

Construction begins for Cheney Brothers distribution center



City of Port St. Lucie, Cheney Brothers, St. Lucie EDC officials and Florida CFO Jimmy Patronis break ground for Cheney Brothers' distribution center at Legacy Park
Photo courtesy of the City of Port St. Lucie

Port St. Lucie/April 20 – Cheney Brothers, Inc. broke ground April 20 on its distribution center and food service warehouse in Legacy Park at Tradition.

The first phase of the family-owned Florida broadline food distributor's facility will be a 367,427-square-foot warehouse with refrigeration and freezer space, test kitchen, ancillary offices, 46 loading docks and a fueling station. At completion in mid-2023, the \$65 million project's first phase will bring at least 275 jobs to Port St. Lucie with wages that are 145% of the average earnings per worker in St. Lucie County.

Florida's Chief Financial Officer Jimmy Patronis opened the event with remarks about the growth and success of Cheney Brothers and the vitality of Florida's economy. Patronis has a longstanding

connection to Cheney Brothers through the hospitality industry; he is a partner in Captain Anderson's, a family-owned seafood restaurant that opened in Panama City in 1967.

"The city has been looking forward to this groundbreaking for a long time," said Port St. Lucie Mayor Shannon Martin. "We were working with Project Bullet before the pandemic slowed things down, so today is a special celebration of the future as we welcome this family-run South Florida institution to Port St. Lucie. The Cheney Brothers groundbreaking is another win for our Southern Grove jobs corridor that will further the city's strategic goal of building a diverse local economy."

"The city of Port St. Lucie has provided Cheney Brothers with a warm welcome to the Treasure Coast. The city, county and state have been exceptional to work with, along with the Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County," said Cheney Brothers CEO and Chairman of the Board Byron Russell. "We look forward to completing the new facility in 2023 and we look forward to a very long relationship with the city of Port St Lucie and St. Lucie County. We are glad to be here."

The new distribution center will be constructed on 53 acres fronting Interstate 95, joining FedEx Ground and an Amazon delivery station in the industrial park. When completed, the facility will service the restaurants, clubs and hotels in the region, and provide a safety net for supplies, if needed, when hurricanes strike. The facility is expected to expand by another 155,100 square feet with a future phase and the company owns 9.28 adjacent acres for additional expansion when needed.

"In opening a new distribution and warehouse facility in St. Lucie County, Cheney Brothers will ultimately be investing more than \$65 million in our county. Not only will more than 275 of our residents have the opportunity to secure jobs that pay close to 150% of our county's average wage, this investment will provide almost \$200,000 a year to fund our fire district, more than \$400,000 a year to educate our children, and so much more," said St. Lucie County Commission Chair Sean Mitchell. "As great economic development projects like Cheney Brothers come online, the county's tax rates can decrease without a reduction in services."

"Cheney Brothers is thrilled to be expanding to St. Lucie County. The Treasure Coast and Space Coast are growing areas and building a state-of-the-art distribution facility in Port St. Lucie will allow us to better serve our customers," said Cheney Brothers President John Reisigl.

A South Florida success story, Cheney Brothers was founded in West Palm Beach in 1925, has since expanded its footprint to Georgia and North Carolina and is in its fourth generation of family operation.

The company exports to 110 countries and has added divisions such as CBI Kitchen Designs and affiliate business lines such as Simply Nuts, Crazy Fish International, and Grand Western Beef.

After the new facility opens, local businesses and residents will have easy access to Cheney Express, the company's express pick-up service. Open to the public, Cheney Express offers an option to pick up frozen, refrigerated and dry items directly from the facility.

"Our work with businesses interested in locating here in St. Lucie County is exceptionally gratifying when the company is already in the South Florida region and is coming here to grow its footprint rather than relocate existing jobs," said Pete Tesch, Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County (EDC) president. "Having the opportunity to help bring more than 275 great jobs to Port St. Lucie and to Florida is a huge win for the city, the county and the state."

About the Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County

The EDC is a private, not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting economic vitality in St. Lucie County through the attraction, retention and expansion of businesses in the community. The EDC works in partnership with local governments and the private sector to advance its goals of creating more and better-paying jobs for residents, broadening the tax base and improving St. Lucie County's economic quality of life. Contact the EDC at 772.336.6250 or www.youredc.com.

About Cheney Brothers, Inc.

Founded in West Palm Beach in 1925, Cheney Brothers is a Florida-based, family-owned and operated food service company. Cheney Brothers is one of the fastest growing broadline food distributors in the U.S. The company operates various facilities across Florida, Georgia, and North Carolina, and also distributes internationally to more than 100 countries. For more information and available positions, visit www.cheneybrothers.com.

**Photo ID: From left, Cheney Brothers President & COO Shane Simmons, Port St. Lucie Mayor Shannon Martin, Florida CFO Jimmy Patronis; Cheney Brothers CEO Byron Russell, Laura Russell, Port St. Lucie Councilwoman Stephanie Morgan, Port St. Lucie Councilman David Pickett, Port St. Lucie City Manager Russ Blackburn, St. Lucie EDC President Pete Tesch*

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