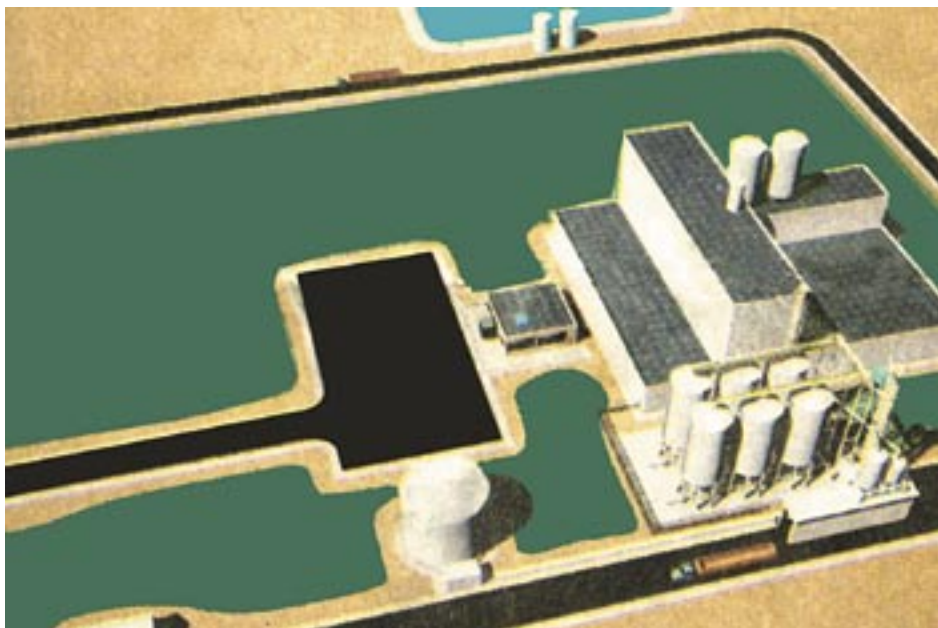


INDIANA Business & Industrial PROPERTIES

Artist's rendering of new corn flour milling plant that Premium Producers Association will locate in the Hwy 41 Industrial Park south of Vincennes, Ind.



Indiana Lt. Gov. Joe Kernan, left, and Gary Gentry, director of Knox County Development Corp., share a laugh prior to a news conference announcing the location of a new flour-milling facility in the US 41 Industrial park south of Vincennes, Ind. Photo by Kevin J. Kilmer.

Corn milling plant to bring 30 jobs to Knox County

Vincennes, Ind., in Knox County will soon be home to a \$5 million corn-milling plant that will provide up to 30 new jobs.

"These kinds of things don't happen by accident," said Lt. Gov. Joe Kernan. "It takes a lot of hard work, and a lot of people to do it. It's extraordinary when you recognize the independence of members of the agriculture community, that they have been able to come together and work toward a common goal."

Kernan serves as commissioner of agriculture and director of the Indiana Department of Commerce. He joined members of the Premium Producers Association and the Knox County

Development Corp. to announce the location of the milling plant.

The white-corn milling facility will use food-grade corn to produce a projected 50 million pounds of tortilla flour per year. The flour will be sold to Atlanta-based La Chiquita Co.

PPA is a member-owned business venture with 152 shareholders, most of whom live either in Knox County, Ind. or Lawrence County, Ill.

Knox County Development Corp. Chairman Gary Gentry said, "This project exemplifies what the state and local community can accomplish by working together. PPA looked at a lot

of sites in and outside of Indiana for this facility, and their decision to locate here underscores the value of a ready industrial park for prospects in the community."

Gentry said that 10 acres in the northeast corner of the U.S. 41 Industrial Park fronting Elkhorn Road have been set aside for the facility, with an option on an additional 10 acres to the west.

PPA Chairman Louis Rusch Jr., a Vincennes farmer, stated that pending approval of the business and marketing plans, ground will be broken for the mill in the spring, with the operations starting in the spring of 2004.

"As a Knox County farmer and

resident, I'm excited about the prospect of a new value-added agribusiness in our own backyard," Rusch said. "This is a tremendous economic development for the area."

To help secure the plant for Knox County, the Department of Commerce offered \$18,000 from the Skills Enhancement Fund to assist training new employees. It also awarded up to \$75,000 in Industrial Development Grant Fund money for infrastructure improvements.

Also, through the federal Industrial Development Incentive Program, PPA was offered a low-interest loan of \$250,000 to secure capital equipment.

Wabash North Industrial Park is almost sold out

The sale of one empty building, and an offer on another in Wabash, Ind., have all but assured there will soon be no empty buildings at the Wabash North Industrial Park.

The Wabash County REMC purchased the original spec building in December, with plans to occupy the building by June.

"REMC's business is growing, and they have been considering a new facility for some time," said Wabash County Economic Development Corp. Executive Director Chris Martin.

"The spec building was large enough

to fill their needs and the location was ideal."

An offer is pending on the other 48,000-square-foot facility, occupied for a short time by Anderson Fittings. Martin said the Anderson sale could bring 30 to 40 new jobs to Wabash County.

The sale of this facility is tied to an incentive package offered by the city of Wabash. The incentives allow WEDCOR, the city of Wabash and the town of North Manchester to help bring manufacturing and distribution facilities to the Wabash County community.

"Our municipalities may provide tax

abatements and low-cost, or even free land, depending on the circumstances," said Martin. "WEDCOR offers a revolving loan program, and a training and incubation grant fund to help both existing and new companies prosper in the community."

WEDCOR officials credit a work ethic born of more than seven generations of manufacturing excellence in helping Wabash County to hold on to manufacturing jobs.

"Wabash County has a much higher percentage of jobs derived from manufacturing than the state of Indiana

and most other communities," Martin said.

"Many manufacturers have been here for 50 years or more. Several more, like OJI Intertech, Martin Yale Industries and G & S Metals have located here in recent years because of the strong labor market and work ethic."

Though there are currently no available buildings in the Wabash North Industrial Park, Martin points out that businesses interested in locating in Wabash County can find ample available sites and buildings in the area—both in Wabash and neighboring North Manchester.