

FELDMEIER EQUIPMENT & FAGE USA: FUELING NEW YORK'S DAIRY BOOM

Last December, Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Council (MVREDC) Co-Chairs, Larry Gilroy and Dr. Robert Geer, proposed to the State Implementation Assessment Team that the MVREDC's strategy for regional growth is not 'vertical' and isolated; rather, that it is 'horizontal' and synergistic. A perfect example is the unique, symbiotic relationship between Feldmeier Equipment and FAGE USA.

Governor Andrew Cuomo has clearly and emphatically declared New York State's support for the upstate dairy industry. A series of tactical investments in milk, cheese, and Greek yogurt production have solidified New York's reputation as the Dairy powerhouse of the United States. Dairy processing facility construction and expansion projects are underway from Johnstown to Buffalo, resulting in thousands of new jobs, at least \$1 billion dollars in new investment –as well as some *really happy* farmers.



Figuring prominently (literally; just look at the tanks) into these projects is a cluster of precision, stainless steel vessels used in various stages of milk, cheese, and yogurt processing. Feldmeier Equipment of Little Falls and Syracuse, NY manufactures these tanks – and they are the best in the business.

Feldmeier's plant expansion is almost complete and will result in 50,000 square feet of new manufacturing space, with the potential to create up to 125 new, much-needed jobs in Herkimer County. This \$8 Million investment supports the growth and sustainability of dairy processors, farmers, and transportation companies across New York. Dairies and dairy processors have a direct, personal

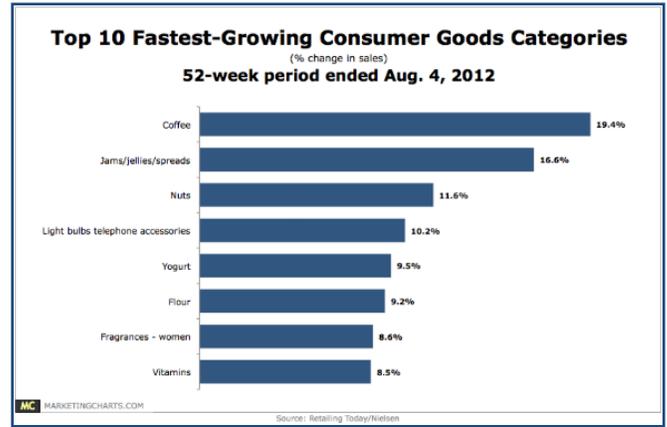
relationship with the plant managers and engineers, building strong connections throughout the Mohawk Valley and confidence in the product.

Enter FAGE USA. Over the past five years, FAGE USA has invested nearly half a billion dollars in their North American Greek Yogurt factory; and the company is currently in the midst of a \$100 million, 180,000 square foot expansion. In a very short time, FAGE USA has already become a major regional employer, with over 180 employees and another 60 new jobs on the way once the new production floor comes online. Situated in the heart of New York's dairy country and along major transportation routes, the Johnstown Industrial Park continues to be a perfect fit for FAGE USA.

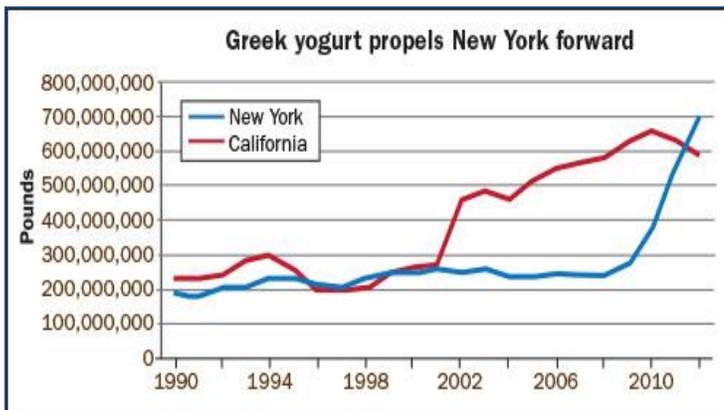
Perhaps just as fascinating is Feldmeier's relationship with local colleges and universities. SUNY Cobleskill is constructing a \$42 Million Center for Agriculture and Natural Resources, while already operating a 700-acre, 200-cow dairy farm on campus. On the flip side, advances in technical training programs at MVCC, FMCC, and SUNYIT are building a pipeline of 21st Century workers. In fact, every engineer that Feldmeier has hired in the past three years has been a graduate of SUNYIT.

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Recently, the Mohawk Valley has developed a strong concentration in craft brewing and gourmet food manufacturing. The Fulton County Center for Regional Growth's proactive approach to economic development and pursuit of this unique industry cluster is paying off for the region. Concentrated heavily in Fulton county, but fortuitously positioned throughout the Valley, companies like Pata Negra, Ommegang, Euphrates, Risen Bakery, Utica Coffee Roasters, Delorio Foods, Richardson Brands, Crystal Geysler, Nirvana, and Matt Brewing comprise an essential, if not fundamental, component of the regional economic strategy.



It is no coincidence that the very plant that manufactures the tanks happens to be in the epicenter of the Empire State's dairy boom. Situated perfectly between the cows and the processors, Feldmeier Equipment is a stainless steel link in the dairy supply chain. Greek yogurt continues to be one of the fastest-growing consumer goods in America, with no signs of slowing down; and New York is at the top – producing the most Greek Yogurt in the United States.



In addition to FAGE USA, Feldmeier's dairy clients across Upstate & Western New York continue to thrive in today's economy:

- **Chobani** in the Southern Tier
- **Muller Quaker Dairy** in the Finger Lakes
- **Byrne Dairy** in Central NY
- **Steuben Foods** in Western NY
- **Cayuga Dairy** in Central NY
- **Kraft expansion** in the North Country

As New York continues to invest in the agriculture industry, farmers and processors continue to reinvest in our communities. More milk demands more cows. More cows demand more feed. More food production strengthens local farms. As more value is placed on agricultural land, development pressures are mitigated – leading to smarter land use decisions. Smart growth ultimately builds more vibrant communities, who, in turn, fuel demand for products like Greek yogurt, craft beer, and fresh produce.

Strategic State investments like these truly are horizontal – sustaining a positive feedback loop. Feldmeier's expansion directly enables the growth of dairy processing in the Mohawk Valley and across the state. As New York's dairy industry continues to prosper, so does Feldmeier, Little Falls, and the entire Mohawk Valley. **Everybody wins.**