

DG Foods to locate plant in Bastrop

Over 300 jobs created

Photos



Gov. Bobby Jindal talks with DG Foods chief executive officer Duffy McKenzie, center, and chief financial officer Greg O'Quinn after the Dec. 9, 2010, announcement the company is creating a poultry and meat processing plant in Bastrop that will employ over 300 workers.

By Mark Rainwater

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Everywhere — In November 2008, Gov. Bobby Jindal pledged his administration would do all in could to help the area economy recover from the announcement that International Paper was closing its Louisiana Mill.

On Thursday, Jindal made good on his promise, saying the timing couldn't be better to announce the creation of more than 300 jobs in a former part of International Paper's once-thriving operations in Morehouse Parish.

Jindal announced at noon news conference that DG Foods, Inc. of Hazelhurst, MS will locate a poultry and meat processing plant in the building which formerly housed IP's Single Service operations.

“I remember saying that we would work with local and regional people to help Bastrop get back on its feet. What we’re doing today is a great first step, an important step, but it’s just a first step,” Jindal said. “I can’t think of a better day or time of year to make this announcement.”

Duffie McKenzie, chief executive officer for DG Foods, praised the efforts of state and local economic development agencies in helping bring the company to Bastrop.

“The governor, his staff, Kay King, Mayor Olive and others were all instrumental in our making the decision,” McKenzie said.

King is director of the Morehouse Economic Development Corp.

The company will invest \$9.7 million in the facility and is scheduled to begin operations in July 2011. Kelsey Short, director of Agriculture, Food and Wood Products for Louisiana Economic Development, said the company’s payroll - 300 hourly and 20 salaried employees - will pump \$6 million annually into the economy. Jindal said the company will have an economic impact of \$13 million to the state and \$2.9 million in local tax revenue in its first seven years of operation. The LED will provide close to \$7 million in incentives to assist the company through a series of loans, grants and training programs for employees.

Following the announcement, Jindal spoke privately with many of those who came to the event. Dorothy Ford, director of the Bastrop-Morehouse Chamber of Commerce, saw the significance of the season in thanking Jindal for his administration’s efforts.

“What y’all have done is make for a very merry Christmas here in Morehouse Parish,” Ford said.

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