

Manufacturer of durable, 100% recyclable packaging to begin operations in the Charleston region

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For Immediate Release

A newly formed venture offering fully recyclable packaging for the pet food industry has selected the Charleston region for its headquarters and first manufacturing operation. American Synthetics is currently hiring its initial 50-person workforce and expects to invest \$25 million and add another 200 employees within five years. Located in Goose Creek's Crowfield Corporate Center, the company plans to begin production early in the second quarter of 2009.

"We're entering an extremely high-growth market for the United States," said Rom Reddy, Managing Partner for American Synthetics. "With the high costs associated with pet food bag breakage and pest infestation, large retailers are demanding a more durable alternative to paper packaging. Our polywoven material provides 100% protection, is fully recyclable, and is cost competitive with paper packaging."

Reddy estimates current U.S. demand for polywoven pet food packaging to be more than one billion bags per year while U.S. manufacturing capacity is a fraction of that. "We plan to produce 40 to 45 million bags during our first year of operation, incorporating the most advanced technology available," he said. He also noted the company's clean manufacturing process will produce no ground or air emissions.

Reddy is confident American Synthetics will be able to compete profitably with foreign-based manufacturers. "With the proper investments in technology, a strong workforce and an experienced management team, we can and will compete on the world stage," he said. "My business partners and I strongly believe in American manufacturing. In fact, most of the successful companies we've operated over the past few decades have been based in the United States."

In selecting a location for American Synthetics, company officials also considered northern Georgia where they have existing operations for another venture. According to Reddy, the Charleston area offered several advantages including quick port access, a highly respected workforce training program and an available facility that aligned perfectly with their needs.

Reddy also has previous business experience in the Charleston market. In the early 1990s, he was involved in the purchase of Exxon Chemical's Industrial Fabrics Division in Summerville. "This area has a very strong and supportive network for establishing and growing a business," he said. "Over the years, I've developed several personal and professional relationships. I look forward to being involved in the community once again."

This competitive location project was facilitated by the Charleston Regional Development Alliance (CRDA) in partnership with numerous public- and private-sector allies including the S.C. Department of Commerce, Berkeley County and the City of Goose Creek. The CRDA is an economic development organization working to advance the economy within the three-county Charleston region.

"Our region has once again attracted an innovative, value-driven company to locate its first operation here," said Jim Bryan, CRDA Chairman. "We celebrate announcements like this even in the best of times, but we're especially pleased in light of the current economic downturn. The spin-off impact from the quality jobs and financial investment will benefit the entire three-county region."

"American Synthetics' decision to not only invest in our state, but also generate significant job opportunities, is an incredible compliment to our workforce and efforts taken to establish a business-friendly environment that encourages growth and investment. We remain committed to working to better the economic soil conditions with meaningful reforms that will allow more businesses to thrive and create jobs in South Carolina," said Gov. Mark Sanford.

"Today's announcement is a reflection of the innovation and entrepreneurial spirit that exists in our state. American Synthetics will manufacture a resourceful product with strong market potential. This announcement is also a strong testament that the state's business-friendly climate, market access, skilled workforce and strong workforce training programs are working to encourage new investment and job creation even in these tough economic times. Thanks to the team efforts of state, local and regional leaders, Berkeley County will benefit from this investment," said Joe Taylor, Secretary of Commerce.

Dan Davis, Berkeley County Supervisor, welcomed the company to its new home in Goose Creek. "We are pleased to see such a progressive, future-oriented firm choose our community as its corporate home," he said. "Those of us who live and work in Berkeley County agree that you have picked the right location. We stand ready to ensure success for American Synthetics and your employees for many years to come."

By locating in Crowfield Corporate Center, American Synthetics joins a thriving business community operating within the master-planned campus. Goose Creek Mayor, Michael J. Heitzler, noted: "As our residential population continues to expand, we're committed to also growing our business sector. Our city is benefiting from a strong, diverse corporate base, and American Synthetics will certainly receive a warm welcome here."

About the CRDA

The Charleston Regional Development Alliance represents Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester counties with a mission to create improved opportunities for all residents within this three-county region. Working with a statewide network of allies, the Alliance markets Charleston to the world as a preferred location for business, and helps to facilitate new investment within the three-county area. The Alliance closely aligns its efforts with those of other organizations to drive a sustainable, regional economic development strategy. To learn more, go to charlestoneconomicdevelopment.com.

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