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## Grant Secures Belmont Business

### \$1.45 million federal grant will help upgrade village wastewater treatment plant

The Village of Belmont has been selected to receive \$1.45 million in Economic Development Administration funds, from the U.S. Department of Commerce, for improvements to the village wastewater treatment plant. The total cost of the project is \$2.5 million.

"I am pleased to see funds working in our state and benefiting those areas that need them most," said U.S. Rep. Ron Kind (D-Wisconsin). "Investing in our rural towns is important to community life and is essential in ensuring continued economic development and job creation in western Wisconsin."

The Village of Belmont will use the funds to upgrade and expand the current wastewater treatment plant. This will handle the proposed flows from Montchevre-Betin Inc., one of the largest manufacturers in Belmont, as well as from future commercial and industrial development in the village. The funding will secure the retention of 140 jobs at Montchevre-Betin, Inc., according to Jean Rossard, vice president.

Rossard explained that the Bonner Branch Creek already has two direct discharges (vill-

age of Belmont and Lactalis), and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources did not want to approve a third direct discharge. "The only way to deal with it was to go through the village's treatment plant," state Rossard.

Montchevre-Betin's future also includes the construction of a digester. "Our digester will be producing methane gas that will be transformed into energy and rerouted to the utility company (Alliant) or, in the long run, to use in our boilers," stated Rossard. "The digester system will allow us to keep growing and reuse our by-product or waste to produce energy and be green at the same time."

Ground was broken for the digester about a month ago, and Rossard is hopeful it will be on-line in April or May.

Rossard noted that if the village did not secure the grant, they would have had to look for a new location for the business.

"This is a great accomplishment for the South-west Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission," said Ed White, economic development program manager, Southwest Wisconsin Regional Planning

Commission. "We've worked hard on this grant. It's great to see it come to fruition and help us to fund a much-needed project in the community."

Montchevre-Betin initially located in Fennimore in 1989 and moved to Belmont in 1995.

The company uses 100 percent natural goat's milk for their cheese products. The milk comes from approximately 200 farms in Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota and Missouri, of which, more than half are Amish farms.

Products range from bulk size (8-pound tubs) to the traditional crottin and goat logs, as well as other varieties and sizes.

Products are available in the United State through selected distributors.

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) serves as a venture capital resource to meet the economic development needs of distressed communities throughout the United States. EDA's mission is to lead the federal economic development agenda by promoting innovation and competitiveness, preparing American regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy.