

Scoular celebrates \$20 million expansion in Jerome

By Sean Ellis

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JEROME – Scoular, a global agribusiness company, on Sept. 5 celebrated a \$20 million expansion of its Jerome feed blending facility, which serves the region’s dairy and livestock industries.

The facility provides feed blends for dairy and beef customers. The expansion project added two new key capabilities.

One includes a “steamflaking” process which processes corn into flakes and makes the feed more digestible for cattle. The corn is steamed, heated and then processed into a flake.

The other new capability is a pellet mill to make feed pellets. According to a company news release, pellets, which are typically used for feeding calves and beef cattle, are easy to transfer, handle and proportion for optimal nutrition.

Idaho ranks No. 3 in milk production in the United States and the bulk of the state’s dairy production occurs in the Magic Valley area of southcentral Idaho, which includes Jerome.

The region also includes a sizable portion of the state’s beef cattle industry.

Scoular is a \$10 billion agribusiness company that buys, sells, stores, handles and processes grain and other feed and food ingredients.

The Jerome expansion came as welcome news to the state’s dairy and livestock industries.

Oakley rancher and Cassia County Farm Bureau President Paul Marchant said the completed expansion stands to be a welcome boon to the livestock feeding sector in the Magic Valley.

“There are few areas in the entire country that can compete with the productivity of southcentral Idaho’s beef and dairy industries,” he said. “The completion of the Scoular facility only enhances the incredible efficiency of this area’s farmers and ranchers.”

Idaho Dairymen’s Association Executive Director Rick Naerebout said the expansion speaks to Scoular’s commitment to the region’s dairy and cattle industries.

Scoular put \$20 million into the facility “because they have confidence in the strength of the dairy industry and they believe the dairy industry is going to continue to grow,” he said.

According to a company news release, the expansion adds a 120-foot high concrete feed mill, boosting the facility's production capacity by 35 percent. It also increases storage capacity by 40 percent.

During a ribbon cutting celebration at the Jerome facility, Andy Hohwieler, Scoular's regional manager, pointed out the expansion project is the company's latest investment in the area and one of several the company has made in recent years.

The company in December 2021 celebrated the opening of a facility in Jerome that produces a new barley product called Emerge that is sold to the aquaculture and pet food industries.

A high-energy liquid feed supplement for cattle feeders is also produced during the manufacturing process at that barley facility.

In August 2021, Scoular announced a new program called Barley MVP that seeks to promote food and feed barley varieties as economically viable rotation crops for Idaho farmers.

Most of Idaho's roughly 550,000 barley acres are malt varieties produced for the beer brewing industry.

The Barley MVP program will focus on helping Idaho growers expand the production of barley varieties that are produced for the animal feed or human food markets.

"We're very excited about what this will do for our customers, the community and for Scoular," Hohwieler said about the expansion of the feed blending facility. "We're very grateful to have the support of the community as we continue to make investments here."

The company operates more than 100 offices and facilities in North America and Asia, including in Jerome and Twin Falls.

Scoular CEO Paul Maass praised local officials for welcoming Scoular's Idaho projects and helping to facilitate them. He noted that the company has been investing in the area for two decades.

Scoular has operations around the globe and "It's not this friendly everywhere," he said. "It's such a wonderful feeling to be supported and appreciated. We don't take that for granted."

The type of welcome that Scoular receives from Idaho officials is "important when you start making investment decisions," he added. "We're excited to continue to invest ... in the community and in growing this area."

"I want to thank Scoular for this investment in Jerome," Jerome city manager Mike Williams said during the ribbon cutting ceremony. "Their investments here began 20 years ago and they really haven't stopped."

Marchant said the overall economic health of the Magic Valley is bound to see many positive effects as a result of the capabilities of Scoular's new pellet mill and steam flaking facilities.

“As a member of Idaho Farm Bureau, it's my hope that the entire community can grasp the importance of agriculture processing facilities in helping maintain a vibrant and robust economy, for all sectors, not just farmers and ranchers and the industries directly related to agriculture,” he said.

Jeff Ackerman, chief operating officer for Idaho-based Bettencourt Dairies, said “our relationship with the Scoular Co. has been a win-win relationship. The expertise that they bring in the areas in which we work with them has been a great benefit.”

“Scoular's commitment to the dairy industry and the livestock industry as a whole is a benefit, not only to the Idaho dairy industry but to the cattle industry and our farming industry here in this area and throughout the Mountain West,” he added.

09 Sep 2024