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Weekly highlights from the
North Carolina Department of Commerce

Walmart Distribution Facility to Create 450 Jobs in Alamance County, N.C.

Governor Pat McCrory and North Carolina Commerce Secretary Sharon Decker announced today that Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. will open a major perishable grocery distribution center in Alamance County. This facility will serve an estimated 123 Walmart retail stores across North Carolina and surrounding states. The company intends to create 450 jobs and invest more than \$100 million over the next three years in Mebane.

"North Carolina continues to be a top choice for companies looking to establish advanced distribution facilities," said Governor Pat McCrory. "We have the skilled workforce Walmart needs to grow and flourish in North Carolina."

Walmart has retail general merchandise and grocery stores throughout the United States and in many countries throughout the world. Each week, more than 200 million customers and members visit its 11,000 stores and Sam's Clubs under 69 banners in 27 countries and e-commerce websites. With fiscal year 2013 sales of approximately \$466 billion, Walmart employs 2.2 million associates worldwide-1.4 million in the U.S. alone. Walmart currently employs more than 52,000 people in North Carolina.

"We're committed to promoting economic growth in North Carolina and we know that many of those jobs will come from existing companies like Walmart," said N.C. Commerce Secretary Sharon Decker. "Walmart's decision to locate in Alamance County is wonderful news for the local community and the entire state."

"Walmart's new distribution center will bring jobs and economic growth to North Carolina and help us maintain the high quality of our produce and other perishable groceries throughout the region," said Bryan Boudreaux, senior vice president for logistics in Walmart's Eastern Division. "We are looking forward to working with city, county and state officials, in the coming months as we develop our plans and move toward construction."

Other partners that helped with this project include: the N.C. Department of Commerce, N.C. Community Colleges, N.C. Department of Transportation, Alamance County, Alamance County Economic Development Foundation, the City of Graham, the City of Mebane, and the Golden LEAF Foundation.



Gov. Pat McCrory at the Spuntech announcement on Tuesday, Dec. 10

High Tech Israeli Textile Manufacturer to Expand in Roxboro

Governor Pat McCrory and N.C. Commerce Secretary Sharon Decker announced today that Spuntech Industries, Inc., a global spunlace manufacturing company based in Israel, will expand its operations in Person County. The company plans to create 60 new jobs and invest more than \$35 million over the next three years in Roxboro.

[Anna Lea Moore](#) served as the developer on the project for the N.C. Department of Commerce.

"North Carolina continues to be a top choice for global companies looking to establish advanced manufacturing facilities," said Governor Pat McCrory. "This proves how important our investment in education, research and infrastructure is resulting in good jobs for North Carolinians."

Spuntech Industries, Inc. develops and manufactures hydroentangled fabric products. It currently employs 94 workers at the production facility in Roxboro.

"We are very excited about the additional investment in the Roxboro site. With the success of our last investment, we look forward to a bright future in the U.S. with our new expansion," said Gidi Krasny, CEO of Spuntech Inc. "We appreciate the support of the local community as well as the state of North Carolina in assisting us in providing high quality people to match our state of the art operation."

[Rod Forsythe](#) served as the developer on the project for the N.C. Department of Commerce. [Read more.](#)

AIG to Create 230 Jobs in Charlotte

Governor Pat McCrory and North Carolina Commerce Secretary Sharon Decker announced today that American International Group (AIG) will establish a technology center in Mecklenburg County. The company plans to create 230 new jobs in North Carolina by the end of 2017 and invest more than \$5.5 million in Charlotte. [Uconda Dunn](#) served as the developer on the project for the N.C. Department of Commerce.

"We're proud of the financial and professional services cluster that has formed in the Charlotte region, and AIG will be a welcome addition to the community," said Governor McCrory. "Global industry leaders know that Mecklenburg County and North Carolina offer them a large pool of highly-skilled talent, a strong business climate and outstanding infrastructure, which entities like AIG need to succeed."

The AIG center will provide application development and management services for the company. AIG is a leading international insurance organization serving customers in more than 130 countries. The company is a leader in property casualty insurance, life insurance and retirement services and mortgage insurance. United Guaranty Corporation (UGC), AIG's mortgage insurance division, is headquartered in Greensboro and AIG Property Casualty, AIG's property and casualty insurance division, has existing operations in Charlotte.

"Attracting high-tech jobs like those with AIG is a great fit for the Charlotte region," said N.C. Commerce Secretary Secretary Decker. "We're excited to welcome the company to the North Carolina family and know they'll find success here like UGC did."

Other partners who assisted with this announcement include: the N.C. Department of Commerce, N.C. Community Colleges, Charlotte Chamber, Mecklenburg County, the City of Charlotte, Charlotte Center City Partners, and the Charlotte Regional Partnership. [Read more.](#)

Assembly Systems Manufacturer to Create 38 High-Paying Jobs in Iredell County

Governor Pat McCrory and N.C. Commerce Secretary Sharon Decker announced on Dec. 6 that [Weber Screwdriving Systems Inc.](#) will locate its manufacturing operations in Iredell County. The company plans to create 38 high-paying jobs and invest more than \$2.3 million over the next three years in Mooresville. The N.C. Department of Commerce's [Ron Leitch](#) was the developer on this project.

Since 1958, Weber Screwdriving Systems Inc. has provided assembly system solutions across highly demanding production environments. Their capabilities range from feeding and installing micro medical pins and screws, to large bolts and heavy fasteners.

A privately held company with its current headquarters in New

Other partners that helped with this project include: the N.C. Department of Commerce, N.C. Community Colleges, Person County, the City of Roxboro, and the Person County Economic Development Commission. [Read more.](#)

Food Manufacturer to Create 57 Jobs in Pitt County

Governor Pat McCrory and N.C. Commerce Secretary Sharon Decker announced on Dec. 4 that [Natural Blend Vegetable Dehydration, LLC](#) will open a manufacturing facility in Pitt County. The company intends to create up to 57 jobs and invest more than \$12 million over the next three years in Farmville. The N.C. Department of Commerce's [Donna Phillips](#) was the developer on this project.

"Bringing manufacturing jobs to Eastern North Carolina is a priority for my administration," said McCrory. "Companies like Natural Blend Vegetable Dehydration know that Pitt County offers the skilled workforce and strong business climate they need to succeed."

Natural Blend Vegetable Dehydration, LLC is being developed by Ham Produce Company, Inc., for the purpose of dehydrating vegetables for use as an ingredient in various food products.

"This jobs announcement is significant because it will have a positive impact on not only Pitt County but also on growers throughout the region," said Decker. "We applaud Ham Produce and Natural Blend Vegetable Dehydration, LLC for investing in Eastern North Carolina."

Ham Produce Co., Inc., with headquarters in Snow Hill, operates one of the largest farming operations of sweet potatoes in the state.

"We are excited about the new venture and the opportunity it will bring to area growers," said Ham Produce Co., Inc. Vice President Stacy Ham. "It has been our goal to bring jobs back to the Farmville facility since we purchased it in 2009."

The project was made possible in part by a performance-based grant from the [One North Carolina Fund](#) of up to \$114,000. The One NC Fund provides financial assistance, through local governments, to attract business projects that will stimulate economic activity and create new jobs in the state. Companies receive no money up front and must meet job creation and investment performance standards to qualify for grant funds. These grants are contingent upon local matches.

Salaries will vary by job function, but the average annual salary for the new jobs will be \$38,123, plus benefits. The Pitt County average annual wage is \$33,769.

York, Weber is the world leader in screwdriving technology. The company plans to open a new U.S. headquarters as well as a manufacturing facility in Mooresville.

"Weber USA has been impressed by the cooperation of the city, county and state governments in North Carolina. This is evidence of a business friendly state and everyone we have dealt with has been motivated in assisting Weber USA make North Carolina the most suitable venue for our company relocation," said Weber USA President Jim Graham. "With the regrowth in American manufacturing and our cutting edge assembly systems technologies, we expect a very bright future in a new U.S. headquarters located in Mooresville. This will help bring additional investment and more skilled jobs to area."

The project was made possible in part by a performance-based grant from the [One North Carolina Fund](#) of up to \$40,000.

Other partners that helped with this project include: N.C. Community Colleges, Iredell County, the Town of Mooresville and the Mooresville-South Iredell Economic Development Corporation. [Read more.](#)



The listening tour's first stop was in Durham on Sept. 20.

Decker Completes Listening Tour across North Carolina

North Carolina's senior economic development leadership is one step closer to developing a long-term strategic plan for growing the state's economy, as N.C. Commerce Secretary Sharon Decker and Tony Almeida, senior advisor to the governor on jobs and the economy, have completed their listening tour across the state. They conducted the final event on Dec. 2 in Wilmington.

Over the past 90 days, Decker and Almeida, as well as members of the N.C. Economic Development Board, have traveled to eight events in each of the newly established Prosperity Zones to hear from economic development professionals, community, business and education leaders, and other stakeholders about the barriers and threats to progress and local opportunities for economic growth.

"It's been an eye-opening experience to meet with stakeholders in their own communities and hear their thoughts and ideas about improving the economy of our state," said

Other partners that helped with this project include: N.C. Community Colleges, N.C. Department of Agriculture, Pitt County, Pitt County Development Commission, Pitt County Committee of 100 and the Town of Farmville. [Read more.](#)

Governor McCrory Announces Appointments to the Rural Infrastructure Authority

The Office of Governor Pat McCrory announced the following appointments to the Rural Infrastructure Authority on Dec. 5:

The Governor's appointees

- Thomas S. Hester Jr. (Vance County) - Hester is the president of Prim Residential Rentals, Inc. He is the chairman of the Vance County Commissioners. Hester will hold an at-large seat on the board.
- Kevin Corbin (Macon County) - Corbin is the owner of Corbin Insurance Agency. He is the chairman of the Macon County Board of Commissioners. Corbin will hold an at-large seat on the board.
- Celo Faucette (Alamance County) - Faucette is retired from LabCorp after 36 years of service. He is a councilmember of the Burlington City Council. Faucette will hold an at-large seat on the board.
- Steven Wangerin (Onslow County) - Wangerin is the chief executive officer for W.T. Humphrey Group. He is the vice chairman of the Jacksonville/Onslow Chamber of Commerce. Wangerin will hold an at-large seat on the board.
- Garry Terry (Bertie County) - Terry is a regional ag services field supervisor with the N.C. Department of Commerce. He has experience as a firefighter and farmer. Terry will hold an at-large seat on the board.

Senate President Pro Tempore Phil Berger's appointees

- Jeff Etheridge Jr. (Columbus County) - Etheridge is a retired group president for BB&T. He has also served on the Board of Trustees for UNC-Wilmington and was also once the chairman.
- Charles DeVane Jr. (Bladen County) - DeVane is the owner of DeVane Builders. He is also chairman of the Elizabethtown ABC Board.
- Pamela Cundiff (Rockingham County) - Cundiff is the vice president of Travel Consultants Inc. and also serves as the chair of the Rockingham County Partnership for Economic Development & Tourism.
- The Honorable Theodore Westmoreland (Cleveland County) - Westmoreland is the president of Westmoreland Printers Inc. and is also the vice chair of the Pinnacle Classical Academy.
- Tracy Philbeck (Gaston County) - Philbeck is

Decker. "We all share a common goal of improving the quality of life for all North Carolinians by creating jobs, and it was validating to hear common themes and ideas everywhere we traveled."

More than 1,000 people attended events in Durham, Hickory, Pinehurst, Winston-Salem, Concord, Asheville, Greenville and Wilmington. Recommendations and discussion from the listening sessions revolved around similar topics that included: infrastructure needs, economic development strategies, importance of tourism, workforce development needs and suggestions, role of community colleges and universities, support for small businesses, less regulations, focus on rural North Carolina, importance of the military, energy and agribusiness, and the need to speed up all processes.

In addition to the listening sessions, a survey was also distributed to all invitees and attendees. More than 1,000 surveys were completed, and that data, along with comments and input from the zone meetings, will be presented to the NCEDB on Dec. 11.

Data from the statewide survey includes input on which industries to focus on, how important exports and foreign investment are, what employers are saying about the quality of the workforce, recommendations to help local businesses, and what state government can do to grow the economy and create more jobs.

Once all the listening tour information is presented to the NCEDB this week, the Board will incorporate findings into its 10-year strategic plan for growing the economy in the state. It will be the responsibility of the new Economic Development Partnership of N.C. to implement the plan.

[N.C. commerce secretary 'committed' to film industry growth](#) (*Port City Daily*, Dec. 3)

[Commerce Secretary wraps up statewide listening tour in Wilmington](#) (WWAY, Dec. 2)



North Carolina Office of
Science & Technology

N.C. Board of Science & Technology Releases 2013 Tracking Innovation Report

North Carolina is in the midst of transitioning to a knowledge- and innovation-based economy with many high-tech sectors increasing in employment and high-tech wages well above the national average. That's according to data compiled in [the 2013 Tracking Innovation report](#) released on Dec. 5 by the N.C. Board of Science & Technology.

Another indicator of North Carolina's move to a knowledge-based economy is the state's strong universities, which excel at research & development, generate significant intellectual property, and produce a well-educated and well-trained science and engineering workforce.

"What this report reveals about North Carolina is critically important if we want to accelerate our recovery from the deepest recession in more than a generation," said N.C. Commerce Secretary Sharon Decker. "This report highlights key trends and themes that must be considered when undertaking efforts to promote economic opportunity throughout the state."

the president of Treescap, Inc. He has served as the Gaston County commissioner of the Dallas Township since 2009. Philbeck is a member of the National Association of Counties Community & Economic Development Steering Committee.

Speaker of the House Thom Tillis' appointees

- Lige Daughtridge (Nash County) - Daughtridge is the principal of Daughtridge Sales Co. Inc. He is a past board member and president of the Tar River Kiwanis and is the current vice chair of the Boys & Girls Club of Nash/Edgecombe counties.
- The Honorable Darrell McCormick (Yadkin County) - McCormick is a former member of the State House of Representatives. He owns a real estate company and served on the House Commerce and Job Development Committee in 2011-12.
- Lee Grantham (Robeson County) - Grantham is the managing partner at NurserySouth. Prior to this position, Grantham was president of Grantham Farms & Nursery. He has served on the Board of Directors for the Lumberton Area Chamber of Commerce.
- Beth Foster (Washington County) - Foster runs two farming operations with her husband Bryan. She is the secretary and treasurer of the Blackland Farm Managers Association and a member of the Commissioner's Circle along with Commissioner of Agriculture Steve Troxler.
- Brady Dickson (Montgomery County) - Dickson started a printing and packaging business in Mt. Gilead. He is the director of the Montgomery Fund, an affiliate of the N.C. Community Foundation. He also served as county commissioner of Montgomery County for 12 years.

The authority reviews and authorizes grants and loans for rural areas within the state. Members formulate policies for making these loans and grants and create ways for the Rural Economic Development Division of the N.C. Department of Commerce to effectively aid local governments in meeting preliminary project planning costs, as well providing insight into the application and review process.

The group also reviews the efficacy of these loan and grant programs and submits its ideas for improvement by September 1 of each year. The authority met for the first time on Dec. 6. [Read more.](#)

CORRECTION

North Carolina's Southeast and North Carolina's Eastern Region inadvertently were omitted in the Dec. 3 issue of SYNC as partners participating in the Chemtex economic development project. SYNC regrets

The report tracks North Carolina's performance in 38 measures of the state's innovation-related assets, activities, and trends. Findings by category include:

Economic Well-Being: North Carolina has one of the fastest-growing populations in the nation, but the productive capacity of its economy is below average, with a higher-than-average share of its residents either unemployed or with low wages and incomes.

Research & Development: North Carolina excels at academic research & development, but the total level of the state's R&D, particularly that performed by businesses, is insufficient to fuel and sustain strong economic growth.

Commercialization: North Carolina organizations, especially its academic institutions, generate significant intellectual property, but the level of the state's commercialization activities must be stronger to realize the full economic and social benefits of that intellectual property.

Innovative Organizations: North Carolina's high-technology sectors have wages well above the U.S. average and are increasing in employment, but a large share of the state's industries and employment is not high-tech in nature and has below-average levels of entrepreneurship.

Education & Workforce: North Carolina has a well-educated and well-trained science and engineering workforce at the more-advanced levels, but the overall educational attainment level of its residents is below average, as is the educational attainment level of a majority of its recent in-migrants.

"We hope this information will assist efforts underway to build effective partnerships between higher education, industry and government," added Decker. "I know that the N.C. Economic Development Board is reviewing the report and will be including the report's findings in its 10-year strategic plan."

[N.C.'s innovation economy ranks average compared to other states, report finds](#) (WRAL Tech Wire, Dec. 6)

the error.

Year-to-date Metrics

Below are year-to-date metrics tracked by the N.C. Department of Commerce's Division of Business and Industry Development that illustrate some of the recent activities of the Division. The metrics include the number of new economic development projects assigned to B&I development staff; the number of economic development project announcements; the number of announced jobs created and capital invested; the number of interactions existing industry staff had with businesses throughout the state; and the number of contacts received by the Business Link North Carolina/Business ServiCenter.

Jan. 1 - Dec. 10, 2013

New projects assigned:	341
Projects announced:	129
Jobs announced:	16,468
Capital investment announced:	\$2.5B
Industry visits by existing industry staff:	989
Calls to Business Link N.C.:	18,224

N.C. in the News

This Week's Highlights

- [AEP Industries to add 16 jobs in equipment expansion in Stallings](#) (*Charlotte Business Journal*, Dec. 5)
- [2 reasons why a Japanese candy maker chose Orange County to expand](#) (*Triangle Business Journal*, Dec. 5)
- [Reality TV show apparel company moves to Salisbury, plans to buy building](#) (*Salisbury Post*, Dec. 4)
- [Sharon Decker wants N.C. to go after advanced manufacturing, aviation, defense jobs in 2014](#) (*Charlotte Business Journal*, Dec. 4)
- [McCrory aide: State focused on new jobs](#) (*The Robesonian*, Dec. 4)
- [Charlotte Chamber cites 7,208 new jobs, \\$728M in investment in 2013](#) (*Charlotte Business Journal*, Dec. 4)
- [FedEx Ground to expand Kernersville hub in early 2014](#) (*The Business Journal of the Greater Triad*, Dec. 4)
- [Report - Sea turtles have economic impact](#) (*StarNews - Wilmington*, Dec. 4)
- [N.C. residents drive 23.7 minutes to work, and other eco-devo trivia](#) (*Triangle Business Journal*, Dec. 4)
- [S&D Coffee & Tea to open roasting facility](#)



The Christmas tree at I-77S Welcome Center in Mecklenburg County

Tourism Division, Welcome Centers Display N.C.-Grown Christmas Trees

The N.C. Christmas Tree Association and the N.C. Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services have provided Christmas trees and wreaths for the lobby of the N.C. Department of Commerce's Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development and for each of the state's nine Welcome Centers. The trees feature ornaments supplied over the years by the state's attractions and cities to spotlight and promote their sites and areas. The trees promote North Carolina's Christmas tree industry, which is ranked second in the nation in the number of trees harvested. The N.C. Fraser fir is the most popular Christmas tree in North America and is shipped across the country and internationally, too.

[in August](#) (*Charlotte Business Journal*, Dec. 3)

- [Still trucking: Cargo Transporters Inc. to add 50 jobs, invest \\$28 million](#) (*Hickory Daily Record*, Dec. 2)
- [Sabo USA is Lincoln's Industry of the Year](#) (*The Gaston Gazette*, Dec. 2)
- [Fireworks: Nucor steel plant in Hertford Co. growing](#) (*The Virginian Pilot*, Dec. 1)
- [CCCC Automotive Restoration program unique in state](#) (*The Sanford Herald*, Dec. 1)
- [Report from the Road: Community Colleges Leveraging Partnerships for Economic Growth](#) (Work in Progress blog, Nov. 27)

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