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***EMPIRE STATE DEVELOPMENT ANNOUNCES CANADIAN COMPANY PRIDE PAK OPERATIONS ARE UP AND RUNNING IN ORLEANS COUNTY***

***Pride Pak to invest \$30 million in NY and create an estimated 200 new jobs***

***Investment Complements “Finger Lakes Forward” – Region’s Successful Upstate Revitalization Initiative Blueprint to Grow the Economy and Create New Opportunities***

**See New Pride Pak Facility [here](#)**

Empire State Development (ESD) announced today that Pride Pak, Inc. has opened the doors on its new 68,000 square-foot facility on 13 acres in the Medina Business Park. Pride Pak, Canada’s largest fresh fruit and vegetable processor, will ultimately invest up to \$30 million on the state-of-the-art complex in Orleans County in order to be closer to its U.S. customers. The company has committed to creating 200 new jobs at the site. The Governor announced Pride Pak’s plan to build in the Finger Lakes region last November.

**In 1984, CEO Steven Karr** started Pride Pak Canada, Ltd. in an effort to service what he saw as Canada’s growing demand for high quality, easy to use fresh food. Expansion in to Newfoundland in 2006 established Pride Pak as the industry leader in the value-added produce industry. The company’s long-standing relationship with Wegmans Food Markets was the stimulus for Pride Pak’s move to the U.S.

**Pride Pak CEO Steven Karr said,** “We are very much looking forward to this next chapter with our partners at Wegmans. The cooperation we have received from the state has been tremendous and I cannot emphasize enough the value of doing business in Orleans County and the Finger Lakes where they are very welcoming to new business.”

As the industry leader in organic and conventional value-added produce processing, Pride Pak Canada currently exports 35 percent of its product to the U.S. All of Pride Pak's produce is packed fresh, not frozen. They provide fresh-cut fruits and vegetables and specialty salad blends to food service operations and retail establishments, including Wegmans Food Markets, Inc.

**Wegmans Food Markets CEO Danny Wegman said,** "Wegmans is completely committed to supporting agriculture and food production partnerships like this one in an effort to grow jobs. The agriculture and food production industry is a key driver of our regional economy. The new Pride Pak facility will help create opportunities for farmers, and will create food production jobs in our region, thus helping to shape the food industry here and helping to ensure its vitality for years to come."

Phase One of Pride Pak's Medina operation will be dedicated to the production of organic baby salad green blends, expressly for Wegmans. Karr says Phases Two and Three will include the addition of conventional fruit and vegetable processing, with the company sourcing carrots and other root vegetables from local farm operations.

When fully operational, Pride Pak expects about 45 truckloads of produce each month. The organic vegetable by-product, about 220 tons monthly, will be delivered to local livestock farms and used as animal feed and fertilizer.

Canada's largest fruit and vegetable processor chose to locate their U.S. headquarters in the Finger Lakes region thanks to Governor Cuomo's emphasis on Upstate revitalization through the *Finger Lakes Forward* strategic plan and through other local support efforts. Empire State Development, provided up to \$2 million in Excelsior tax credits in return for job commitments to move the project forward.

**Empire State Development President, CEO & Commissioner Howard Zemsky said,** "Pride Pak is a highly successful international company and their decision to grow its operations in New York State is a tribute to the concrete economic opportunities available here for companies looking to take their business to the next level. Under Governor Cuomo's leadership, New York State has significantly improved the business climate, resulting in job creation in turn which fuels economic opportunities."

The New York Power Authority also provided an allocation of low-cost hydropower to Pride Pak in return for job and capital investment commitments. The Town of Shelby also received a \$750,000 award from the New York State Office of Community Renewal to assist Pride Pak.

**James S. Rubin, Commissioner of New York State Homes and Community Renewal** said, “HCR’s award of Community Development Block Grant funds will be used for machinery and equipment, and will create 80 jobs for working families. This is another example of Governor Cuomo’s efforts to revitalize the upstate economy and encourage innovative businesses like Pride Pak to expand operations in New York.”

**State Senator Rob Ortt** said, “The new Pride Pak facility is an impressive addition to Orleans County and the entire region. Pride Pak has been making a positive impact on communities, employees and consumers in Canada for over 20 years and we are happy they chose to make Medina and Orleans County their home in the U.S.”

**Assemblyman Steve Hawley** said, “I am passionate about local economic development and ushering in new businesses to our area, and it is exciting to see such a large company that directly supports Western New York’s agriculture industry begin operation here in my Assembly District. Pride Pak is an amazing company with a great reputation and its development aims to bring hundreds of jobs, fresh produce to support our local retail industry, and recycled material for our farmers. I am proud to have worked with New York State Economic Development and local leaders to see this project through, and I have faith that investments like these will attract other businesses to set up and expand in our state.”

**Dave Callard, Chairman of the Orleans County Legislature** said, “All of us here in Orleans County are so very excited about the commitment being made by Pride Pak and their beautiful newly constructed facility. Our team continues to work very hard to develop the kind of business friendly environment needed to attract great companies like Pride Pak to our community. This is an excellent opportunity for a wonderful long term partnership with Mr. Karr and his team.”

**Mike Sidari, Mayor of the Village of Medina** said, “Pride Pak has already become an extraordinary corporate citizen and valued member of our community. We take pride in the fact that the Village of Medina is always welcoming to new businesses and that Pride Pak has chosen Medina for its new corporate headquarters in the United States.”

Pride Pak is currently accepting job applications and those interested can apply directly at Pride Pak Canada or through the Orleans Center for Workforce Development in Orleans County.

For more about Pride Pak click [here](#)

## **Accelerating Finger Lakes Forward**

Today's announcement complements "Finger Lakes Forward," the region's comprehensive blueprint to generate robust economic growth and community development. The State has already invested more than \$3.4 billion in the region since 2012 to lay the groundwork for the plan – investing in key industries including photonics, agriculture and food production, and advanced manufacturing. Today, unemployment is down to the lowest levels since before the Great Recession; personal and corporate income taxes are down; and businesses are choosing places like Rochester, Batavia and Canandaigua as a destination to grow and invest in. Now, the region is accelerating Finger Lakes Forward with a \$500 million State investment through the Upstate Revitalization Initiative, announced by Governor Cuomo in December 2015. The State's \$500 million investment will incentivize private business to invest well over \$2.5 billion – and the region's plan, as submitted, projects up to 8,200 new jobs. More information is available [here](#).

## **About Empire State Development**

Empire State Development is New York's chief economic development agency. The mission of ESD is to promote a vigorous and growing economy, encourage the creation of new job and economic opportunities, increase revenues to the State and its municipalities, and achieve stable and diversified local economies. Through the use of loans, grants, tax credits, and other forms of financial assistance, ESD strives to enhance private business investment and growth to spur job creation and support prosperous communities across New York State. ESD is also the primary administrative agency overseeing Governor Cuomo's Regional Economic Development Councils and the marketing of "I Love NY," the State's iconic tourism brand. For more information on Regional Councils and Empire State Development, visit <http://www.regionalcouncils.ny.gov> and [www.esd.ny.gov](http://www.esd.ny.gov).

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