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Materne to open Nampa applesauce plant this month

Former Micron site to employ 250 people, have 12 production lines

NAMPA — Materne North America, which produces GoGo squeeZ applesauce, will open its new Nampa plant this month, less than a year after the company announced it would take over the former MPC Corp plant.

The Nampa site will eventually have 250 employees, with 12 applesauce production lines running by 2017. The first two lines will start operations this month, with the next batch of production lines now in transit from Europe.

In February, Materne bought the 340,000-squarefoot facility on Karcher Road from Micron, with local and state government entities giving the company \$7.9 million in incentives for the \$85 million project. Hansen-Rice in Nampa refurbished the site, which was under construction from May to November.

John George, vice president of manufacturing for Materne, said the incentives and economic conditions, including existing infrastructure, were part of why the company chose Nampa. Materne already has a plant in Traverse City, Michigan, and George said the company wanted a site that was within 10 hours of Washington's Yakima Valley, which grows most American apples. He also said that the Treasure Valley has a strong potential workforce.

"We were looking for places that had a good base of more talented people, and people that had an education in food and agriculture," George said at the Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce 2014 Economic Summit on Nov. 18.

"We didn't want to go through some of the painful learning that we got in Michigan," he said. The incentives for Materne include a five-year property tax exemption from Canyon County worth \$6 million and up to \$1.4 million in Workforce Development Fund training from the Idaho Department of Labor.