

Fruit juice and oat drink manufacturer creates 54 jobs at new Co Tyrone site

A family run fruit juice and oat drink manufacturer is creating 54 new jobs at a site in County Tyrone after embarking on a major expansion to boost production.

Mulrines, a fourth generation County Donegal business which produces fruit juice from its own apple orchards as well as so-called plant-based beverages – made the announcement after securing a 22 acre site in Sion Mills. It is renovating existing buildings at the former linen factory in the town owned by the Herdman family from where it will increase its production of fruit juice and oat drinks.

The company supplies its products to the retail, wholesale and food service sectors in the Republic, the UK and into other markets.

The new jobs will be created over the next three years and include roles as operatives, administrators, team supervisors, maintenance and logistics. They will command salaries “in the mid £20k range”, delivering total annual salaries of some £1.4 million.

Peter Mulrine, Chairman of Mulrines, said the projects is the culmination of years of research, planning and negotiation.

“The UK plant-based beverage market is experiencing year-on-year growth and this new factory will provide an opportunity for us to enter the fast-growing oat drink market,” he said. “It also offers additional capacity for our core fruit juice and beverage business.”

He said the boost to production will allow the company to

increase its external sales.

“The construction of the new factory capacity and the resulting new jobs are just the first phase of our investment in Sion Mills. The additional production capacity offers a significant opportunity for us to deliver additional fruit juice sales across our existing and new markets. As a result of increased production, we are likely to need additional storage which will form the basis of our second phase of investment in the facility.”

Invest NI has offered support towards the creation of the roles, with funding provide once the jobs are in place.

“This project will see the former Herdmans site brought back to life after nearly 20 years, creating new employment in the area and delivering significant local supply chain benefits,” Mel Chittock, Interim CEO of Invest Northern Ireland said.

“We are pleased that our support has helped secure this investment for Northern Ireland. Sion Mills is one of Northern Ireland’s most historical industrial sites and we are delighted the company has chosen it as the location for this new factory.”