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Food Processing Company Picks Santa Teresa for Expansion

Oro LLC expects to hire 49 workers in New Mexico

SANTA TERESA, N.M. - New Mexico Economic Development (EDD) Cabinet Secretary Alicia J. Keyes announced today that the vegetable processing company, Oro LLC, is expanding operations into New Mexico's Santa Teresa Border Zone.

The company has identified a 20-acre site in the Santa Teresa Gateway Rail Park and expects to begin construction this summer. When the facility opens in 2024, Oro plans to create 49 jobs in New Mexico with an average salary of \$35,710.

The State of New Mexico has awarded \$750,000 from EDD's Local Economic Development Act (LEDA) job-creation fund to Oro to support expansion infrastructure. Oro will invest \$19 million into the site.

"Recruiting new businesses to the Santa Teresa Border Zone continues to be a priority for Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham," EDD Secretary Keyes said. "This region is more important than ever to America's prosperity as companies look to diversify their supply chains and provide more affordable goods and materials to North American customers and consumers."

Oro identified Santa Teresa for its strategic transportation network – due to quick access to the Pacific Northwest and the West Coast.

The company provides bulk ingredient sourcing to processors and packaged vegetables for restaurants, food servicers, and retail customers. Oro has contract growers in Mexico and the United States and wants to boost relationships with New Mexico growers as it expands in the state.

"Oro sees Santa Teresa as a logistical gateway that will open our products to more customers across the west, and that means more opportunities for growers and processors in New Mexico," Hugo Ruiz, company operations manager, said.

Doña Ana County serves as the fiscal agent for the LEDA funding. "On behalf of the Board of Commissioners, I welcome Oro, LLC to Doña Ana County. The decision to establish their business here is a testament to the many advantages and opportunities that our county has to offer. We are excited to partner with them, to support their growth, and we look forward to the positive impact their presence will have on our local economy," Commission Chair Susana Chaparro said.

The Mesilla Valley Economic Development Alliance (MVEDA), a key partner with the state in this effort, also pledged \$100,000 from the NMBorderplex Closing Incentive program to help bring the project to Doña Ana County.

The incentive, which is administered by MVEDA and the Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico, was established by El Paso Electric in connection with the corporate sale of the Utility to Infrastructure Investments Fund (IIF) to provide \$1 million per year for 20 years in support of private businesses, projects, and organizations that make, or will make, a measurable difference in achieving economic growth and development, expanding and diversifying the tax base, creating new quality jobs, and increasing the economic base within El Paso Electric's New Mexico service territory.

The Santa Teresa Port of Entry is a primary crossing between the United States and Mexico, and it is the first land port without a bridge structure from the east. Because of this, it serves a critical function for the El Paso and Ciudad Juarez industrial region, as the only oversized and overweight port not limited by space or weight. The port is also clearing a growing number of regular commercial vehicles and a larger segment of local and non-local private commuters.

Santa Teresa continues to set records in commercial traffic and that number is expected to increase due to consistent heavy congestion at El Paso ports. In the last two years, the port has doubled the number of commercial vehicles processed per hour and hit a new record in 2022 by processing more than 160,000 trucks.

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EDD's mission is to improve the lives of New Mexico families by increasing economic opportunities and providing a place for businesses to thrive. EDD's programs contribute directly to this mission by training our workforce, providing infrastructure that supports business growth, and helping every community create a thriving economy.

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