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## **Governor Susana Martinez Announces Tucumcari Mountain Cheese Factory Investing \$4.5 Million, Creating New Jobs**

**Tucumcari** - Governor Susana Martinez joined local officials in Eastern New Mexico today to announce that Tucumcari Mountain Cheese Factory, Inc. is investing \$4.5 million to expand their facility and add 20 new well-paying jobs, nearly doubling its workforce. Expansion plans include construction of a new 17,000 square-foot facility and the purchase of new equipment.

"Our continuing efforts to diversify our economy are showing results," said Governor Martinez. "I am happy that Tucumcari Mountain Cheese Factory is part of our manufacturing growth, and delighted they will be bringing new jobs to Tucumcari and the surrounding area."

"New Mexico has a quality dairy industry and now a business environment that is friendly to manufacturers," said Charles Krause, Tucumcari Mountain Cheese founder. "I look forward to producing and exporting even more of my product within and outside of New Mexico's borders."

Charles Krause, a fourth generation cheese maker from Wisconsin, founded Tucumcari Cheese in 1995 in the vacant old Coca-Cola plant. Ninety-five percent of its feta cheese is sold under the label Ithaki. In 2008, Tucumcari Mountain's feta received second place in the Biennial World Champion Cheese Competition (second only to a Denmark cheese company), which made it the number one cheese of choice among U.S. customers.

This is the latest in a series of announcements showing the growing jobs friendly climate in New Mexico. California manufacturers Franco Whole Foods, DHF Technical Products, and Southwest Steel coil are expanding and relocating to Las Cruces, Rio Ranco, and Santa Teresa respectively as New Mexico becomes more competitive than California. Even international manufacturers from places like Turkey and Germany are taking notice and setting up shop in New Mexico. And New Mexico family-run manufacturing businesses from Farmington to Los Lunas to Santa Fe are significantly expanding their businesses due to Governor Martinez's tax reforms.

In 2013, Governor Martinez enacted critical tax reforms such as allowing manufactures the option of paying corporate income tax on goods sold only in New Mexico, and reducing New Mexico's corporate income tax by 22 percent, from 7.6 to 5.9 percent over five years, making New Mexico more competitive with other Western states. Governor Martinez also eliminated "tax pyramiding," an unfair practice which often resulted in double and triple taxation of finished projects in the construction sector. In January 2014 Ernst & Young upgraded their rating of New Mexico's taxation of manufacturers from worst in the region to best in the west.

New Mexico Economic Development Department (EDD) Cabinet Secretary Jon Barela, Tucumcari Mayor Pro Tempore Ruth Ann Litchfield, Quay County commissioners, and Tucumcari Mountain Cheese Factory, Inc. founder Charles Krause joined Governor Martinez for the announcement.

"Value-added food production businesses, such as Tucumcari Mountain, provide good jobs for New Mexicans and complement our strong agricultural heritage," said Secretary Barela. "These jobs generally pay more than other industries, bring new dollars into our state and help diversify our private-sector economy."

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