



GREAT PLAINS

TECHNOLOGY & MANUFACTURING CLUSTER

JANUARY 2023 NEWSLETTER

Member Spotlight

Wenger Manufacturing -
Sabetha, Kansas



Our member spotlight this month is Wenger Manufacturing from Sabetha, Kansas. The company is an industry leader and pioneer in delivering extrusion and drying process solutions for aquatic feed, food, pet food, and various other industrial products.



During the Dust Bowl era, Wenger developed mixers for molasses and field stubble for suffering cattle, and have since grown to export extrusion processes for food and feed industries worldwide. Wenger's strong innovation culture has always been a key to their success. In addition to world-class manufacturing capabilities and processes, the Wenger Technical Center supports

very active research programs to test new concepts and develop new extrusion-based products. This allows the company to remain resilient during global crisis and stay highly competitive in terms of quality, innovation, and customer service. As part of their innovation culture, Wenger engages in innovative partnerships with many universities, including the K-State Technology Development Institute (TDI). TDI assisted with the design and build of a lab dryer, and will be providing redesigns for the company as well. *"We have worked with TDI on several projects for many years, and look to them for insight and capability. We greatly appreciate their support and look forward to future projects."* Lafe Bailey, Wenger.

Throughout its history, the company has always stayed true to its small-town roots and has reinvested aggressively to support Sabetha, Kansas. Wenger connects with its community by providing high school career training, manufacturing day tours, scholarships and local funding, while encouraging employees to serve in civic positions. In June 2022, Wenger closed on a long and challenging transaction process to sell the family-owned company to Marel, an Icelandic food manufacturer. The Wenger family selected this company because of its promise and commitment to continue supporting Sabetha, the Wenger brand, its employees, and customers. Marel and Wenger will also be creating a foundation for Sabetha and surrounding communities that their employees call home.



"Leaders must learn the subtle cues from their culture, employees, and key customers...but most importantly, leaders should have the confidence to lead towards those cues. That's why Wenger has always kept their employees and communities first for 87 years and counting." Lafe Bailey, Wenger.



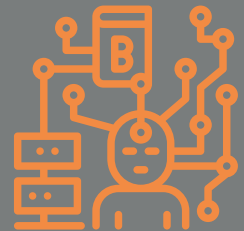
Under its new ownership with Marel, Wenger looks forward to further growing the already globally renown Wenger brand and developing strategic and budgeting plans for the future. This also includes a continued effort to connect with even more Kansas based companies for outsourced specialty manufacturing. For more information visit their

website at www.wenger.com.

Did You Know...

...that artificial intelligence (AI) is expected to create a total economic impact of \$15.7 trillion by 2030? (Source: [New Equipment Digest](#)).

Manufacturers all over the world are beginning to or have already implemented these processes to automate, collect meaningful data, and manage their operations.



Digitization is critical for future success. If your company is not sure where to start with AI or Industry 4.0, reach out to us to get started. Our team's technical expertise can guide you through questions you may have. Get started!

info@greatplainstmc.org.

Give Us A Follow!



NEW! Partner Program Feature

The GPTMC will be featuring a program from partners that can assist manufacturers in each newsletter. If you have a new/existing program that you would like featured, please reach out at info@greatplainstmc.org.

Kansas Industrial Training/Retraining (KIT/KIR) - KS Dept. of Commerce

The [Kansas Industrial Training \(KIT\)](#) and [Kansas Industrial Retraining \(KIR\)](#) are workforce incentives that assist with training new positions and job retention.

Eligible expenditures for both programs include:

- Instructor salaries
- Curriculum planning
- Materials, supplies, textbooks
- Training aids
- Minor training equipment
- Travel expenses

For more information, please reach out to your local [Regional Project Manager](#).



Upcoming Partner Events

- 2/1: JCCC SBDC Supplier Diversity Expo
- 2/16: Woman-Owned Small Business Federal Contracting Program

View and sign up for more events at <https://greatplainstmc.org/events>

Last Call for P2 Internship Host Companies



The K-State Pollution Prevention Institute (PPI) is accepting host company applications for their Pollution Prevention (P2) Internship program through early February. The P2 internship program is designed to connect Kansas industrial businesses with Kansas engineering and environmental science students to conduct research projects that lead to higher operating efficiencies, decreased regulatory compliance burdens, and smaller environmental footprints.

Under the guidance of PPI technical advisors and the host company supervisor, the 10-week internship provides students with hands-on experience in applying pollution prevention strategies in an industrial setting to solve challenges and add value to the operations. The research projects will target areas such as energy and water use, toxic chemicals, air emissions, hazardous and solid wastes, and employee risks.

For more information about the P2 internship and to know if your company qualifies, please visit <https://www.sbeap.org/intern-program> or contact the PPI office at ksu-ppi@ksu.edu - 800-578-8898.

Reminder! COVID-19 EIDL Loan Repayment

Did your business receive a COVID-19 EIDL Loan? Borrowers will begin or have already started making payments to their loans due to the 30 month deferment period ending. The Kansas City SBA, Wichita SBA, and Kansas SBDC offices hosted a webinar to walk attendees through the process of creating a SBA Capital Access Financial Systems account, how to make loan payments, identifying the loan servicing center, and other helpful resources.



Important details from the webinar include:

- The COVID-19 EIDL must be repaid. It cannot be forgiven and it is not a grant
- The first payment is due 30 months from the date of the original note.
- If you have a traditional disaster loan and a COVID-19 EIDL, you cannot combine them.
- If you have any business structure changes (new ownership, entity update, etc), you must notify the SBA.
- To make payments, borrowers must create an account on the [SBA Capital Access Financial Systems](#) (CAFS).

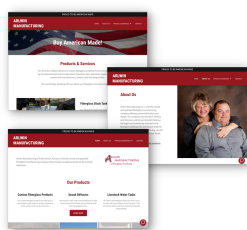
To watch the webinar, please visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zCdJeOw3wSg>. For more information about the COVID-19 EIDL, please visit the GPTMC information page at <https://greatplainstmc.org/covid19-eidl> to access additional resources, or reach out to your local [Kansas City](#) or [Wichita](#) SBA offices.

Website Development Program Success - Arlwin Manufacturing

Arlwin Manufacturing of Smith Center, Kansas received assistance from the Great Plains TMC to update their existing website.



The company is a fiberglass manufacturer that produces livestock water tanks, sound diffusers, and custom fiberglass component parts. Their products are typically made for recreation and transportation industries, farm and ranch supply companies, custom tank manufacturers, schools, and recording studios.



"We are so thankful for this great service and opportunity for manufacturers in the region! We will soon be selling the business, and know that this updated website will be a tremendous benefit for the new ownership. We are excited to see the business grow in the future!" - Garoleen Wilson, Office Manager.

For more information about Arlwin Manufacturing, please visit www.arlwinmfg.com. If you are interested in website or marketing assistance from the Great Plains TMC, please email us at info@greatplainsmfg.org to get started.

How Can You Engage with the GPTMC Community?

If you are new to the GPTMC or you've been here for a while, you may be wondering how you can become more involved with the manufacturing community. The GPTMC created this community to have a place for manufacturers to ask questions, find solutions, connect with needed resources, and network with others with the same goals in the region.



Being involved in the GPTMC not only helps the community grow, but it also helps businesses build relationships and increase their awareness and visibility. If you're

not sure where to begin, this blog will help you get started. It features suggestions on how you can further engage with the GPTMC, and shares resources and links to guide you through the community. Read the full blog [here](#) or visit www.greatplainsmfg.org to learn more.



2022 Year in Review

As we look forward to what 2023 has in store for the GPTMC, we want to express how thankful we are for all the support from the members and partners in this manufacturing community. Here's a quick view of 2022!

- 59 new members
- 259 total community members
- 28 events attended
- 12 presentation
- 11 blogs
- 5 website creations
- 2 website workshops

More from 2022



Partnered with fellow SBA RIC AgLaunch and KDA to support ag equipment manufacturers at the Ag Growth Summit



Attended two tradeshow events to support Kansas manufacturers and small businesses



Hosted a Central Kansas Manufacturing Network event at our facility to share our capabilities and services