

Allegany County Industrial Development Agency  
Notice of Intent to Assist a Project in an Agricultural District by Providing Financial Incentives and  
Acquiring Land in an Agricultural District by Eminent Domain

(i) A detailed description of the Project of the proposed action and its agricultural setting t:

The Allegany County Industrial Development Agency (ACIDA) has received an application requesting financial assistance from Great Lakes Cheese (the “Company”) supporting the construction of a new cheese manufacturing facility in the Towns of Amity and Angelica, Allegany County, New York, to replace and outdated plant in the Town of Cuba New York, which is it reached the end of its useful life. If the Company is unable to build a new facility in the Allegany County region, the company has stated that it will leave the state eliminating 229 current jobs, and removing 2 million pounds of milk demand from the New York market. The Company has stated that if it can expand in the area, it will add 200 jobs, not counting construction jobs, and based on the additional 2 million pounds of demand for milk, it is estimated this will create 600 new farm jobs in the region (while if the Company were to leave the region, an estimated 600 farm jobs would be lost). The application (which was included in the SEQRA Notice of Intent sent to the Department and County Board) is online at

[http://www.acida.org/uploads/1/3/2/0/132023476/acida\\_financial\\_assistance\\_application\\_glc\\_signed.pdf](http://www.acida.org/uploads/1/3/2/0/132023476/acida_financial_assistance_application_glc_signed.pdf)

### **Project Description**

Great Lakes Cheese is proposing the construction of a new 480,000 square-foot cheese manufacturing facility, including on-site packaging and distribution facilities, employee parking, access roads, and related utility infrastructure, including a 50,000 square-foot wastewater treatment plant the “Project”) , in the Towns of Amity and Angelica, Allegany County, New York. The Project would be located on a portion of several parcels of land totaling 210 acres located on Trianna Road (Tax map number 158.-1-31) and Old State Road (Tax map number 158.-1-2.1) in the Town of Amity and County Road (“CR”) 20 (Tax map number 145.-1-5.1) in the Town of Angelica, Allegany County, Parcel 158.-1-2.1 will be subdivided into the smaller parcel on the east side of CR 20 (part of the Project)and the remainder of the parcel west of CR 20. The Site is just south of the Belmont exit of I-86.

The new facility will contain the entire cheese manufacturing process. The main facility will include provision for receiving raw materials by truck, the manufacturing process, packaging, shipping, and distribution, and office space in a single-level building except for an approximately 130-foot tall multi-stage drying tower, truck scales, guard shack, employee parking and access roads, a water tower and fire pump building, and stormwater containment basins. In addition to wastewater treatment plant (including a treatment building, tanks, and impoundments) for manufacturing waste, a septic system will serve the plant employees. The wastewater will be discharged to the Genesee River. Construction will take place over multiple years, with the project breaking ground third quarter of 2021, site & building construction from that time through third quarter 2023, equipment installation through to start up from second quarter 2022 through third quarter 2024, with project operation starting January 1, 2025.

The heart of the manufacturing facility is a turnkey equipment package which effectively dictates the shape and size of the property on which the new facility can be located. As a result, the sites available in the region are agricultural properties. The Company examined over 70 sites, including conducting geotech and surveys on alternative sites.

### **Site Description**

The Project Site is located at an elevation of approximately 1344 feet above Mean Sea Level along CR 20, sloping to the northeast. Road drainage on CR 20 flows north away from the site. The Genesee River and tributaries of said creek are present on the edge of the site. There are no established drainage ways on the site other than roadside stormwater ditches, nor any surface water features other than the Genesee River.

Soils mapped by USDA are primarily Allard silt Loam, gently sloping (0-3%). These soils are moderately well-drained soils formed in glacial till, with a hydrologic soil class B and classified as prime farmlands. The soils are not subject to flooding and have a depth to water table of greater than 80 inches. Topsoil is likely impacted by past farming activities.

There are no curbs preventing access to the Site, however there is a small ditch and drop off on the west side of the Site along CR 20. There are no additional fences on the Site. There is no public water service or sanitary sewer currently available to the Site. There is public water service located on NYS Route 19 to the southwest of the Site. Three phase electric service is available at the Site, along poles at the road right-of-way, however upgraded service will be brought to Site as part of the Project. There are no pad-mounted transformers currently on the site. A new substation will be built as part of the utility upgrade. There is no gas service to the Site.

The Site vegetation is active agricultural fields. There are trees mainly in the north, south, and east edges of the Site adjacent to the Genesee River, minimal disturbance of the treed areas is anticipated. The eastern portion is located in Zone A and B FEMA flood zones. Additionally, there maybe a federal freshwater wetland located in the center of the Site and the Genesee River is a Class C stream. The Site does not contain any State jurisdictional wetlands.

;

(ii) the agricultural impact of the proposed action including short-term and long-term effects;

The impact on the proposed property is the loss of land dedicated to growing crops. There are no farm operations on the Site, nor structures. The property owner retains significant other holdings in the region. The negative impact to the use of the property as an agricultural resource would be both short-term and long-term.

Conversely, the agricultural industry in the County and the region will suffer significant long-term harm if the project does not go forward and the Company leaves the state in 2025. The Company currently acquires 2 million pounds of milk annually through dairy cooperatives. This is the largest food manufacturing operations supporting local farms in the region. The loss of this facility will have significant negative impacts on the agricultural industry, the ability of farms to maintain current levels of dairy herds and contribute to the tax base and workforce in the region. Cornell Cooperative informs us that the trend has been for a loss of dairy farms in the region, the inability to maintain this facility in this area will accelerate that trend.

(iii) any adverse agricultural effects which cannot be avoided should the proposed action be implemented;

Because of the nature of the proposed project, conversion from farm fields to manufacturing, adverse agricultural effects cannot be avoided if the proposed action is implemented.

(iv) alternatives to the proposed action;

The Company reviewed over 70 sites in the region before settling on this location, with an emphasis of trying to stay first in the Town of Cuba, and then within the County. It is very important to the company to maintain a facility within commuting distance of its current workforce. It is the

Company's dedication to its employees that is providing the opportunity to retain this operation, other states are offering significantly higher financial incentives.

While an alternative site would not impact the preferred site, it would have the same exact impact on agriculture, because only agricultural properties in the County and region are large enough to support this facility. Displacement of agricultural farmland, limited here to crops rather than farm operations on site, will occur at any of the potential sites that could handle this facility. Thus, no alternative to the proposed action will produce lower impacts on agriculture.

(v) any irreversible and irretrievable commitments of agricultural resources which would be involved in the proposed action should it be implemented;

The project site (and every alternative site) would be converted from farm fields to manufacturing, presenting an irreversible and irretrievable commitment of the agricultural resource to allow this proposed action to go forward.

(vi) mitigation measures proposed to minimize the adverse impact of the proposed action on the continuing viability of a farm enterprise or enterprises within the district;

Besides ensuring that the property owner receives fair market value for the property, the ACIDA is only taking the farmland absolutely necessary. The wastewater treatment plan associated with the property is being placed partly in the flood zone, rather than on prime farmlands. One of the parcels is only being partially taken to minimize the loss of farm fields. The project itself is a mitigation measure to minimize the adverse impact on farm enterprises within the Agricultural District. If the Company leaves the region, there will be significant negative impacts on the agricultural industry, specifically the dairy industry, as a result of the loss of the demand for milk.

(vii) any aspects of the proposed action which would encourage non-farm development, where applicable and appropriate; and

The proposed action is separate from efforts to encourage development in the area. The wastewater treatment plant, for example, will only support the facility, not other growth in the area. The utility will be bringing in increased power supply which may support other development, but the proposed improvement is being sized for this facility. It is possible that some current or future workers will create increased housing demand in the Villages of Angelica and Belmont and the surrounding area, over the long-term. A primary reason for selecting the site was so that the workforce at the current facility could commute from existing homes. Increased economic activity related to the larger facility, whether in the direct purchase of non—agricultural supplies and increased income in the community due to new worker salaries, will have an add—on effect to the local economy that could encourage non—farm development

For further information, please contact

Dr. Craig Clark, Executive Director  
Crossroads Commerce & Conference Center  
6087 State Route 19 North  
Belmont, New York 14813  
585-268-7472  
[clarkcr@alleganyco.com](mailto:clarkcr@alleganyco.com)