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Sara Lee to add \$130M meat-slicing plant in KCK; create 250 jobs

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Kansas City, Kan. — Nobody does it like Sara Lee.

Thursday night, the company announced plans to completely renovate the old Con Agra plant at 4612 Speaker Road as part of a new state-of-the-art manufacturing plant.

The plant's estimated 250 employees - of which 55 percent could come from Wyandotte County - will produce Sara Lee and Hillshire Farms lunch meats.

"This industry-leading facility will reinforce our competitive advantage in value-added meats, one of Sara Lee's top strategic categories and long-term growth drivers," C.J. Fraleigh, Sara Lee executive vice president and CEO of North American Retail and Foodservice said. "It will help us further build our Hillshire Farm and Sara Lee brands, both leaders in the fast-growing category of premium meat."

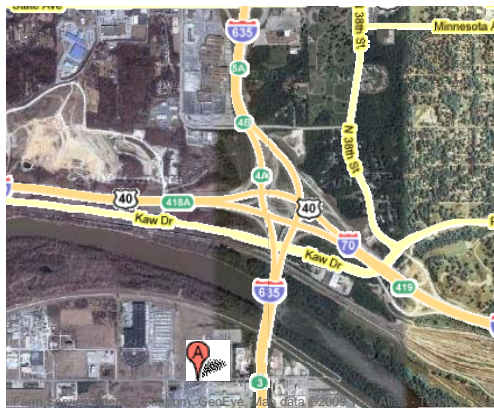
Wyandotte Economic Development Council executive director Brent Miles led the local effort to land the plant - a two-year effort dubbed "Project Compass." The Kansas Department of Commerce, the Kansas City Area Development Council and partners within the development council also contributed to the effort.

"To say this project is significant is an understatement," Miles told the Unified Government's Board of Commissioners during a Thursday night meeting.

Commissioners unanimously approved the issuance of \$46 million in industrial revenue bonds, and a up to 75 percent tax abatement as part of the project.

Sara Lee North America chief supply officer George Chappelle said renovations to the 187,000 square-foot facility will start this September. The company hopes to start hiring key management positions later this year, with the hiring out of the rest of the staff in 2010. He projected a tentative opening date of Jan. 1, 2011.

"Wyandotte County is open for business and we're delighted to welcome Sara Lee and Hillshire Farm to our community," UG Mayor/CEO Joe Reardon said in a prepared statement (the mayor couldn't be in attendance at the meeting). "This is a public/private partnership that creates new jobs for our outstanding workforce at a critical time given our current economy."



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