

GREENVILLE UPGRADES

Thermo Fisher Scientific's plant is a boon for eastern North Carolina.

Thermo Fisher Scientific, one of the nation's largest biotechnology products manufacturers, is expanding its capacity to produce prefilled syringes and vials thanks to a \$74 million upgrade to its Greenville plant.

This expansion is part of a \$150 million global investment in three fill-and-finish plants. It will allow the company to increase capacity through the purchase of new equipment and technology, according to Michelle Logan, senior director of operations.

Last August, Thermo Fisher completed its \$7.2 billion acquisition of Patheon, the Durham-based company that formerly operated in the 1.5 million-square-foot facility alongside DSM Pharmaceuticals. The combined organization delivers an end-to-end solution for clients, from initial drug formulation to clinical trials and then to commercial production, according to Mari Mansfield, a company spokeswoman.

It's one of the world's leading facilities for the manufacturing of aseptic, or sterilized, liquid fill, oral-dosage forms and lyophilized products. Lyophilization, also known as freeze-drying, allows materials to be shipped more efficiently and stored longer.

The investment won't impact hiring, Mansfield adds, but she predicts growth in the future.

"We are now up to 1,500 employees at our Greenville location and are excited about this new investment," she says. "We do foresee long-term growth here, and our plan is to drive talent acquisition over the next five-year window."

Thermo Fisher employs 2,900 across the state. Worldwide, the company boasts 70,000 employees and more than \$20 billion in annual revenue.

The Greenville plant manufactures 700 products and serves 400 customers, including some of the leading pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, Mansfield says.

"We've worked on 48 of the top 100 selling medicines. We have launched 117 new drug approvals in the last decade, and we produce more than 20 billion solid doses and 250 million sterile doses a year," she says.

Today, Thermo Fisher invests \$215 million in payroll, temporary



A \$74 million upgrade to Greenville's 1.5 million-square-foot Thermo Fisher Scientific plant will increase the pharmaceutical manufacturer's capacity through new equipment and technology.

labor, capital expenditures and taxes in the state and spends \$120 million with state vendors.

"Thermo Fisher is very successful here, and we have created a strong partnership with the state," Logan says. "North Carolina, as a whole, is a desirable place to be, with access to talent and a diverse infrastructure. We have quality of life and economic stability."

North Carolina also offers partnership opportunities with universities, community colleges and state agencies, which provide avenues for growth, development and jobs, she adds.

In 2016, North Carolina voters approved a \$2 billion bond package to support statewide capital improvements, two-thirds of which will go to fund improvements in higher education, specifically STEM education, career readiness, medical sciences and business. Thermo Fisher is collaborating with the state in these efforts.

"During its time in North Carolina, Thermo Fisher has leveraged its partnerships to help support key development issues, including the Connect N.C. Bond Act, which will expand to include STEM programs on campuses across the state," Mansfield says.

Logan, who has been involved in the company for most of the last 18 years, is excited to see growth continue in Greenville.

"We do a great job here. Greenville is a great place to live and fulfill our mission of producing products that are healthy, clean and safe," she says. "The future is limitless." ■

— Teri Saylor is a freelance writer from Raleigh.