

Governor Walker: Applauds Brakebush Brothers Inc. expansion in Marquette County

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MADISON – Governor Scott Walker today highlighted Brakebush Brothers Inc., a leading processor of poultry products, for expanding its operations in Marquette County to meet the growing demand for its products. The company expects to create more than 200 jobs and invest \$86 million for the expansion of its production facilities in Westfield. The company has already started hiring for the expansion, much of which will be completed by December.

“With over 1,000 employees, Brakebush Brothers has been a major employer in Marquette County for decades, and I thank the company for its decision to expand its operations in Wisconsin,” said Governor Walker. “With our pro-business policies and dedicated workforce, we are seeing more companies opt to expand in our great state. I’m pleased that a company that has been in the region for nearly a century will remain here for years to come.”

“Our company has been able to grow and compete on a national level for many years, and this expansion of our production facility will enable us to provide great-tasting Brakebush products to our customers for years to come,” said Carl Brakebush, company chairman. “The Westfield and surrounding area of Marquette County has been our home since 1925 and the hardworking, dedicated people in this area are the key to our success. We have indeed been blessed and are proud of what has been established here in south-central Wisconsin.”

Brakebush, a family-owned company that produces more than 200 processed chicken products for restaurants, schools, healthcare facilities, colleges and universities and convenience stores nationwide, is adding a new production line at its Westfield facility. The project will accommodate the company's current and future growth in existing and emerging markets.

The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) is supporting the project by authorizing up to \$6.5 million in state income tax credits over the next five years. The actual amount of tax credits Brakebush will receive is contingent upon the number of jobs created, the amount of capital investment and the amount spent on employee training during that period.

Company officials and WEDC representatives announced the expansion Thursday at the Tri-County Regional Economic Development Corporation Summit in Wild Rose.

"The commitment by Brakebush to invest and create jobs is paramount to our present and future economy in the region," said Bill Wheeler, executive director of the Tri-County Regional Economic Development Corporation. "This is a family business that has shown a real commitment to the Tri-County area, and we wish them continued success."

The business was founded in 1925 by brothers Otto and Bill Brakebush, who started with one truck and took livestock and poultry from the Westfield area to major markets in Madison, Milwaukee and Chicago. The company now ships to all 50 states, plus Canada and parts of the Caribbean, and its products have made it to other parts of the world via the U.S. military. The company produced more than 275 million pounds of products in 2016.

Brakebush is based in Westfield, where its facility is more than 500,000 square feet. It also has operations in Irving, Texas, and Wells, Minnesota. It has about 1,900 employees nationwide.

In addition to the 219 jobs expected to be created by Brakebush, an economic modeling study estimates the expansion could indirectly generate 123 additional jobs in the region. Those 342 new jobs could generate up to \$720,000 annually in state income tax revenue.