



Commonwealth of Virginia

Office of Governor Bob McDonnell

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Governor McDonnell Announces 205 New Jobs in Pulaski County

~ Red Sun Farms to invest \$30 million in first U.S. greenhouse tomato production operation ~

RICHMOND - Governor Bob McDonnell today announced Red Sun Farms, a producer of high-quality hydroponic vegetables, will invest a total of \$30 million to establish its first U.S. high-technology greenhouse production operation in Pulaski County. The company will erect climate controlled greenhouses on 45 acres of land in the New River Valley Commerce Park to grow quality greenhouse grown vegetables, creating 205 new jobs within five years. Virginia successfully competed against Tennessee for the project.

Speaking about today's announcement, Governor McDonnell said, "This game-changing project has been in the works for a long time, and it is gratifying to see it come to fruition today.

Red Sun Farms uses extremely high-tech equipment to provide a continuous supply of the best organic greenhouse produced vegetables, and after much research determined that Pulaski County is the ideal spot for its first U.S. production center. Virginia offers optimal climatic conditions for greenhouse operations, a central location providing convenient access to east coast markets, and a top-notch workforce ready for this new opportunity. As the first tenant of the New River Valley Commerce Park, Red Sun Farms' significant investment and creation of 205 new jobs is a tremendous win for the Commonwealth and Pulaski County, and represents strategic growth for the New River Valley region."

"We welcome Red Sun Farms' first U.S. greenhouse tomato production operation to Pulaski County and the Commonwealth of Virginia," said Jim Cheng, Virginia Secretary of Commerce and Trade. "The company will not only provide new jobs to the community, it will help diversify the local economy and add value to Virginia-grown products. I am confident Red Sun Farms will find success in the Commonwealth and continue as a leader in the greenhouse vegetable industry of North America."

"Today's announcement by Red Sun Farms is terrific news for Pulaski County and the Commonwealth's overall agricultural reputation," said Todd P. Haymore, Virginia Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry. "Virginia is already one of the nation's top producers of tomatoes, but very few are produced under controlled, greenhouse conditions. Having a major greenhouse production operation like Red Sun elevates further Virginia's standing as a major player in agricultural development and provides potential for greater growth in this arena down the road. Indeed, this project shows that Virginia is ripe for more agricultural production and job creation opportunities."

Headquartered in Michoacán, Mexico, Red Sun Farms (Agrícola El Rosal) was founded in 2001 as part of a family owned agro-industrial group. Agrícola El Rosal S.A. de C.V. is a company dedicated to production of vegetables under greenhouse hydroponic systems using high technology. Red Sun Farms is a key component of the agriculture division, and is an integral part of the group's business growth and development throughout North America.

"We are extremely excited to begin construction on our new greenhouse facility in Dublin, Virginia," said Carlos Visconti, COO of JemD Farms and Thierry Legros, Managing Director of Red Sun Farms. "Being able to provide quality, safe, and now, locally grown greenhouse produce to our retail partners and consumers is a great accomplishment for our team. We thank the Governor and the local authorities for their support and assistance to make this project a reality."

The Virginia Economic Development Partnership worked with Pulaski County, the New River Valley Economic Development Alliance, the NRV Commerce Park Participation Committee of the Virginia's First Regional Industrial Facility Authority, and the Roanoke Regional Partnership to secure the project for Virginia. Governor McDonnell approved a \$350,000 grant from the Governor's Opportunity Fund to assist Pulaski County with the project. The Governor also approved \$100,000 from the Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development Fund, a grant administered by the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and made to businesses that add value to Virginia-grown agricultural and forestal products. The company is eligible to receive state benefits from the Virginia Enterprise Zone Program, administered by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community

Development. Through its Virginia Jobs Investment Program, the Virginia Department of Business Assistance will provide funding and services to support the company's recruitment, training and retraining activities.

“This announcement establishes a unique, high-tech industry in Pulaski County that supplements our existing agricultural businesses,” said Joe Sheffey, Chairman of the Pulaski County Board of Supervisors. “Furthermore, it is the first in what we plan to be several other industries to locate in our regional Commerce Park. We see Red Sun Farms as yet another step in our efforts to diversify our local economy. I want to thank Governor McDonnell, the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, the New River Valley Economic Development Alliance, Virginia's First Regional Industrial Facilities Authority, and county staff for working so diligently to assist Red Sun Farms in making their decision to locate to the New River Valley.”

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