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Contact: GovPress@wisconsin.gov

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WEDC supports project with up to \$500,000 in tax credits

KENOSHA — Gov. Tony Evers, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) Secretary and CEO Missy Hughes, and Kenosha-area officials today celebrated the groundbreaking of Heartland Produce's new \$29 million headquarters and distribution facility in Kenosha.

Heartland Produce, a third-generation family-owned business, supplies fresh produce to retailers and foodservice distributors. With their new headquarters, the company becomes the first tenant of the Greenway Development, which will eventually feature industrial, commercial, retail, and multi-family housing on the site of the former Dairyland Greyhound Park.

"As our state and economy continue to bounce back from COVID-19, businesses and investments in our state—like Heartland Produce—will be critical to ensuring that continued recovery," said Gov. Evers. "This project at the Greenway Development is a win for the community and the regional economy, and underscores how connecting the dots sets our businesses, families, and communities up for success."

WEDC is supporting Heartland Produce's expansion plans with up to \$500,000 in state income tax credits over the next three years. The actual amount of credits Heartland Produce will receive is contingent upon the number of jobs created and the amount of capital investment during that period.

"This project is so exciting because it will not only create 40 family-supporting jobs but it will act as an anchor for a new business park and neighborhood," Hughes said. "With Interstate 94 running right by the site and the Kenosha Regional Airport nearby, the site is ideal for all kinds of business development."

The project includes construction of a 205,000-square-foot state-of-the-art produce distribution facility with room for future expansion. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the company saw increased demand, and the new facility will give Heartland Produce room to create additional fruit and vegetable ripening rooms to increase production.

"We're excited to be part of this development and would like to thank everyone involved in making this happen," said William Dietz Jr., Heartland Produce president.

The company is expecting to create 40 full-time jobs with average wages above \$28 per hour.

"I'm glad to see a family-owned business like Heartland Produce opening their new headquarters in Kenosha," said Rep. Tip McGuire. "As we saw last year, our food supply chain is critical to the wellness of our state, and Heartland Produce will continue playing this vital role while creating good jobs in our community."

Heartland Produce started in 1989 in Elgin, Illinois, but moved to Kenosha in 1994. The company has more than 160 employees working at its Kenosha location and at grocery stores around the state. Selling to independent grocery stores and national chains, Heartland Produce distributes fruits, vegetables, organics, and locally grown produce through its Organic Indeed and Fresh Indeed brands.

"Heartland has been a long-term Kenosha business and we are excited to see the new use for the former dog track site," said Kenosha Mayor John Antaramian.

The Greenway Development is being planned by the Forest County Potawatomi and Zilber Property Group. Greenway plans call for more than 1.6 million square feet in industrial space, about 432 multi-family apartment residences, and 117,000 square feet of commercial and retail space, with integrated sustainable design features throughout. It replaces the former Dairyland Greyhound Park, which closed in 2009.