

# **Gov. Pritzker And Ferrero Break Ground On \$214 Million Kinder Bueno Production Facility In Bloomington**

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**BLOOMINGTON** — Governor JB Pritzker joined Ferrero North America, as well as state and local officials, for the groundbreaking of Ferrero's Bloomington facility. This will be the first North American location to produce Kinder Bueno products. The company's commitment to further expand its Bloomington facility will bring a \$214.4

million investment to the area and create 200 new jobs over four years - generating economic benefit for the region and state.

“Central Illinois sits in the heart of our nation, so it’s only fitting that it serves as the heart of Ferrero’s North American operations: CRUNCH, 100 Grand, Raisinets, and now Kinder Bueno, all made right here,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “This expansion is a testament to Illinois’ quality workforce and reputation on the global stage, and especially the quality workforce right here in Central Illinois. I want to thank the entire Ferrero team for their partnership. Here’s to years of success for Ferrero and economic prosperity for the entire Bloomington-Normal metro area.”

The full expansion will add 169,000 square feet dedicated to producing Kinder Bueno, a popular Ferrero premium chocolate bar that launched in the U.S. in 2019. The ceremony marked the beginning of construction, with the full facility expected to be complete in 2024.

This builds on a significant economic impact generated annually by the company - with nearly \$300 million in output in Illinois alone, nearly 1,400 current full-time staff in Illinois, and more than 350 in Bloomington, making it one of the largest employers in the area. Additionally, Ferrero partners with Heartland Community College on an apprenticeship program that strengthens the workforce pipeline by training and certifying maintenance workers at the plant.

“This investment will fuel our momentum in North America, a strategic growth area for Ferrero. Enhancing our manufacturing capabilities in the market is key to driving our innovation agenda and advancing Ferrero’s goal of becoming a world leader in snacks and confectionery,” said Alanna Cotton, President and Chief Business Officer of Ferrero North America. “We’re grateful for the strong partnerships we have with state and local leaders here, and proud that our expansion is part of Bloomington’s amazing success story.”

The new Kinder Bueno production facility is an expansion of Ferrero's existing Bloomington manufacturing center, which is currently constructing a processing expansion that will make chocolate for Crunch, 100Grand, Raisinets, and other Ferrero products for the North American market, with expected completion in 2023.

“Ferrero’s expansion here shows why Illinois is the hub of America’s food and confections industry. Our incredible workers and world-class infrastructure are fueling innovation and growth,” said U.S. Senator Dick Durbin. “We thank Ferrero for making our state their chocolate manufacturing home in America – these investments are playing an important role in Illinois’ continued economic success.”

“Chocolate can evoke memories of trick or treating or a special dessert, but this time, chocolate is also driving jobs to Illinois,” said U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth. “I’m excited that Ferrero is investing in central Illinois’s economy and Bloomington’s working families, and soon, Illinois will have the distinction of being home to the first Kinder production center in North America. I’m looking forward to a sweet future of workforce development after today’s groundbreaking.”

“Today’s announcement is a key step forward in Ferrero launching its new Kinder Bueno production facility which will create more than 200 jobs and millions of investment dollars in the Bloomington-Normal area,” said DCEO Director Sylvia I. Garcia. “Illinois is committed to collaborating with job creators like Ferrero who invest in our communities and workforce as we work to create economic opportunities across our great state.”

Ferrero has made Illinois - and North America - a focus for investment in recent years, with the acquisition of the Bloomington plant as well as one in Franklin Park in 2018. They also broke ground on the chocolate processing plant in 2021, and the Kinder Bueno production facility, which was announced in June 2022. In 2023, the company is also slated to open a new Innovation Center which will include new Research & Development labs and offices for its cookies, cones, and crusts brand teams in Chicago.

“This groundbreaking is a logical step in what has been a series of transformational investments by Ferrero in our community,” said Bloomington Mayor Mboka Mwilambwe. “Beyond providing jobs, Ferrero has been a wonderful community partner, supporting community events and organizations. We look forward to a prosperous future together.”

As part of the expansion, the company received an Economic Development for a Growing Economy (EDGE) tax credit, which stipulates a goal of investing \$103 million and creating 75 jobs over the next two years. A link to the full agreement can be found [here](#).

Ferrero’s decision to locate the first-ever Kinder Bueno plant in Illinois builds upon a notable year for Illinois’ food processing industry. This includes the announcement that Kellogg will split its operations and relocate its headquarters to Chicago from Michigan, Tyson’s expansion in Caseyville which will create more than 250 new jobs, Eli’s Cheesecake expanding operations, and more.

To support the continued growth of companies in Illinois today and in the future, the Pritzker administration has utilized business investment strategies such as EDGE to

attract job creators. Other efforts include investing in Illinois' workforce with training in high growth industries, and the development of business development tools - including the apprenticeship tax credit - which encourages investment in high tech job training.