

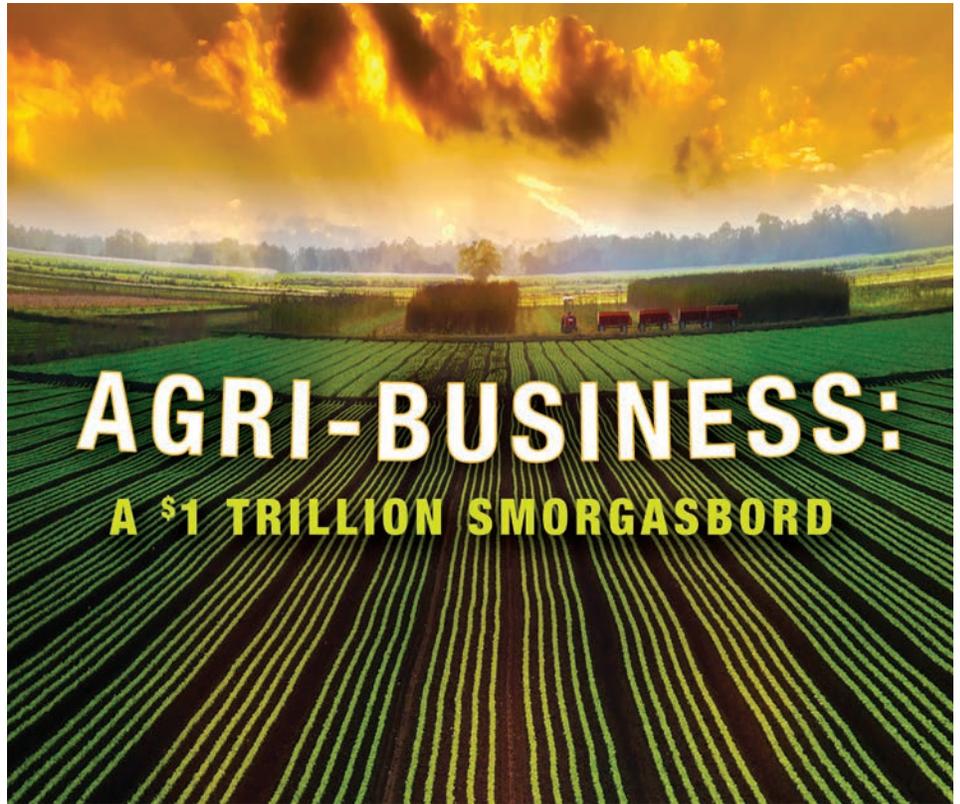
U.S. AGRI-BUSINESS  
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FROM U.S. FARMS.

Globally, food and agriculture is a \$7.8 trillion industry, global investments in the food and agriculture sector have grown three-fold since 2004 and, according to a McKinsey report, on average have demonstrated higher returns to shareholders than other sectors. In the U.S., agriculture, food and related industries generated 5.5 percent of the country's GDP at \$992 billion, \$137 billion of that coming directly from U.S. farms.

Despite this activity, there are several unmet challenges facing stakeholders across the supply chain in food & agriculture. In the current market, producers are increasingly pushed to produce more with less, data is being captured by disparate players in different parts of the value chain, and consumers are becoming increasingly focused on the lifecycle of their food.

These challenges are highly interconnected and that real solutions will require collaboration and systems-level thinking. Building a better food and agriculture system requires innovation at every level of our supply chain. This includes, but is not limited to, innovations around:

- ◆ Precision agriculture and technologies and services that encourage more sustainable growing practices
- ◆ Driving better market access and appropriate technology for local food systems and/or sustainable agriculture
- ◆ Efficiencies in supply chain management, traceability and food safety



- ◆ Increasing access to and availability of healthy, sustainable food.

### VINELAND, NJ: GROWING GOOD THINGS

Agriculture and related business operations have been an integral part of life and commerce in Vineland, New Jersey, since its founding in 1861. Today, "Agribusiness" and related sectors like food processing and cold storage remain an important part of the Vineland economy.

Located in the heart of the northeast corridor, Vineland offers both an affordable business location and an excellent quality of life. Per acre land prices and labor costs are lower than most other northeast locations, and the city offers competitive electric and water rates through the Vineland Municipal Utilities. Companies will also find a variety of state and local financial incentives, customized workforce education and training programs, and a designated Urban Enterprise Zone.

At over 69 square miles, Vineland is the largest city in New Jersey with a mix

of both urban and rural settings. There are two thriving industrial parks, with a third being developed, which are located along a state highway on the western edge of the city, providing easy access to over 100 million customers from the Eastern Seaboard to the Mississippi River. The eastern and southeastern parts of the city are home to dozens of family farms with thousands of acres actively producing a wide variety of fruits, vegetables, and herbs.

The city also hosts the Vineland Produce Auction, which is the premier farmer's cooperative on the East Coast. The Auction includes 130,000 square-feet of cross-dock loading space and state-of-the-art cooling facilities capable of handling hundreds of thousands of packages in a 24-hour period. In addition to serving the needs of 550 New Jersey growers, the Auction provides a network of broker, buyer, and wholesale activities to domestic and international markets including Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean Basin, and South America.

## LOCATIONS FOR THE AGRI-BUSINESS INDUSTRY

"New Jersey agriculture has deep roots in Vineland with innovative family farms that have been working the land for generations," said Vineland Mayor Anthony Fanucci. "It represents a way of life that we are very proud of, and an industry that is critical to the local economy, and to the state's economy."

One operation that has stood the test of time is Flaim Farms, which has been growing and shipping quality produce for over 80 years from their 400-acre Vineland farm. Now operated by the third and fourth generations of the family, Flaim Farms typically grows over 35 different seasonal commodities each year which are sold to retail and wholesale customers in the northeast and southeast through the family's shipping arm, Next Generation Produce.

According to Co-Owner Kevin Flaim, "Produce is a business that is constantly changing, and you must be proactive to build your customer base. For example, we started our own line of 'Panther Brand' frozen and breaded eggplant cutlets that have a shelf life of 18-24 months which was very well received, and as a result, we added frozen and breaded zucchini fries. These products are available to our customers year-round in retail and institutional/food service packs."

This farming infrastructure helps support a growing number of companies which are either expanding or relocating to Vineland. One such company is Florida-based Infinite Herbs, which is in the process of opening a new 30,000 square-foot production facility in the Vineland Industrial Park North which will employ 125 people. "Infinite Herbs produces some of the finest culinary herbs and micro-greens in the world, shipping about 4,000,000 pounds annually to domestic and international markets. "The company sells to major retailers like Walmart, Trader Joe's, and Whole Foods.

"Infinite Herbs had been looking to expand operations to the Mid-Atlantic region and Vineland was the perfect choice because of the company's long-



*F&S Produce in Vineland is a vertically integrated company which utilizes services provided by their trucking division, Pipco Transportation, and their freezer facility, Mideastern Cold Storage.*

standing relationship with area farmers," said Managing Director Camilo Penalosa. "We could have moved to another big city, but the idea is to be next to the growers. "I've been in Vineland many times, so this area and the advantages it has to offer are well known."

"We are excited that Infinite Herbs is expanding their operations to Vineland, they are truly a perfect fit for the city," said Economic Development Director Sandy Forosisky. "In addition to the new capital investment and jobs that will be created, the expansion offers additional partnership opportunities for local farmers who can provide the fresh, high-quality products Infinite's customers are looking for."

Existing food processing operations and new arrivals to Vineland like F&S Produce, which recently purchased a 585,000 square-foot manufacturing plant to keep up with the growing demand for their products, are part of the food cycle from "farm to fork." "F&S processes over 100 million pounds of agricultural raw materials each year to supply their retail, food service, and industrial customers. "They partner with affiliated companies to utilize innovative sustainability initiatives like vegetative

waste composting and water conservation, and they source local raw material needs whenever possible through the Vineland Produce Auction and farms across New Jersey.

"Our growers are an extension of our company and a key driver behind our continued success," said President and CEO Sam Pipitone, Jr. "We take great pride in the strong relationships we've built with our growers and supply partners who share our goal of sustainably grown, quality produce. We are proud to support our local farmers right here in southern New Jersey."

"Vineland presents unlimited opportunities for companies related to agriculture and the food industry. "Our low energy costs, high-quality potable water and available capacity for industrial waste water treatment, logistics and distribution advantages, and the availability of quality, locally grown produce are the perfect ingredients for your success. Give us a call and find out why it's 'Always Growing Season' in Vineland," Mayor Fanucci concluded. "

For more information, please contact the Vineland Department of Economic Development at (856) 794-4100, or by email at [sforosisky@vinelandcity.org](mailto:sforosisky@vinelandcity.org).