



sync[®] NEWS & OPPORTUNITIES

FROM N.C. COMMERCE



N.C. Commerce Secretary Tony Copeland (left) with UPS' Director of Transportation Keith Hill, during today's strictly socially distanced event in Greensboro.

Governor Cooper Announces UPS Will Launch 592-Job Expansion in N.C.

UPS, the multinational package delivery and supply-chain management company, will add 592 jobs in Guilford and Alamance counties, **Governor Roy Cooper** announced today (October 13). The company plans to invest a total of \$316.4 million at two sites over the coming four years.

Earlier this morning, **North Carolina Commerce Secretary Anthony M. Copeland** led a socially-distanced event in Greensboro to celebrate the project.

"The pandemic highlights that supply chain management and delivery services are critical during a crisis. These two expansions are a bold investment that add up to hundreds of jobs and millions in investment across North Carolina," said **Governor Cooper**.

"UPS appreciates the State of North Carolina for their support of these projects that will help UPS move our world forward by delivering what matters. The new and expanded facilities will increase the speed and flexibility for connecting businesses and customers throughout the state, across the country and around



BENESTAR BRANDS

International Snack Food Company to Invest \$24 Million in Kings Mountain

Benestar Brands, an international snack food manufacturer, will create 129 jobs in Cleveland County, **Governor Roy Cooper** announced today (October 13). The company will invest \$24 million to establish a new production facility in Kings Mountain.

"Even during a pandemic, companies like Benestar Brands can expand operations because of our strong workforce, quality transportation network and management of this crisis," said **Governor Cooper**."

Benestar Brands, the parent company of Evans Food Group, is a rapidly growing snack food manufacturer focused on better-for-you, high-quality snacks. The newest project in North Carolina will provide easier access to the fast-growing company's customer base and the nation's east coast market. This new facility will support Benestar Brands' expansion plans into new snack categories.

"After an extensive search throughout the southeast, we selected Kings Mountain, North Carolina for our newest production facility based on the state's strong support of the manufacturing industry and talented workforce," said **Carl E. Lee, Jr., CEO of Benestar Brands**. "Over the past year, our company has expanded our portfolio of innovative savory snacks, entering new categories that will be produced at this Plant. We look forward to an ongoing partnership with the State of North Carolina as we expand our company."

"Today's decision by Benestar Brands shows that North Carolina is a prime destination for companies of all kinds striving to innovate and

the globe," said **Derrick Johnson, president of UPS's South Atlantic District**. "This is an exciting time to be part of North Carolina's economic growth and we look forward to bringing additional jobs that pay well to the Greensboro area as a partner in the community."

UPS will expand its existing Greensboro hub with the addition of 141 new jobs and construct a new package car center at the N.C. Commerce Center in Graham, creating 451 jobs there.

New positions at both facilities will come with wages averaging \$65,147 per year, creating a total annual payroll impact of \$38.5 million for the region.

"The COVID-19 pandemic is changing the nature of global supply chains, and today's news is early evidence that North Carolina is positioned well for the future," said **Secretary Copeland**. "UPS is an iconic name in logistics and their expansion will impact the state's economy and business community in a number of very positive ways."

UPS's North Carolina expansion will be facilitated, in part, by a Job Development Investment Grant (JDIG). Over the course of 12 years, the project is estimated to grow the state's economy by more than \$1.4 billion.

Using a formula that takes into account the new tax revenues generated by the new jobs, the agreement authorizes the potential reimbursement to the company of up to \$10.23 million over 12 years.

The company's JDIG agreement will also result in as much as \$1.14 million in new funding for the state's Industrial Development Fund - Utility Account. The Utility Account helps rural and economically distressed communities finance infrastructure upgrades necessary in attracting job creation and investment.



(L-R, Front row) Jeff Phillips, Chair, Guilford County Board of Commissioners; Secretary Copeland; Keith Hill, UPS; Amy Scott Galey, Chair, Alamance County Board of Commissioners. (Back row) Ed Hooks, Mayor, City of Mebane; Brent Christensen, President & CEO, Greensboro Chamber of Commerce; Jerry Peterman, Mayor, City of Graham; Mac Williams, President, Alamance Chamber of Commerce; Marikay Abuzuaiter, Greensboro City Council.

The [North Carolina Department of Commerce](#) and the [Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina](#) led a collaborative effort to bring UPS's expansion to North Carolina. Also partnering in the project were the [North Carolina General Assembly](#), the [North Carolina Community College System](#), [Alamance County](#), [Guilford County](#), [City of Greensboro](#), [City of](#)

grow market-share," said **Commerce Secretary Anthony M. Copeland**. "Our state has the assets and amenities to support growing companies realize their strategic objectives."

The average annual salary for all new positions is \$43,021, creating a payroll impact of more than \$5.5 million per year. Cleveland County's overall average annual wage is \$40,019.

Benestar Brands was awarded a Job Development Investment Grant (JDIG) with a potential reimbursement to the company of up to \$1,212,000 over 12 years. Projects supported by JDIG must result in positive net tax revenue to the state treasury, even after taking into consideration the grant's reimbursement payments to a given company.

In addition to the [North Carolina Department of Commerce](#) and the [Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina](#), other key partners in the project include the [North Carolina General Assembly](#), the [North Carolina Community College System](#), [Cleveland Community College](#), [Cleveland County Government](#), [Cleveland County Economic Development Partnership](#), and the [City of Kings Mountain](#).



Governor Cooper Announces Merchants Distributors Will Expand and Create 111 Jobs in Hickory

Merchants Distributors, LLC, a wholesale grocery distributor founded in Hickory in 1931, will invest \$120 million to expand its services and operations, creating 111 jobs, **Governor Roy Cooper** announced September 30.

"Companies with roots in our state like Merchants Distributors understand North Carolina's advantages for their business," said **Governor Cooper**. "It's great to see a home-grown company, which could expand anywhere, once again choose our state and our workers to expand."

Merchants Distributors (MDI) and its parent company Alex Lee, Inc. were founded in Hickory and maintain headquarters there, distributing both food and non-food grocery items to more than 600 retail stores across

[Graham, City of Mebane, Greensboro Chamber of Commerce, Alamance Chamber, High Point Economic Development Corporation, Guilford Tech Community College, Guilford County Workforce Development Board, and Duke Energy.](#)



(L to R): North Carolina Senator Phil Berger, City of Eden Mayor Neville Hall, Purina Vice President of Manufacturing Nolan Terry, North Carolina Secretary of Commerce Anthony Copeland, Purina President Nina Leigh Krueger, and Rockingham County Board of Commissioners Chair Mark Richardson

Nestlé Purina PetCare Will Create 300 Jobs in Rockingham County

Nestlé Purina PetCare Company, the leading pet care company in the United States, plans to establish significant new manufacturing and distribution operations in Rockingham County that will become operational in 2022 and create up to 300 new jobs by 2024, **Governor Roy Cooper** announced September 30.

The company will invest \$450 million in a 1,300+ acre site near Eden that formerly housed a brewery, where it will manufacture and distribute Purina pet food.

"North Carolina's manufacturing workforce is strong, and this announcement is an important new phase in Nestlé Purina's growth," said **Governor Cooper**. "This company's global reputation for quality products, innovation, sustainability, and corporate citizenship fits well with our state's workforce, economy, and the business community."

Headquartered in St. Louis, Purina has been a trusted name among U.S. pet owners for nearly a century. Its brands include Purina ONE, Pro Plan and Dog Chow and Tidy Cats. The company's sales totaled \$9.4 billion in the Americas in 2019, and it employs more than 8,000 workers across 21 U.S. production sites. Since 2001, Purina has been part of Nestlé S.A., a global leader in nutrition, health and wellness based in Vevey, Switzerland.

"Eden is Purina's first manufacturing operation in North Carolina, and through this expansion we build on our more than 90-year history of making science-based dog and cat foods that pet owners trust," said **Nina Leigh Krueger, President, Nestlé Purina U.S.** "Despite the challenging times we have all been living in, Purina has remained resilient. This strategic and long-term investment demonstrates our commitment to providing high-quality nutrition for pets. We're thankful for the great partnership at the state and local levels, and we are excited to be a part of this community now and for many years to come."

the United States and other locations. The company's new project in Caldwell County will renovate and expand the company's existing facility in Hickory, including the installation of sophisticated logistics technology and automation to support rapid growth of the business.

"We are excited to continue to grow in Hickory where we were founded nearly 90 years ago," said **Brian George, Chairman and CEO of Merchants Distributors**. "The quality of life and the business support from North Carolina and our local community makes Hickory an ideal location to continue to grow our business."

"Nearly 90 years ago, Moses George – a Lebanese immigrant – and his two sons started this company with two trucks and 12 employees," said **North Carolina Commerce Secretary Anthony M. Copeland**. "Through hard work and vision, and a supportive environment for their business, this family built a company that now employs more than seventeen hundred people in North Carolina. It's an inspiring, North Carolina story."

Although wages for the new jobs will vary depending on position, the average salary will be \$51,634, above the current average wage in Caldwell County of \$40,124. The state and local area will see an additional impact of more than \$5.7 million each year from the new payroll.

A Job Development Investment Grant (JDIG) worth up to \$1,344,000 spread over 12 years will help facilitate the project.

In addition to the [North Carolina Department of Commerce](#) and the [Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina](#), other key partners in the project include the [North Carolina General Assembly](#), the [North Carolina Community College System](#), [Caldwell County](#), [City of Hickory](#), and the [Caldwell County Economic Development Commission](#).



Adventure Gear Manufacturer to Invest \$1 Million, Bring 70 New Jobs to Old Fort

Triple Aught Design, a US-based adventure gear company, will create 70 new jobs in McDowell County, **Governor Roy Cooper** announced October 2. The manufacturer will invest \$1 million to build and operate a cutting-edge apparel and gear production

"Today's announcement by Nestlé Purina marks a new beginning for this property and for the people of Eden," said **Commerce Secretary Anthony M. Copeland**. "The significant investment this global company is about to make here during this historic pandemic speaks forcefully about the safety, resilience and reliability of North Carolina as an international business destination."

Nestlé Purina PetCare's project will be facilitated, in part, by a Job Development Investment Grant (JDIG). Over the 12-year term of the grant, the project is estimated to grow North Carolina's GDP by nearly \$2 billion. Using a formula that takes into account new tax revenues generated by the 300 new jobs, the JDIG agreement authorizes a potential reimbursement to the company of up to \$4.31 million over 12 years. The company's operations are projected to generate \$61.23 million in state tax revenue over the life of the grant.



Maddie Grace, a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, poses in front of the future home of Nestlé Purina PetCare's 22nd U.S. manufacturing facility in Eden.

The [North Carolina Department of Commerce](#) worked closely with the [Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina](#) to facilitate Nestlé Purina Petcare's selection of Rockingham County. Other key partners in the project include the [North Carolina General Assembly](#), the [North Carolina Community College System](#), the [North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality](#), the [N.C. Rural Infrastructure Authority](#), [Rockingham County](#), the [City of Eden](#), [Rockingham County Center for Economic Development](#), [Norfolk Southern](#), the [North Carolina Railroad](#), and [Duke Energy](#).



U.K. Government and N.C. Commerce Hosting Educational Webinar on Offshore

facility and experience center in Old Fort.

"Today, the second largest industry in our state, manufacturing, is continuing to grow with Triple Aught choosing North Carolina for their East Coast operations," said **Governor Cooper**. "Companies like Triple Aught Design are drawn to our strong manufacturing workforce and premier quality of life to support their company's growth."

An employee-owned, American company, Triple Aught Design designs, engineers, produces and retails high-quality adventure apparel and equipment. Founded in 2010, the San Francisco-based manufacturer sells their products directly to consumers online, in their flagship retail store and with a select group of international retailers.

"We considered locations across the entire US, and are thrilled to have found a perfect location in Old Fort," said **Brett Eisenberg, CEO of Triple Aught Design**. "Western North Carolina's talented manufacturing base, proximity to our key textile partners, and inspiring wilderness areas make it an ideal location for our East Coast expansion."

"Innovation drives companies of all sizes and industry segments to North Carolina," said **North Carolina Commerce Secretary Anthony M. Copeland**. "Triple Aught Design is the newest addition to our state's impressive list of growing manufacturers, and we welcome the energy, values and vision that has led to their success."

A performance-based grant of \$210,000 from the One North Carolina Fund will help facilitate Triple Aught Design's expansion to North Carolina.

In addition to the [North Carolina Department of Commerce](#) and the [Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina](#), other key partners in the project include the [North Carolina Community College System](#), [McDowell Technical Community College](#), [McDowell County](#), [McDowell County Economic Development Association](#), and the [Town of Old Fort](#).

On Our Radar

- [Vast Majority of North Carolina Employers Plan Salary Increases in 2021 Despite COVID-19](#) (*Capital Associated Industries* - October 7)

N.C. in the News

- [College Launches New Training Initiative, Expands Training Center](#) (*Wake Tech* - October 12)
- [The Port of Wilmington receives \\$16](#)

Wind Energy

The United Kingdom has built a world-leading offshore wind sector.

On Friday, October 30, the U.K. Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office will host an educational webinar offering insights on how the U.K.'s experience can be applicable to North Carolina as the state actively explores the offshore wind energy sector.

The Department of Commerce is sponsoring the event, along with the Carbon Trust, a consultancy firm based in London.

The session will cover how policy and the private sector can build a domestic supply chain, develop workforce skills through educational partnerships, and redevelop existing infrastructure, including ports.

[Register Online.](#)

[million grant for improvements](#) (WECT-TV - October 9)

- [Carolina moves more research discoveries and inventions to market for commercial impact](#) (UNC - October 7)

About Us

SYNC is North Carolina Commerce's electronic newsletter for local government officials, private-sector allies, state policy makers, and other economic development leaders. We offer unfiltered details about new economic development projects and events, useful news about your peers, and opportunities to synchronize with statewide programs and tools in order to advance economic development in your community. [Send your story ideas to the editor.](#)

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