

Sofidel Group Chooses Columbus, Ohio, for New U.S. Tissue Mill

Italy-based Sofidel Group this week announced plans to locate a new U.S. manufacturing facility in the Columbus, Ohio, Region. Pending required approvals and favorable due diligence, the facility will be located in Circleville.

The project represents the first U.S. greenfield project for Sofidel Group, one of the world's leading integrated paper manufacturers. Founded nearly 50 years ago in Italy and still privately held by families of the founders, the company is recognized as the sixth largest manufacturer of tissue paper in the world, with operations in 13 countries.

"The U.S. is the most important market in the tissue paper industry, so selecting an ideal facility location was critical to our continued growth in American markets," said Luigi Lazzareschi (photo), CEO, Sofidel Group. "Assistance from SelectUSA, JobsOhio, Columbus 2020, and the Pickaway Progress Partnership was critical in our evaluation of communities and selection of Circleville for our new plant."



The planned 1.4 million-square-foot Circleville manufacturing facility will increase production in the U.S. and is projected to be ready for operation in 2017. Manufacturing and management positions will be available, and hiring is set to begin in fall 2016.

"Pickaway is very excited to welcome Sofidel to our community," said Brian Stewart, president, Pickaway County Board of Commissioners. "The Board of Commissioners has worked closely with Pickaway Progress Partnership, the City of Circleville, and many other community partners to make our county an attractive place to do business, and the results are speaking for themselves. These new jobs will be an incredible addition to our local economy."

Successful collaboration between Columbus 2020 and SelectUSA was a driving force in Sofidel's attraction to the Columbus Region. The 2015 SelectUSA Investment Summit served as a catalyst for the relationship, allowing Columbus 2020 to display the Columbus Region's operational advantages for international companies. In the weeks following the SelectUSA event, Columbus 2020 was accompanied by the Pickaway Progress Partnership during a visit to the Sofidel facility in Italy, which is where company leaders first learned of the Circleville site.

"We're thrilled the SelectUSA Investment Summit provided a platform to initiate this relationship and a springboard for collaboration between a wide variety of community partners. We look forward to working with Columbus 2020 and the Sofidel Group as the investment progresses," said Vinai Thummalapally, executive director, Select USA. "Congratulations to all involved for seizing this opportunity and working hard to bring manufacturing jobs to Circleville."

The Columbus Region's attraction effort leveraged several public and private collaborators, including JobsOhio, American Electric Power, Columbia Gas of Ohio, Norfolk Southern, the Ohio Rail Development Commission, the Ohio Department of Transportation Jobs & Commerce division, Pickaway Progress Partnership and many private businesses and community officials.

"We are delighted that Sofidel chose Ohio for its first integrated greenfield facility in the United States," said JobsOhio Managing Director Glenn Richardson. "Sofidel's investment will establish an Ohio presence for one of the world's leading integrated paper manufacturers while creating jobs in Circleville."

The Sofidel Group is a world leader in the manufacture of paper for hygienic and domestic use. Founded in 1966, the Group has subsidiaries in 13 countries – Italy, Spain, Sweden, the U.K., Belgium, France, Croatia, Germany, Poland, Romania, Greece, Turkey, and the USA – with more than 5,200 employees. With a consolidated turnover of EUR 1,771 million (2014), Sofidel is the second ranking group in Europe in terms of production capacity in the tissue sector (1,050,000 metric tpy). "Regina," its most well-known brand, is present in all target markets. Other brands include Softis, Le Trèfle, Sopalín, Nouvelle, Thirst Pockets, KittenSoft, Nalys, Cosynel, Yummy, Soft & Easy, Volare, Onda, Lycke, Nicky, Papernet, Heavenly Soft and Confidence. Sofidel is the first company in the tissue sector to become a member of the WWF Climate Savers international program.

In 2010, hundreds of community and business leaders from across Central Ohio came together in an unprecedented way to develop the Columbus 2020 Regional Growth Strategy, an aggressive, decade-long plan to ensure economic vitality in the Columbus Region. Columbus 2020's mission is to generate opportunity and build capacity for economic growth across the 11-county Columbus Region. The Columbus 2020 team conducts business outreach, promotes the Columbus Region to market-leading companies around the world, conducts customized research to better understand the Columbus Region's competitiveness, and works to leverage public, private, and institutional partnerships. Funding is received from more than 300 private organizations, local governments, academic institutions and JobsOhio.