

Princes completes £60m investment in its Cardiff soft drinks factory

Food and drink manufacturer Princes has opened its expanded drinks facility in Cardiff following the completion of its £60m investment into the site.

The overall capital investment, which is the largest ever undertaken by the company in soft drinks, has enabled the company to install seven new soft drinks production lines as well as upgrade and refurbish two existing lines. The company has also strengthened the Cardiff factory's warehousing and logistical capabilities as well as built and commissioned a new ingredient processing centre.

Princes Cardiff is a centre of excellence for its fruit juices and customer-own label products. The site had previously only produced one-litre, ambient juices, multipacks and ready-to-merchandise display units. However, following the completed investment, the manufacturer now has the capability to produce ambient, mini and chilled drinks.

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This has doubled overall production capacity and created 130 new jobs, the company said. Princes in Cardiff is one of the largest employers in the area with over 260 employees.

The investment has also allowed Princes to expand its product range beyond fruit juice and enter new markets including the low and no alcohol category for the first time with its 'Skinny Mixers' range.

Head of operations Ian Davies said: "We're extremely pleased

to have completed this investment programme and proud of what we've achieved at Princes Cardiff following several years of hard work by our teams and partners, throughout the height of the pandemic and beyond.

"The investment has significantly boosted our production capabilities and capacity enabling entry into new categories as part of our ongoing innovation strategy. We have also introduced new pack sizes and formats to meet customer demand, and reduced Princes' carbon footprint through increased efficiencies and the use of more environmentally-friendly carton materials."

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He added that the changes means the firm is on track to reduce waste juice at the factory by over 2,000 tonnes. The Cardiff site is also part of a feasibility study to produce green hydrogen from biogas generated at a nearby waste-water treatment centre. The energy is being used by Princes to fuel boilers that generate heat for fruit juice pasteurisation.

Of the £60m investment by Princes, £3m was contributed by the Welsh Government.

Lesley Griffiths Welsh Government Minister for Rural Affairs said: "I am very pleased to have officially opened Princes'

expanded drinks facility following substantial investment which included £3m of Welsh Government support. We have a vision here in Wales to see our Food and Drink manufacturing sector turnover grow to at least £8.5bn by 2025, and developments such as this in Cardiff will be important in helping us realise the aim.”

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