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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**HILMAR CHEESE COMPANY TO OPEN NEW CUTTING-EDGE CHEESE AND WHEY PRODUCTION FACILITY IN DODGE CITY, KANSAS**

HILMAR, CA. May 5, 2021. Kansas Gov. Laura Kelly and Hilmar Cheese Company, Inc. today jointly announced the Company's decision to build a new state-of-the-art cheese and whey protein processing plant in Dodge City, Kansas.

Hilmar Cheese Company, founded in 1984, is one of the world's largest producers of high quality American-style cheese and whey products, with customers in more than 50 countries.

The new facility is expected to create 247 new jobs and represents \$460 million in capital investment. The project is estimated to bring an additional \$550 million in capital investment and 750 new jobs within a fifty-mile radius of Dodge City by late 2023.

Hilmar Cheese Company CEO & President David Ahlem called Dodge City an "ideal choice" given its central location, critical existing infrastructure, proximity to the growing local dairy industry and business-friendly climate.

"Our first-class workforce and central location make Kansas one of the best places in the nation to do business," said Governor Laura Kelly. "It's great to see another major food manufacturer like Hilmar choose to put their trust in our state and Dodge City for their newest facility."

The state-of-the-art facility will showcase sustainable solutions. Hilmar Cheese Company is a leader in sustainable practices and has adopted the U.S. Dairy Stewardship Commitment and goal to achieve a Net Zero dairy industry by 2050.

"We want our plant to be as good for the environment as it will be for the local economy," Ahlem said. "We'll use technologies and sustainable practices to promote carbon neutrality."

Nick Hernandez, City Manager added, "One of the biggest advantages for both Hilmar Cheese Company and Dodge City is the cohesive nature of our sustainability efforts. They have a standing commitment to being stewards of the environment much like Dodge City, and through this mutually beneficial partnership, we will be able to further utilize our wastewater for crop irrigation and biogas production."

Headquarters & Innovation Center

8901 North Lander Avenue, P.O. Box 910, Hilmar, CA 95324 USA T: 209.667.6076 Fax: 209.634.1408 [hilmarcheese.com](http://hilmarcheese.com)

California Manufacturing Site & Visitor Center: 9001 North Lander Avenue, P.O. Box 910, Hilmar, CA 95324 USA T: 209.667.6076

Texas Manufacturing Site: 12400 US Highway 385, P.O. Box 1300, Dalhart, TX 79022 USA T: 806.244.8800



The new facility will help Hilmar Cheese Company meet the growing demand of its customers and the marketplace for cheese and whey products worldwide. In addition to job creation, the plant will create opportunities for the Dodge City community, promote growth for Kansas dairy producers, and help Hilmar Cheese Company fulfill its purpose to improve lives.

Joann Knight, Executive Director Dodge City/Ford County Development Corporation, stated that the economic impact to the community “will be compounded substantially by the additional dairies, transportation and services that will be required to support the processing facility once operational as well as the impact that the construction phase will have on our region.”

The project has been a collaborative effort of many organizations. The State of Kansas Department of Commerce, Department of Ag and Department of Transportation; the City of Dodge City, Ford County, Dodge City/Ford County Development Corporation, Black Hills Energy, Victory Electric, United Tel•Com, Dodge City Public Schools USD 443, Dodge City Community College and area agricultural producers have helped bring the new business to the community.

“We greatly appreciate the warm welcome from the State of Kansas and the City of Dodge City officials whose values of integrity and excellence closely align with ours,” Ahlem said. “Dodge City gives us many opportunities including a local and skilled labor force, a supportive and expanding agricultural region, and an excellent transportation network that allows us to easily reach our expanding markets.

“We’re really happy with our decision and excited about becoming a part of this outstanding community.”

Hilmar is expected to break ground on the facility in the summer of 2021 and be fully operational in 2024.

Hilmar Cheese Company was established in 1984 by 12 local dairy farm families in the Central Valley of California. The company added a state-of-the-art production facility in Dalhart, Texas in 2007. Privately owned, the company currently employs more than 1,500 local residents of the two areas. The company offers great benefits, training and long-term career growth opportunities. Since its inception, Hilmar Cheese Company has been dedicated to processing high-quality cheese and whey products. It currently produces a variety of cheese including Cheddar, Monterey Jack, Pepper Jack, Colby, Colby Jack and Mozzarella. The whey is processed into Whey Protein products that are used as ingredients in many foods including nutritional beverages and bars; and Lactose, which is marketed internationally as an ingredient in confections and infant formula.

The company is also known as a strong community partner supporting local events, education and health care. Hilmar Cheese Company’s annual scholarship program awards students of our employees, milk producers, and community scholarships to support continuing education. The company’s California Visitor Center and the exhibits at the Texas XIT Museum are visited by thousands of students on field trips each year.

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*About Hilmar Cheese Company, Inc.*

*Hilmar Cheese Company, Inc. improves lives around the world by being a leading producer of wholesome dairy products. Founded in 1984, Hilmar Cheese Company and its division, Hilmar Ingredients, serve customers in more than 50 countries. State-of-the art production facilities in California and Texas convert high-quality milk received from local independent dairy farms into a variety of nutritious cheese and whey ingredients. The company specializes in the production of cheddar and American-style cheeses utilized by private label and national brand companies worldwide. Its Hilmar Ingredients division manufactures and markets globally a wide range of whey protein and lactose products. Committed to continuous improvement, innovation and sustainability, Hilmar Cheese Company strives to make products that benefit all involved from our customers to our suppliers to our employees and communities. Together, we deliver the promise of dairy.*

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