

Pero Family Farms eyes expansion in Vineland

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VINELAND - A Florida-based food company looking to establish a new location in the Northeastern part of the country has identified Vineland as the site for its expansion.

Pero Family Farms in December was approved by the New Jersey Economic Development Authority for a Grow NJ award totaling nearly \$19 million in tax credits over a 10-year span.

Pero — a produce grower, packager, processor and distributor — proposed a \$13 million investment in a new 118,400-square-foot facility at the corner of North Mill and Weymouth roads. No timeline for completion has been set.

The company plans to hire about 220 employees at the facility, according to the NJEDA.

"We are excited at the prospect of building Pero's presence in the Northeast, and see Vineland as a strategic point for meeting the growing demand for our products," Pero President and Chief Operating Officer Frank Pero said. "We appreciate the EDA Board's approval of Grow NJ tax credits, as they would help to offset the costs associated with doing business in this desirable location."

[Pero Family Farms](#), of Delray Beach, Fla., boasts a farming tradition dating to 1908. The company offers an array of fresh vegetables offered whole, as side dishes and as snacks. Pero also offers organic produce. Their products are available at retailers such as Walmart, Target, Wegmans, Whole Foods and a host of others.

"We are thrilled that the New Jersey EDA has approved the Pero Farms Food Company application for a Grow NJ award," Vineland Mayor Anthony Fanucci said. "The company would bring with it a century-long tradition of family farming that further strengthens our food processing sector, brings new employment opportunities for city residents, and grows our tax base."

"Our location and accessibility to major East Coast markets, low-cost municipal utilities, and competitive construction and labor costs make Vineland an attractive and profitable business location for the company to expand. We look forward to working with the Pero Farms team and to welcoming them to Vineland."

According to the NJEDA, Pero also was considering a site in East Hempfield, Pa., before settling on Vineland.

This is the latest in a handful of NJEDA-backed projects helping to bring businesses to Vineland. The most recent came in November when Vineland Poultry was approved under the Grow NJ program to pursue a 55,000-square-foot site on South Mill Road.

“Vineland offers many distinct logistical advantages, including access to New York and New Jersey ports, and the New Jersey and Pennsylvania turnpikes,” NJEDA CEO Melissa Orsen said. “Cumberland County is emerging as a hub for companies of all sizes and industries that recognize the benefits of a South Jersey presence.”