

Company keeps sugarbeet farmers supplied with seed

By DENISE RUTTAN
For the Capital Press

Tucked amid the rolling grass seed fields and faded barns of the tiny town of Tangent, Ore., you'll find a state-of-the-art sugarbeet seed processing facility with global reach.

Since 1970, Betaseed, the firm that processes sugarbeet seed here, has risen to become one of North America's leading suppliers. Adding to Betaseed's headquarters in Minnesota and another location in Idaho, the Tangent facility provides one arm of an intricate international supply chain. Betaseed's operation in Tangent processes more sugarbeet seed than any other facility in the U.S.

"The Tangent facility is Betaseed's only seed production and processing facility, so it is extremely important in Betaseed's supply chain," said John Enright, president of Betaseed Inc.

This supply chain keeps growers in business. About 1.2



Submitted photo
Betaseed's bare seed processing facility in Tangent, Ore.

million acres of sugarbeets are currently grown for sugar production in North America. This key crop supplies about half the nation's sugar supply.

But sugarbeets are not just a food crop. Betaseed has also developed Energy Beet seed, used for the production of bio-fuels.

Nearly 70 employees keep the Tangent facility humming, and it will be expanding sig-

nificantly in the near future, Enright said.

The \$40 million upgrade is targeted for completion in 2016. The project includes improvements to receiving, bare seed processing, treatments and coatings and finished goods.

On a little more than 11 acres, the facility now consists of an office building, quality and research-and-development laboratories, seed processing buildings, a maintenance shop and warehousing and shipping facilities. All seed harvested for commercial use is processed, packaged and shipped directly by the Tangent facility for growers throughout North America.

Here, seeds are processed in a high-tech computerized plant. Quality assurance experts perform more than 60,000 tests on these hybrid seeds each season. No sugarbeet varieties are grown for a crop in the Willamette Valley; only seed production is located here.

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