce director of research.. “This technology will have applications in clinical diagnostics, public health and biodefense applications, where the ability to detect new or unknown viruses is critically important.”

BioForce will be discussing licensing or co-development of the technology platform with commercial partners.



IDED sparks \$81M Denison expansion

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and the economic health of our community as a whole.”

Farmland Foods, founded in 1959, is a subsidiary of Smithfield Foods, Inc., of Smithfield, Virginia. Farmland is headquartered in Kansas City, Missouri, and has about 6,300 employees at its operations in Denison and Carroll, Iowa, as well as in Nebraska, Illinois, Kansas, Ohio, Utah and Massachusetts.

Farmland processes fresh and frozen pork products for national retail and foodservice markets, with a strong concentration in the Midwest. Farmland serves an international commodity, foodservice and retail market in Asia, Central America and Eastern Europe.