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## **New state-of-the-art dairy-processing plant in Idaho’s Magic Valley to fill growing demand for shelf-stable milk products**

*190,000-square-foot vertically integrated facility first of its kind in Idaho*

BURLEY, Idaho (March 16, 2023) — Suntado LLC announced at the Idaho Dairymen’s Association Legislative Banquet last night it has broken ground on a new state-of-the-art shelf-stable milk and alternative beverage manufacturing facility in Burley, Idaho. Scheduled to open in spring 2024, the multimillion-dollar facility will process approximately 800,000 pounds to 1 million pounds of local milk per day.

“This project has been a dream for dairy farmers Jesus Hurtado and Dirk Reitsma for a long time and it’s exciting to see their innovative approach come to life in the state that they love so much,” Suntado CEO Jeff Williams said. “Their commitment to detail, enthusiasm for big thinking, and their loyalty to the dairy community gives integrity to the capability of the Suntado name. That they saw an area to grow dairy consumption and stepped up to answer the call speaks volumes to the owners’ dedication to the future of this industry.”

The Burley plant will open with six production lines to produce conventional and organic extended shelf-life and ultra-high temperature dairy beverages and products. Suntado’s strategic growth plan includes multiple phases to expand to 18 production lines in the future. Milk will be procured in Cassia County, capitalizing on the very local nature of milk.

“This facility represents a new, pioneering mindset in which dairy products are designed to be a destination, not just a commodity,” Dairy West CEO Karianne Fallow said. “It’s exciting to see new product offerings and vertical integration in the same project. Dairy West has partnered with Suntado in helping the company get to market with products that meet the demands of our changing consumer landscape. This is good for dairy farmers, good for the dairy community, and certainly good for customer choice.”

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According to Fallow, value-added dairy products like ESL and UHT are popular options in today's changing marketplace.

"These innovations provide an expansion in the assortment of products available for rapidly shifting consumer demands," she said. "With trends favoring smaller households, growing dairy consumption around the world, access to easier food storage, and consumer concern over food waste and caring for the planet, ESL and UHT are in increasing demand."

Suntado plans to hire up to 95 full-time employees and provide market-competitive compensation and above-market benefits. The company identifies respect for its workers, operational safety, and quality products as its defining factors.

Reitsma is a second-generation dairy farmer, having recently taken over operations from his father, John Reitsma. It was the elder Reitsma's vision to vertically integrate in the dairy beverage space. Hurtado began his career working for other dairy farmers until the senior Reitsma helped launch his career as a cowman and landowner. Together, Reitsma and Hurtado produce 2.5 million pounds a day of milk on their collective conventional and organic dairies.

Williams said the project was only possible with the help of strong partners throughout the state, including Idaho Gov. Brad Little, the Idaho Department of Commerce, Idaho Department of Agriculture, Burley Mayor Steve Ormond, the City Council of Burley, Cassia County, Dairy West, and the Idaho Dairymen's Association.

Idaho is the third-largest dairy producing state in the country and is home to 376 dairies, nearly 700,000 dairy cows, and 19 dairy processing facilities. Idaho's dairy industry generates \$10.7 billion in sales annually and currently creates nearly 40,000 direct and indirect jobs in the state.

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