



Courtesy of Wilbur-Ellis

Wilbur-Ellis Co. marks the grand opening of its new dry fertilizer storage and blending facility Oct. 7 in Moses Lake, Wash. The facility allows the company to provide farmers with fertilizer more efficiently, a Wilbur-Ellis spokesperson says.

## Wilbur-Ellis opens fertilizer facility in Moses Lake

By **MATTHEW WEAVER**  
Capital Press

Wilbur-Ellis Co. has opened a new dry fertilizer storage and blending facility in Moses Lake, Wash.

The new facility allows farmers to receive their fertilizer in a quarter of the time it used to take, said Sandra Gharib, corporate communication specialist, Wilbur-Ellis Co.

“One of the big changes that we have recently seen is the need to be able to service our customers faster,” Gharib said. “As the equipment in the field gets larger and the farmer can cover more acres in a day, our need to be able to supply the farmers with the inputs they need in a timely manner also grows.”

The company’s facilities needed to be updated several years ago, Gharib said.

The facility was designed to consolidate fertilizer blending activities from multiple locations into one regional hub, according to a Wilbur-Ellis press release. It includes a high-speed receiving system for railcars and trucks, multiple loading towers and a high-intensity mixer.

“The new fertilizer blending equipment is the most advanced available on the market today, and provides our customers with high-quality, precision-blended fertilizers,” Gharib said. “Our customer’s needs are always changing, and we are always investing to meet those changing needs.”

Wilbur-Ellis will continue to look for areas in the Northwest and around the country to make investments in infrastructure, Gharib said.

# Ag economy drives Fabri-Kal’s decision to build plant in Burley

By **JOHN O’CONNELL**  
Capital Press

BURLEY, Idaho — Officials with a high-tech food container manufacturer said they chose to build a local plant based largely on the abundance of Magic Valley wheat and the site’s proximity to the Twin Falls Chobani yogurt factory.

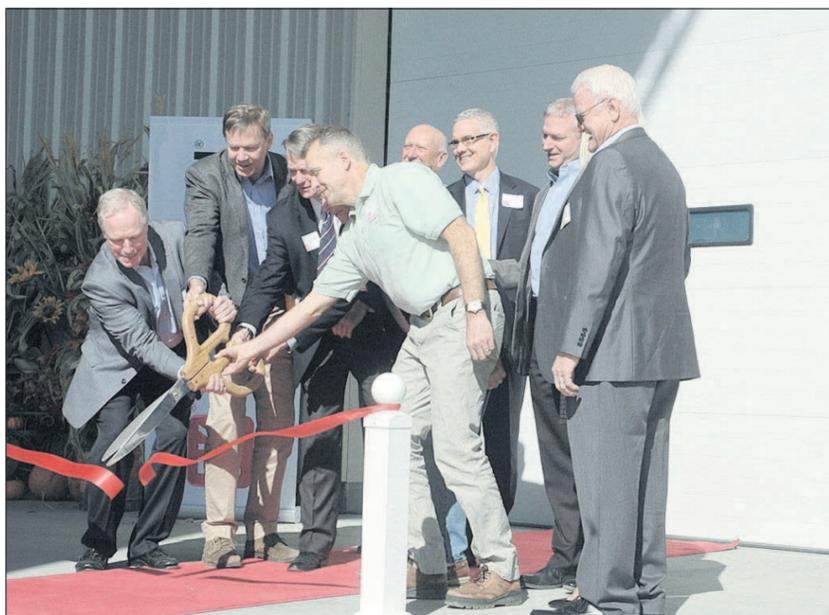
During an Oct. 15 ribbon-cutting ceremony and grand opening for the new Fabri-Kal plant, company officials explained they’ll need wheat as the main ingredient in a unique, new line of crop-based bowls, trays and to-go containers.

The opening of the Burley facility should also save Chobani nearly \$3 million in shipping of Fabri-Kal yogurt cartons, said Dan Thomas, chairman of the board with the Kalamazoo, Mich.-based company. Last year, Chobani awarded Fabri-Kal an exclusive contract to supply containers.

State and local dignitaries and economic development officials at the ceremony lauded the new business as the latest example of continued growth in Idaho.

“One of the great assets the Magic Valley has is the agricultural economy. This is a great example of that expanding to the next level,” said Jeff Sayer, director of the Idaho Department of Commerce.

The 100,000-square-foot facility is located on a former dairy and was built in just over six months. Fabri-Kal invested about \$10 million in construction and equipment and plans to employ about 50



John O’Connell/Capital Press

Officials involved in bringing the new Fabri-Kal container manufacturing plant to Burley, Idaho, cut the ribbon during an Oct. 15 grand opening ceremony. The plant will use wheat straw to make certain paper products and will produce Chobani yogurt cartons.



John O’Connell/Capital Press

Products made by Fabri-Kal are on display inside the new container manufacturing plant in Burley, Idaho, during an Oct. 15 ribbon-cutting ceremony and grand opening. The plant will use wheat straw to make certain paper products and will produce Chobani yogurt cartons.

workers at the plant.

About 90 percent of the construction labor force was

local, and about 100 workers were onsite at the peak of building, said Todd McDon-

ald, president of CSM Group, the project’s construction manager. The facility has been designed to accommodate a future doubling of its size.

“Our plan is to grow,” said Brian Hackett, who will serve as the Burley plant manager.

Hackett said Fabri-Kal — a \$350 million company founded 65 years ago with other locations in Michigan, Pennsylvania and South Carolina — emphasizes giving back to its communities. Fabri-Kal’s foundation has donated \$13 million to local causes, including United Way, grants to local schools, colleges and universities and college scholarships for children of employees.



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## 4-H'ERS TAKE DONATIONS FOR ANIMAL FIRE VICTIMS AND KIDS SPORTS PLUS HONOR VOLUNTEERS

By Tim Hearden  
Capital Press  
RED BLUFF, Calif. — 4-H members from Manton, Calif., felt a keen sense of empathy for ranchers and others who lost their homes and property in the recent Valley Fire in Northern California.

Manton, in the northeastern California foothills east of Red Bluff, has had several encounters with wildfires in recent years, including the nearly 30,000-acre Ponderosa Fire, for which the tiny town was evacuated in the late summer of 2012.

“We were close” to the flames three years ago, said 4-H'er Caleb Ramos, 12, adding that he was thankful he didn't lose his home to the fire. “But some of our friends did.”

Ramos and his friend, 11-year-old Alex Vieyra, were among Manton 4-H members collecting animal medical supplies at the recent Tehama District Fair in Red Bluff for people with large animals affected by the Valley Fire northwest of Sacramento.

The fire, which was 97 percent contained as of Oct. 1, has burned 76,067 acres in Lake, Napa and Sonoma counties, destroying 1,958 structures and causing four fatalities.

Ranchers who had fled the area returned home to find that some of their animals had survived, The Associated Press reported.

“We thought we should help them because we got a lot of help from people during the Ponderosa Fire,” Vieyra said.

The youngsters put out troughs for donated items during the fair Sept. 24-27.

“We just thought about it and did it,” Ramos said.

In other 4-H happenings in California, according to a statewide 4-H newsletter:

- 4-H students in San Benito County, near California’s Central Coast, recognized a need to provide recreational activities for school-age youngsters whose families can’t

financially afford to sign them up for youth sports leagues.

So students Erica Leung, Jessica Ward and Kelly McCullough began a service learning project with the theme, “Live Well, Be Well,” which focused on the importance of physical activity and healthy eating.

With the help of a civic organization, Youth Alliance, the youngsters held a donation drive to collect gently used and new sports equipment for local after-school programs and planned three days of visits at each school to participate in activities with the students and bring healthy snacks, according to the newsletter.

- With National 4-H Week occurring Oct. 4-10, statewide 4-H leaders honored the adult volunteers, instructors and team leaders who make all of the youth organization’s activities and programs happen.

In the last program year, 19,403 adult and teen volunteers contributed 1,464,225 total volunteer hours to 4-H in California.

“We can literally say thanks a million to you, our volunteers, the backbone of 4-H,” state 4-H Foundation executive director Paula Allison wrote in the newsletter. “Your gifts of your time and resources make our work possible.”



*Caleb Ramos, right, 12, holds a donated bag of veterinary wrap as Alex Vieyra, 11, looks on. The two 4-H members from Manton, Calif., were participating in a medical supplies drive for ranchers with large animals who were impacted by the Valley Fire in Northern California.*

Photo by Tim Hearden/Capital Press



*Austin Hood, right, of Bowman 4-H in Tehama County, Calif., lets a small boy pet his calf Sept. 25 at the Tehama District Fair in Red Bluff, Calif.*

Photo by Tim Hearden/Capital Press

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