

SUSANA MARTINEZ
GOVERNOR

JON BARELA
CABINET SECRETARY



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Contact: Angela Heisel
(505) 629-5148
Angela.Heisel@state.nm.us

Governor Susana Martinez Announces More than 50 New High-Paying Manufacturing Jobs in Clovis

Clovis, NM - Today, Governor Susana Martinez announced that Southwest Cheese will expand in Clovis, creating more than 50 new high-paying jobs. Southwest Cheese will increase its operational capacity by 30 percent as part of the expansion, and these new jobs will have an average compensation of \$62,000, including benefits.

"For New Mexico to maintain its momentum as a leader in international commerce and trade, we need to continue supporting businesses like Southwest Cheese as they expand to more national and global markets," said Governor Martinez. "Helping more businesses reach more customers around the world helps grow New Mexico's economy by creating more jobs in our communities, particularly in rural areas like Clovis."

Southwest Cheese exports all their products outside of New Mexico, with at least 25 percent destined for international markets. Southwest Cheese will invest \$140 million, and break ground on their expansion in early 2016. Additionally, Southwest Cheese will be increasing its consumption of locally sourced dairy milk. The joint venture between Southwest Cheese's parent company Glanbia and the dairy cooperatives of the Greater Southwest Agency, including Dairy Farmers of America and Select Milk Producers, currently processes over 220 truckloads of milk per day, making it one of the largest single site manufacturers of premium quality cheese and whey protein in the world.

New Mexico will provide \$350,000 for the expansion through the state's closing fund, known as Local Economic Development Act (LEDA) funding. LEDA is a valuable tool for recruiting new businesses to the state and helping those that are already here grow and thrive. During this summer's special legislative session, Governor Martinez fought to grow the closing fund to \$50 million, up from nearly zero when she took office.

"Southwest Cheese is proud to be expanding operations in Clovis as we seek to capture further domestic and international cheese and whey market share," said George Chappell, president of Southwest Cheese. "We are thankful for the support of Governor Martinez, Secretary Barela and local leaders in Clovis."

New Mexico continues to see encouraging signs as a growing leader in international commerce and trade. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, New Mexico leads the nation in export related job growth, and three of its metro areas are ranked in the top five of national leaders in total export growth, with Las Cruces leading the way at No. 1. Additionally, New Mexico just had its 37th consecutive month of year-over-year job growth.

"As New Mexico continues to further its position as an international export leader, we look forward to the increase in products shipped from Southwest Cheese around the world," said Economic Development Secretary Jon Barela. "Value-added food production is a focus of growth for the Martinez Administration and the Southwest Cheese expansion is very much welcomed."

Southwest Cheese employs over 380 employees in the Clovis area and is a world class leader, and the largest single site manufacturer of premium quality block cheese and whey protein powders. The plant will supply some of the world's leading food companies and meet cheese and whey demand both domestically and internationally. This expansion will increase Southwest Cheese employee numbers to more than 400 in Clovis.

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