

Garden Fresh Vegetables, LLC

Outline of Need:

Garden Fresh Vegetables, LLC (GFV) is a 10 acre hydroponic tomato greenhouse located in O'Neill, Nebraska. This locally owned and operated company was started in 2007 by a group of investors who recognized the marketing potential of fresh tomatoes and cucumbers. The purchase of a 10 acre greenhouse would allow them to meet current market demands as well as branch into available markets, expand the labor force and strengthen their sustainability.

How Rural Development Helped:

Rural Development teamed up with UMB Bank N.A. of Omaha to provide Garden Fresh Vegetables, LLC a Business and Industry Guaranteed Loan for \$3,967,262.

The Results:

By expanding their existing greenhouse business with the purchase of a 10 acre greenhouse and developing a three acre propagation unit, GFV will be able to offer the community 35 new jobs. Currently GFV employs an estimated 50 full-time (FT) employees and an additional 10 FT seasonal with an average pay scale of \$10 per hour. They also offer seasonal employment to high school and/or college students. GFV is considered one of the largest employers in O'Neill, population 3,733. GFV produces a superior product due to three factors, superior water, second best light in Nebraska and good weather that allows temperatures to drop 20 degrees at night in the summer enhancing the pollination which creates larger, juicier tomatoes. Their produce is currently used in most local grocery stores and GFV is the primary supplier of locally grown tomatoes and cucumbers for all Nebraska HyVees, Wal-Marts and Pegler Sysco, Russ' Markets in Lincoln, Lofreddo's in Omaha and Balls Food in Kansas City. Runza restaurants use only their tomatoes. Many local stores, including Subway, purchase GFV tomatoes and cucumbers. A number of other grocery stores throughout Nebraska, Kansas, Iowa and South Dakota purchase their produce as well. They initiated participation in the Farm-2-School Program and currently provide tomatoes to five school districts and anticipate selling to many more educational facilities. GFV has a warehouse and retail store in Omaha and sells to private vendors and customers.



10 Acre Addition

