Nestlé Purina PetCare Celebrates Official Grand Opening Of New Pet Food Factory in North Carolina

1.3-million-square-foot facility repurposes former brewery while establishing 'factory of the future'

EDEN, N.C., March 26, 2024 /PRNewswire/ -- State officials, community partners and Nestlé Purina PetCare leaders gathered today to commemorate the official opening of the pet care company's newest pet food factory in Eden, North Carolina. The grand opening celebration is the culmination of more than three years of work to bring the more than $450 million operation to life and establish the first Nestlé manufacturing facility in the state.

"Demand for our products continues to grow and opening this new facility – our first manufacturing operation in North Carolina – allows us to better serve our consumers, particularly in the eastern and southeastern parts of the country," Purina Chief Executive Officer Nina Leigh Krueger said. "Our new factory in Eden is a huge step to continue meeting that growing demand, and the latest example of the continued investment being made across our U.S. manufacturing network. We're grateful for the support and partnership across the region, and are confident we're building a facility, and a passionate team, that will represent this community proudly for generations to come."

The new Purina factory in Eden has already created more than 300 new positions, with plans to add more personnel in the future. Between 2020 and 2025, Nestlé is on track to invest $2 billion in Purina's factory and capital expansion projects to enhance its manufacturing footprint. A 24th factory is currently under construction in Williamsburg Township, Ohio, and is expected to be fully operational in the next 12 months. North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper recognized the significant investment and commitment from all parties to make the facility a reality.

"We continued to believe that the brewery in Eden could be used for a new manufacturer and we are excited that with this grand opening Nestlé Purina is ready to make a new home in North Carolina with 300 new employees," said Governor Cooper. "They will find here a well-trained, dedicated and diverse workforce along with support for their efforts to have this new plant embrace renewable energy and sustainability."

The grand opening celebration also featured North Carolina State Senator Phil Berger who spoke alongside several other Purina leaders including Chief Technical Officer Nolan Terry, Manufacturing Vice President Casey Hansen and Eden Factory Manager Will Steiner. Rockingham County Economic Development Director Leigh Cockram also spoke on behalf of the region.

"Factory of the future"

The new 1.3-million-square-foot Purina facility in Eden – which repurposes 80 percent of a former brewery's existing structure – features several modern technologies which transform and enhance the overall production process, including the first-ever vertical dryer installed in a Purina U.S. factory as well as automated systems in warehousing and the freezer space. The new facility also features a first-of-its-kind Manufacturing Experience Center, designed to introduce modern manufacturing to the next generation of workforce.

"We have been looking forward to this day for a very long time and are so grateful for the contributions of so many incredible associates who've been working hard to bring this factory to life" said Will Steiner, factory manager of the new Purina factory in Eden. "So much amazing collaboration has gone into this project, but what's most exciting is we can now really get to work and produce many of our pet food brands that pets love and owners trust. We have a great team in place to bring Purina's quality and safety standards to life in Eden."

Nestled on 1,350 acres extending to the Virginia state line, the new Purina factory in Eden, North Carolina, marks the 23rd Purina manufacturing operation in the U.S. Eden will operate as a zero waste for disposal facility. Across its manufacturing network, Purina is working to conserve water and achieve 100 percent renewable electricity at its factories by 2025.

Community donations

The grand opening event featured donations from Purina to local organizations granted through its Trust Fund, which was established by company founder William H. Danforth and supports partners working to positively impact communities where Purina has operations.

Purina made a $30,000 donation to expand industrial and applied technologies programs at Rockingham Community College. The funds support the opening of a new Center for Workforce Development building, enhancing the community's current and future workforces with training opportunities to better support high-technology employment opportunities. The 3D printing room inside the new structure will also be named in honor of Nestlé Purina. The check was presented to Mark Kinlaw, President of Rockingham Community College.

Purina's $10,000 donation to Dan River Basin Association supports the organization's 'Tails on Trails' initiative, designed to encourage pets and people to explore nature together. The program will host bi-monthly guided hikes designed with pets in mind and provide printed maps of dog-friendly trails around Rockingham County; as well as an online map featuring dog-friendly trails across the entire 16-county Dan River Basin. The check was presented to Tiffany Haworth, Executive Director of Dan River Basin Association.

Purina also recently delivered a donation which helped renovate and reopen the Purina Bark Park inside Freedom Park in Eden; helped fund the installation of an electronic kiosk at the Rockingham County Veterans Park; and supported Help, Incorporated and the opening of a new facility, the SquareOne Family Justice Center, which provides crisis care to abuse victims in a centralized location. The local team regularly supports Rockingham County Animal Shelter and Friends of Eden Animal Rescue with donated product, and also helps feed the K9 officers of the Eden Police Force.

In 2023, Purina invested more than $30 million to support programs that aim to bring and keep pets and people together and to forge partnerships that help communities and the environment thrive.

About Nestlé Purina PetCare

Nestlé Purina PetCare creates richer lives for pets and the people who love them. Founded in 1894, Purina has helped dogs and cats live longer, healthier lives by offering scientifically based nutritional innovations. Purina manufactures some of the world's most trusted and popular pet care products, including Purina

ONE, Pro Plan, Friskies and Tidy Cats. Our more than 11,000 U.S. associates take pride in our trusted pet food, treat and litter brands that feed 46 million dogs and 68 million cats every year. More than 500 Purina scientists, veterinarians, and pet care experts ensure our commitment to unsurpassed quality and nutrition.

Purina promotes responsible pet care through our scientific research, our products, and our support for pet-related organizations. Over the past five years, Purina has contributed more than $150 million towards organizations that bring, and keep, people and pets together, as well as those that help our communities and environment thrive.

Purina is part of Nestlé, a global leader in Nutrition, Health and Wellness. For more information, visit purina.com or subscribe here to get the latest Purina news.

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