

Japan-based vinegar brewery, Marukan, locates to Spalding County, creates 15 jobs

Marukan is third company to locate to The Lakes at Green Valley industrial park

ATLANTA, Jan. 26, 2015 – The Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD) today announced that Marukan, a Japanese leader in rice vinegar brewing, will locate its second U.S. brewery in Griffin at The Lakes at Green Valley, the state's first eco-friendly park, creating 15 jobs and investing \$13 million into the project.

"The fact that a global leader chose Georgia to locate its first east coast production facility is an indicator that our state is the right place for businesses to flourish," said GDEcD Commissioner Chris Carr. "Our dynamic network of companies, interconnected transportation infrastructure and access to skilled talent continue to attract innovative businesses such as Marukan. We look forward to their continued growth here."

The 100,000-square-foot brewing facility will support the company's growing customer base in the Southeast. The manufacturing facility will produce, package and distribute premium rice vinegar using traditional brewing methods developed over three centuries. The Griffin plant will more than double the company's current production capacity, when combined with the Marukan brewery in California. Marukan will also work with students at the University of Georgia Griffin Campus to research opportunities for current and new products. Production is expected to begin in early 2017.

"It has been my dream and vision to build Marukan's second U.S. plant in the east," said Chairman Denzaemon Sasada. "This location in Griffin is ideal for our natural brewing method and we are very excited to join many other quality Japanese companies who have found a new home in Georgia." Headquartered in Kobe, Japan and Paramount, California, Marukan has been brewing rice vinegar since 1649 and celebrated its 40th anniversary in the U.S. last year. Marukan is the nation's leading maker of 100 percent organic rice vinegars which are popular in the largest health food chains such as Whole Foods Market, as well local independent natural food shops.

Japan is one of Georgia's top five investor nations and companies based in Japan employ more Georgians than any other international company in the state. Scott McMurray, division director of global commerce at GDEcD and Yumiko Nakazono, managing director of Georgia's office in Tokyo, worked with the Griffin-Spalding Development Authority to assist Marukan on behalf of the state of Georgia.

"Being selected by Marukan, with its nearly 400 year history of continuous operations, again validates the attractiveness of Spalding County and The Lakes at Green Valley as a top tier place to do business," said Chair, Griffin-Spalding Development Authority Chuck Copeland. "Company officials from both their US-based operation and Japanese corporate offices have been a pleasure to work with on this project."

"We are very happy to welcome Marukan into The Lakes," said Executive Director, Griffin-Spalding Development Authority David M. Luckie, CEcD. "This is a great project for our community and our new food center at UGA, and we continue to be thankful for the terrific partnership with the State and particularly with the Georgia Department of Economic Development's Scott McMurray and Joseph Huntemann who worked this project with us."

About Marukan Vinegar

Makers of the world's finest rice vinegar, Marukan Vinegar was founded in 1649 in Western Japan. Historical documentation supports that it was the first company to sell rice vinegar commercially at that time. Rice Vinegar, which is a naturally occurring acetic acid derived from rice alcohol, or sake, has been used to prepare and preserve foods long before there was electricity or modern refrigeration. The utilization of rice vinegar to preserve and season cooked rice and seafood is credited with the rise in popularity of sushi in Japan hundreds of years ago. Sushi cuisine boomed in the United States in the late 20th century and is now a world-wide trend that continues to grow. All Marukan products use the time-honored, slow-brewing Japanese process that creates the finest rice vinegar and ponzu sauces in the world.

In the Tokugawa Era (1603–1867) there was a saying that "Masamune means Sake and Marukan means vinegar," and as a guarantee of the unfailing quality of Marukan vinegar, the name of the company's founder, Suya Kanzaburo (Yasuhisa) was written on every barrel of vinegar produced. Later the first character of that name was designed into the present the company's trademark, which has continued to stand as a guarantee of Marukan's traditional skill and constant high quality that chefs in the finest restaurants and everyday homes alike use to bring out the very best culinary flavor.

Please visit www.marukan-usa.com for more information.

About the Georgia Department of Economic Development

The Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD) plans, manages and mobilizes state resources to attract new business investment to Georgia, drive the expansion of existing industry and small business, locate new markets for Georgia products, inspire tourists to visit Georgia and promote the state as a top destination for arts events and film, music and digital entertainment projects.

-END-

Contact:

David M. Luckie, CEcD

Executive Director

Griffin-Spalding Development Authority

P.O. Box 1009

Griffin, GA 30224

770.412.9200 Office

770.412.9222 Fax

David@gsda.net