



NEWS RELEASE

ST. JOSEPH Chamber of Commerce

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Aug. 19, 2014

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ANIMAL HEALTH & NUTRITION COMPANY TO ADD NEW JOBS, CONSTRUCT NEW FACILITY IN ST. JOSEPH

(St. Joseph, MO) -- A historical part of St. Joseph's economic past will very soon be seeing new life.

The St. Joseph Chamber of Commerce is pleased to announce that one of the city's animal health and nutrition companies, a supplier of meat ingredients for the pet food industry, is expanding. Protein LLC will construct a new facility on a more than 9.5 acre tract of land at the corner of Stockyards Expressway and Illinois Avenue in the Stockyards Industrial Park area. The total capital investment is anticipated to be \$11.6 million. The company will add about 20 new full-time employees.

"The creation of new jobs and the construction of a new facility in the Stockyards Industrial Park is a signal that the animal health and nutrition business is still a vibrant part of St. Joseph's economy," said R. Patt Lilly, President and CEO of the St. Joseph Chamber of Commerce. "We are very happy to see new construction in the Stockyards area." The St. Joseph Regional Port Authority and Buchanan County provided the site to the company as an economic development incentive. Buchanan County performed an extensive amount of concrete removal that remained on the site from its former Stockyard use.

"The land has come full circle, from being used as a site to sell livestock, to now housing a company that provides materials to the animal nutrition industry," Mr. Lilly said.

The City of St. Joseph is expected to participate in the Enhanced Enterprise Zone program through a special incentive package of tax abatement. This was instrumental in moving the project forward due to unexpected and costly site issues associated with the former use of the land. Formal approval of the incentive package is expected in the latter part of September.

"The project not only plays into the realm of economic development from an investment and job creation standpoint, it also serves as a major redevelopment project that will significantly improve the appearance of the area," said Brad Lau, Vice President of Economic Development for the Chamber.

The State of Missouri's Enhanced Enterprise Zone Program was a key incentive utilized in the project, Mr. Lau said. Protein LLC is a subsidiary of BHJ USA Inc., which is an Omaha, Neb.-headquartered company that supplies value-added fresh or frozen raw materials to the pet food, pharmaceutical and fur industries in North America and Europe. In St. Joseph, the company is a significant supplier of raw product to the pet food industry.

"We are excited about finally breaking ground for our new plant in St. Joseph, which is designed to fit our future needs and allow us to better service our customers in the Midwest region, said Thomas Bendix Christensen, President of BHJ USA Inc. and Protein LLC. "We have worked on this project for a long time, and would like to thank the City of St. Joseph, Buchanan County, KCP&L, the Chamber of Commerce and the St. Joseph Regional Port Authority for assistance and good cooperation throughout the process. With this investment we are committed to the community and hope to be able to grow our business in St. Joseph in the future."

Protein LLC currently leases space from Nor-Am Ice and Cold Storage and employs 50. The company expects its contractor to begin site work as early as today, Aug. 19.

Protein LLC is currently located at 2700 Stockyards Expressway. For more information, contact Thomas Bendix Christensen, President of BHJ USA Inc., at (402) 734-8030, ext. 240, or by e-mail at tbendix@bhjusa.com.

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