



BEL EXPANDS IN BROOKINGS: STRENGTHENING LOCAL PRODUCTION AND INNOVATION IN THE UNITED STATES



EDITORIALS

“ The U.S. is a strategic market for Bel and a cornerstone of our global growth ambition.

Over the past years, it has become one of the key engines of the Group's development, reflecting our ability to anticipate evolving consumer needs and adapt our portfolio to new lifestyles and usage moments. The expansion of our Brookings plant is a concrete illustration of our multi-local model in action: producing close to consumers, sourcing locally, and relying on empowered teams on the ground to drive both performance and innovation.

This investment reflects our long-term commitment to the U.S. market and to Babybel®, one of our most iconic and dynamic brands worldwide. Babybel® has found a strong resonance with American consumers across generations, as a convenient and portioned cheese that combines pleasure, simplicity and nutritional value. By doubling the production capacity of the Brookings site, we are reinforcing our ability to offer American consumers high-quality, accessible and nutritious products.

More broadly, this project illustrates the strategic direction Bel has taken in recent years: : evolving from a traditional dairy player to a global leader committed to



Purpose*Full Snacking with a portfolio of cheese, fruit and veggie snacks that support people's dietary preferences. As a mission-led company, Bel is committed to championing healthier and more sustainable food for all. The Brookings project fully embodies our two-legs model, where economic performance and sustainability progress together, and where industrial excellence plays a central role in creating positive impact.”



CÉCILE BÉLIOT,
CEO Bel Group

“ The expansion of the Brookings plant represents a major milestone in Bel's global industrial strategy. It significantly strengthens our manufacturing footprint in North America and enhances our ability to support the sustained growth of fast-moving brands such as Babybel®.

This project is not solely about increasing production volumes. It is about building a best-in-class industrial platform that combines performance, food safety, quality standards and operational excellence. The new production line integrates the latest technologies to improve efficiency, ensure consistent product quality and support a culture of continuous improvement across our operations.

With this expansion, Brookings now plays a central role within Bel's global network of factories and stands as a reference site for Babybel® production worldwide.”



MARC PANVIER,
Senior VP Operations

“ The Brookings plant has long been part of the local community, and this expansion marks an important new chapter in its history. It is the result of a strong collective effort by our teams, whose expertise, engagement and pride are demonstrated every day as they produce Babybel® for millions of American consumers.

Beyond industrial performance, the project brings concrete benefits to the region. It supports job creation, skills development and the strengthening of long-term partnerships with local suppliers and dairy farmers.

We are proud to contribute to the economic vitality of South Dakota and to position Brookings as a strategic industrial and innovation hub within Bel Group.”



VLADIMIR HOMOLA,
Plant Director, Brookings

“ Babybel® is one of the most loved cheese brands in the United States and a symbol of convenient, nutritious snacking. Its strong growth reflects evolving consumer expectations, including a growing demand for convenient and portion-sized snacks with just a few ingredients and delivering complete protein. In the U.S., Babybel® has naturally found its place in everyday moments as a practical and enjoyable cheese that fits real life.

This is the spirit of what we call Purpose *Full Snacking at Bel: offering snacks that are intentionally designed, combining nourishment, joy, and convenience. The expansion of the Brookings site allows us to better serve our customers and retail partners, while continuing to innovate across formats, recipes and packaging.

This investment confirms Bel’s ambition to accelerate its development in the U.S. and to make Babybel® a reference brand for on-the-go snacking that provides both fun and nutrition, and that is rooted in a strong brand, local production and long-term growth.”



PETER MCGUINNESS
CEO Bel North America



CONTEXT & STRATEGIC AMBITION

WHY EXPAND THE BROOKINGS PLANT?

The decision to expand the Brookings plant is rooted in several long-term trends shaping both the U.S. food market and Bel's strategic priorities. Babybel® is experiencing strong and sustained growth in the United States, driven by the rise of snacking and increasing consumer demand for portion-sized snacks that combine convenience, quality and nutrition. At the same time, expectations around food production are evolving, with greater emphasis on local sourcing, traceability and shorter supply chains.

In this context, reinforcing industrial capacity in North America is a strategic necessity for Bel. Expanding the Brookings site allows the Group to secure long-term production capabilities while remaining closely connected to consumers and retail partners across the country. It also strengthens our ability to serve U.S. consumers with snacks that are designed around real-life usage: portioned, convenient, and adapted to everyday moments.

BEL IN THE UNITED STATES

Bel has a long-standing presence in the United States, dating back to 1970, and operates under a multi-local model designed to produce close to consumers while sourcing key ingredients locally. In 1974, the Kaukauna Cheese brand moved to its facility in the Little Chute Industrial Park in Wisconsin. Bel maintained its presence in Little Chute through 1996, when Fromageries Bel and WisPride joined forces with Kaukauna Cheese to form Bel/Kaukauna U.S.A. Today, Bel operates several production sites across North America and markets a strong portfolio of iconic brands,

including Babybel®, The Laughing Cow®, Boursin® and GoGo Squeeze®. Local teams play a central role in driving growth, innovation and impact, with a high level of autonomy to adapt to market dynamics and consumer expectations. This local footprint is also what enables Bel to innovate with speed and relevance - translating consumer preferences into product, format and packaging improvements that can scale.

In the United States, Bel is also advancing its Purpose*Full Snacking vision, aiming to reposition the role of snacking within a balanced diet by encouraging more intentional choices. By championing fruit, veggie and dairy snacks, Bel seeks to provide nourishment and enjoyment while contributing to a more sustainable future of food.

This vision is reflected in Bel's focus on simple and personal nourishment, with snacks designed to meet a wide range of dietary needs, from simple ingredients and no added sugars to good sources of protein and plant-based dairy alternatives. Perfectly portion-sized formats make it easier for consumers to enjoy balanced, grab-and-go snacks wherever they are,

while also helping to limit food waste. In practice, this means designing snacks that people can adopt easily - at home, at work, on the move - without having to rethink their routine.

Bel also places strong emphasis on joyful choices, creating playful and delicious snacking experiences that transform everyday moments into more memorable ones. Its distinctive formats, including wedges, rounds, pucks and pouches, are designed to combine creativity, convenience and taste. Across the portfolio, the portion is a signature: it helps people enjoy the right quantity, supports convenience, and reinforces what makes Bel brands distinctive.

As a 160-year-old, family-owned company guided by its global commitment "for all, for good," Bel integrates sustainability at the heart of its strategy. This includes an ambition to support regenerative food systems and stronger communities, in particular through long-term partnerships with farmers, sustainable innovation, and circular economy solutions that aim to make more efficient use of packaging, water, waste and carbon, while preserving shared resources.



KEY FIGURES

2012

Bel announced plans to build a new state-of-the-art Mini Babybel® plant in Brookings, South Dakota, to meet growing consumer demand for Mini Babybel® in the United States.

Construction began in July 2013 and was completed in 2014, creating nearly 250 jobs at the site.



10,000 TONS
of Babybel® produced
per year at the Brookings site.

#1 MINI BABYBEL® MARKET WORLDWIDE

The United States is the leading country for Mini Babybel® consumption, reflecting the brand's strong penetration and sustained growth in the market.



100% AMERICAN MILK
used for Babybel® is coming from South Dakota
and neighboring states.

1.6

**MILLION
INDIVIDUAL CHEESES**
produced daily at the Brookings plant

6 MINI BABYBEL FLAVORS

Original, Light, Mozzarella, Gouda, Monterey Jack and White Cheddar are produced at the Brookings plant.



100% MINI BABYBEL®

The Brookings site is exclusively dedicated to the production of Mini Babybel®, allowing the plant to develop deep expertise in its manufacturing processes.

2014

The Brookings facility began operations near South Dakota State University, whose Dairy and Food Science Department supplies many of the site's employees and contributes to a local ecosystem focused on knowledge, food safety and modernization.

2027

Target date for Mini Babybel®
paper packaging (replacing cellophane
– the wax stays!)



THE BROOKINGS EXPANSION PROJECT

THE PROJECT AT A GLANCE

Designed to support Babybel®'s strong and sustained growth, the project will double the site's production capacity, increasing output from 10,000 to 20,000 tons. This expansion is supported by the installation of new production lines and the deployment of state-of-the-art industrial technologies.

Beyond capacity, the project reflects Bel's ambition to build a modern, high-performing industrial platform that meets the highest standards of quality, food safety and operational excellence. The new installations are designed to support



long-term efficiency, consistency and reliability, while reinforcing Brookings' role within Bel's global manufacturing network. Miron Construction is the General Contractor and I&S Group (ISG) is the designer of the building.

ECONOMIC & LOCAL IMPACT

The expansion also supports the creation of new jobs and represents a significant industrial investment in the region. By strengthening the site's activity over the long term, the project contributes to the vitality of the local economic ecosystem and deepens Bel's roots in South Dakota.

A key dimension of the project lies in its impact on the local dairy sector. Today, the Brookings plant receives approximately 650,000 pounds of milk per day, representing around 13 trucks. This volume corresponds to the production of approximately 10,000 cows. With the expansion, the plant's milk intake will double, with an additional 650,000 pounds of milk delivered daily, further strengthening partnerships with local farmers and reinforcing Bel's commitment to local sourcing.



**650,000
POUNDS
OF MILK PER DAY**

**CURRENT HEADCOUNT
IS 260 EMPLOYEES.
WE PLAN TO ADD ROUGHLY
150 NEW EMPLOYEES
TO THE BROOKINGS TEAM**



BABYBEL® AT THE HEART OF THE PROJECT

FOCUS ON BABYBEL®

At the heart of the Brookings expansion is Babybel®, a brand that has accompanied generations of consumers and holds a unique place in everyday food. With its instantly recognizable round shape and iconic red wax shell, Babybel® has long stood for a simple, joyful and practical way of enjoying cheese. Babybel® is an iconic global brand and one of the most recognizable cheese brands in the United States.

Over time, Babybel® has continuously evolved alongside changing lifestyles and consumption habits, while remaining true to what makes it distinctive. Its perfectly portioned format has made it a reference for convenient, on-the-go snacking, combining pleasure and nutrition in a way that is accessible to all generations from children to adults. Currently we produce and average of 1.6 million Babybel® cheeses every day. With the completion of the expansion, we will double the capacity, bringing our total to more than 3 million Babybel® snack portions every day.



PRODUCT COMPOSITION & INGREDIENTS

The Babybel® products manufactured at the Brookings plant are made with 100% American milk and rely on real, high-quality ingredients: pasteurized cultured milk, salt, microbial enzymes. This small, round, melting cheese is naturally a good source of calcium and 4g of protein with 100% real cheese snack with no artificial growth hormones, artificial colors, flavors, or preservatives. Production follows strict food safety and quality standards, ensuring consistency, reliability and trust at every stage. The portion format plays a central role, offering the right quantity to support balanced consumption, reduce food waste and fit seamlessly into everyday moments.

By placing Babybel® at the core of the Brookings project, Bel reinforces the brand's strategic role in the U.S. market. The expansion supports Babybel®'s continued growth while preserving what has made it successful for decades: a unique recipe and taste, an unmistakable identity, and a joyful, practical experience that adapts to the expectations of today's consumers.

LOCAL SOURCING & MILK SUPPLY

US MILK SOURCING

Milk used at the Brookings plant is sourced exclusively from American dairy farmers. This local sourcing approach allows Bel to ensure strong traceability and rigorous quality controls throughout the supply chain, from farm to production site.

By working closely with its suppliers, Bel builds long-term partnerships based on trust, transparency and shared standards. These relationships play a key role in guaranteeing consistent quality and food safety, while supporting the reliability of supply needed to sustain Babybel®'s growth in the United States.

COMMITMENT TO LOCAL VALUE CHAINS

Beyond production requirements, this approach reflects Bel's broader commitment to local value chains. By sourcing milk locally and producing close to consumers, Bel actively supports U.S. agriculture and contributes to the resilience of regional dairy ecosystems. Through sustainable, long-term relationships with farmers and suppliers, the Group seeks to create shared value and reinforce its positive economic impact within local communities.



INNOVATION, R&D AT BROOKINGS

BROOKINGS AS AN INNOVATION HUB

Thanks to continuous investments in the modernization of its equipment and the strong commitment of its teams, the Brookings plant stands out for its industrial excellence, its capacity for innovation, and its compliance with the highest standards of quality and food safety. Today, the site produces nearly 10,000 tons of Babybel® per year, representing close to 1.6 million Babybel® cheeses every day.

Alongside its industrial role, the Brookings site is positioned as a platform supporting innovation within Bel's U.S. footprint. The expansion of the plant goes hand in hand with the creation or reinforcement of R&D capabilities, designed to accompany the site's development over the long term. At Bel, innovation starts with usage: understanding how people snack, and translating that into product, process and packaging improvements that can be delivered consistently at industrial scale.

Brookings is expected to play a role in future Babybel® innovations, contributing to the brand's ability to evolve in line with consumer expectations and market dynamics. By combining industrial expertise with innovation capabilities, the site supports Bel's ambition to continuously improve its products while maintaining the highest standards of quality and food safety.

WHAT KIND OF INNOVATION ?

Innovation at Brookings may cover several dimensions. It can involve product innovation, with a focus on recipes, formats or nutritional profiles. It can also relate to process innovation, aimed at improving efficiency, performance and operational excellence across production lines. Packaging innovation is another key area, supporting the evolution of materials, designs and solutions that enhance consumer experience while meeting industrial and quality requirements. This innovation logic also supports Bel's ability to respond to region-specific preferences, while staying true to the identity of its iconic brands.

Through this approach, Brookings contributes to Bel's broader innovation ecosystem, linking industrial performance with continuous improvement and long-term value creation.



BEL'S INDUSTRIAL FOOTPRINT

BEL FACTORIES WORLDWIDE

As a global food company, Bel Group relies on a broad and diversified industrial footprint, designed to support its multi-local model. Bel's factories around the world are strategically located close to consumers, enabling the Group to combine local production, strong sourcing standards and industrial performance.

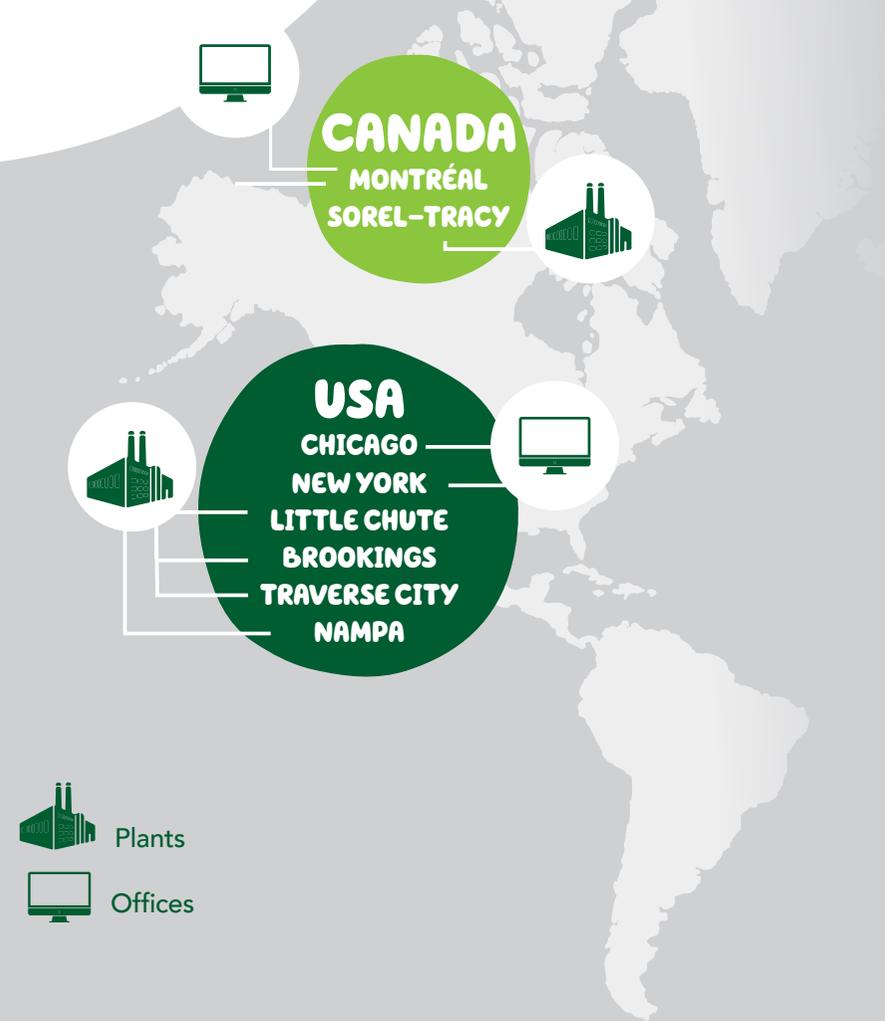
Within this global network, the Brookings plant holds a strategic position. As a dedicated Babybel® production site serving the North American market, Brookings plays a central role in supporting the brand's growth in the United States. The site contributes to the Group's ability to secure production capacity, ensure supply reliability and deploy industrial best practices at scale.

INDUSTRIAL EXCELLENCE

Across all its factories, Bel is guided by a strong commitment to industrial excellence. Food safety is a non-negotiable priority and is embedded at every stage of production.

High quality standards ensure consistency, reliability and trust in Bel's products, while performance is continuously monitored and improved to support efficiency, competitiveness and long-term sustainability.

Through its global industrial footprint, Bel combines scale and proximity, innovation and rigor, reinforcing its ability to deliver high-quality products while remaining closely connected to local markets and communities.



ABOUT BEL GROUP

The Bel Group is a major player in the cheese, fruit and plant-based snacking segment, which mission is to provide healthier and more sustainable food for all. Its portfolio of differentiated and internationally recognized brands includes The Laughing® Cow, Kiri®, Babybel®, Boursin®, Pom'Potes® and GoGo squeeZ®, as well as some twenty local brands. Together, these brands enabled the Group to achieve sales of €3.7 billion in 2024. Around 11,000 employees in 60 subsidiaries around the world contribute to the Group's mission. Bel products are manufactured at 30 production sites and distributed in more than 120 countries.

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