Ruiz Foods Facility To Open in Florence County, Create 500 Jobs

South Carolina Department of Commerce

COLUMBIA, S.C. — Ruiz Food Products, Inc., a producer of leading frozen Mexican food and snack products, has selected Florence County for its newest manufacturing facility - its first on the East Coast. The $55 million investment is expected to generate more than 500 new jobs over the next several years.

Ruiz Foods, which is based in Dinuba, Calif., is expanding into the Southeast region through the acquisition of a state-of-the-art facility in Florence. Renovation of the former Heinz facility - located in the Pee Dee Touchstone Energy Commerce City park - is scheduled to begin immediately, and the company plans to begin manufacturing a variety of its nationally distributed El Monterey® and Tornados® products in 2015.

El Monterey®is the flagship frozen Mexican food brand for Ruiz Foods and the number-one-selling brand of frozen Mexican food in the United States. Products include burritos, tamales, breakfast burritos and Mexican snacks. Tornados® is a top-selling snack available at convenience stores.

Governor Nikki Haley will join company officials and local economic development leaders for a formal announcement event at the facility on Tuesday, June 17.

Once the facility is renovated and equipped, initial manufacturing operations are expected to begin in 2015.

Over the next several years as the facility scales up to full production, Ruiz Foods will employ more than 500 team members. Employment opportunities will include positions in plant management, building and manufacturing equipment maintenance, facilities management, cold storage, food preparation and assembly, quality assurance, mechanical and electrical maintenance and repair, stocking and inventory, shipping and receiving, accounting, clerical, administrative, and janitorial. Employment opportunities through the company will be listed online later this year.

Ruiz Foods also operates manufacturing facilities in California and Texas and currently employs about 2,400 team members in the U.S.

The Coordinating Council for Economic Development approved job development credits related to the project.

About Ruiz Food Products, Inc.

Co-founded by father and son, Louis and Fred Ruiz in 1964, Ruiz Foods is a

privately held corporation. "Hispanic Business Magazine" consistently ranks Ruiz Foods among the top 20 Hispanic-owned businesses in the United States; and among the top ten U.S. Hispanic-owned manufacturing firms in the United States.

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