



## General Mills will locate a \$24 million distribution facility at the Midlink Business Park in Comstock Township

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**KALAMAZOO, MI** -- General Mills is coming to Comstock Township.

Worldwide food maker and distributor **General Mills** will establish a new, 155,000-square-foot distribution center -- focused primarily on its yogurt business -- at the Midlink Business Park in Comstock Township.

Ground has already been broken on the project -- on the south side of the 24--acre business park, located on Sprinkle Road just south of I-94 and once the site of a sprawling General Motors Corp. metal stamping plant.

Jennifer Owens, a vice president of regional economic development organization Southwest Michigan First, said Minneapolis-based General Mills is committed to making a capital investment of \$24 million on the project.

The new center is expected to be operational by July 2014 and create 27 new jobs over two years.

"I am excited about General Mills choosing Comstock Township and establishing roots in our community," Comstock Township Supervisor Ann Nieuwenhuis said in a press release. "This project brings along job opportunities, utilization of the highest and best use of its chosen location at the **Midlink Business Park**, as well as an increase in our tax base, especially for the Comstock Public Schools."

She also lauded the effort of various local and state government entities to work together with General Mills and their contractors.

Comstock Township is supporting the project with a 10-year real and personal property tax abatement valued at \$1,526,000. According to Southwest Michigan First, Kalamazoo County will contribute \$1,523,900 in combined Brownfield and local incentives. The state of Michigan provided a state education tax abatement valued at \$371,000 in support.

"General Mills is recognized across the world for its leadership and its choice of Michigan for new investment

and job creation underscores our state's strategic importance in the food industry," Michigan Economic Development Corp. President and CEO Michael A. Finney said in a press release. "General Mills' decision to build a new cold chain facility in Comstock Township signals Michigan's leadership in manufacturing food products and bringing those products to market."

"Cold chain" refers to a system used by food producers, agricultural product producers, pharmaceutical makers and others involved with perishable products to store and distribute products in a set temperature range to help ensure the life of those products.

General Mills' recognizable brand names include Cheerios, Betty Crocker, Fiber One, Häagen-Dazs, Nature Valley, Yoplait, Pillsbury, Green Giant, Old El Paso, Wanchai Ferry and Yoki. The business, which had fiscal 2013 worldwide sales of \$17.8 billion, does business in more than 100 countries.

Ron Kitchens, chief executive officer of regional economic development organization Southwest Michigan First, thanked General Mills "for embracing the combined efforts of our regional partners to attract the company to Southwest Michigan."

"We look forward to the working with the company as it builds out its location in Comstock Township and begins to engage with our local workforce in lean manufacturing practices," he said in a press release.

He said General Mills selected this Southwest Michigan for its strategic geographical location.

In a press release, Kevin Schoen, vice president, North American Logistics for General Mills, said, "Comstock Township is a great location for this new facility, strategically enhancing overall Supply Chain/Logistics for General Mills. We greatly appreciate the support of the local community and state officials, and we can't wait to have our new Comstock facility in operation."

Kalamazoo County Administrator Peter Battani said, "Kalamazoo County, through the work of our Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, is very proud to support the General Mills-leased development at Midlink. This is another great example of many public/private partnerships, led by Southwest Michigan First, to grow jobs and our regional economy."

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