

## **Marquez wants growth; city orders smell reduction first**

By Eiji Yamashita

Hanford Sentinel, Tuesday, March 23, 2010

Marquez Bros. International has submitted plans to expand the manufacturing capability at its downtown Hanford facility, but city officials have ordered the company to get rid of the stench first.

The food manufacturer is proposing a small addition to its existing plant on Fifth Street so it can produce desserts, rice pudding and power drinks in addition to cheese and whey products. To ease the burden on the city's sewer system as it handles liquid waste from its sprawling operation, the company began pre-treating its own wastewater a few years ago.

Then along came the strong foul odor that could make anybody wince who is within a mile of the plant.

When the company submitted its application about six months ago, the city saw it as opportunity to address that nuisance.

"We didn't want to just approve a project until we were assured that their pretreatment plant was brought up to standard to begin with," said John Stowe, senior planner. "That's why we didn't process the project right away. We wanted to make sure improvements are made to the pretreatment plant to prevent the odors."

Preventing the smell was one of the original conditions when Marquez was first allowed to build the pre-treatment plant, Stowe said. But it apparently went out of compliance when the plant began fouling up the air daily.

With the smell-prevention measure finally in place, the city is ready to take action on Marquez's conditional use permit.

On Tuesday, the Hanford City Planning Commission is scheduled to hold a public hearing and consider whether to approve the additional operation proposed by Marquez. The meeting will be in the Council Chambers of the Civic Auditorium, 400 N. Douty St.

This expansion of the manufacturing operation will be entirely within the existing structure and is considered an infill project, according to the staff report prepared for the commission. The expansion will only use a small portion of the pre-treatment facility capacity, but modifications are needed to eliminate odor nuisance, the report says.

The Planning Commission meets every second and fourth Tuesday at 7 p.m.

## **Fresno State lands \$600K to study dairies, air quality**

The Business Journal Friday, March 19, 2010

California State University, Fresno is the recipient of a \$597,990 grant to study the impact of dairies on the region's air quality.

The grant was announced today by National Institute of Food and Agriculture, part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It said Fresno State researchers will examine the impact of dairy facilities on regional ozone, particulate matter, greenhouse gases and odor levels.

Project activities will be used to train students in research techniques and to develop new courses to encourage students to pursue agricultural careers with an emphasis on science, technology, engineering and math, according to a USDA news release.

The grant is part of \$5 million being released nationally to address air quality issues in the fiscal year 2009 to develop ways to reduce and mitigate emissions from ag operations. Fresno State was the only California university to see a chunk of that money.

"Agricultural producers need the most effective practices and technologies to prevent or mitigate greenhouse gases or other contributors to climate change," said Roger Beachy, USDA chief scientist and NIFA director. "This research will build effective mitigation strategies and help farmers and foresters learn and adopt best management practices that reduce agricultural emissions."

## **Chevron project tests solar technologies**

By John Cox, Californian staff writer

Bakersfield Californian, Tuesday, March 23, 2010

With so many executives and dignitaries on the guest list, Chevron might have taken some time over the weekend to wipe down solar panels that were the subject of a big company event Monday on the dusty site of a former Oildale refinery. But no.

A thin coating of light brown soil covered row after row of pricey solar panels as company staff gave tours to members of Kern's political and business communities.

The dirt, Chevron people felt obliged to point out, was no oversight. Nor will it be cleaned off anytime soon. It's supposed to be there.

The Brightfield Solar Demonstration Chevron unveiled Monday is a test of promising new photovoltaic technologies. It's also a competition among seven solar panel manufacturers.

Over a period of at least three years, panels from each of the seven manufacturers are to withstand the same conditions -- heat, wind, fog and dust -- with no maintenance or human intervention.

How well each set of panels performs is to be measured against a default set of conventional solar panels. Chevron plans to pair the data with readings from an adjacent weather station and share the information separately with each manufacturer.

Whichever panel-maker performs best in terms of price, efficiency, ease of installation and durability could get a contract to outfit future Chevron solar fields.

"This is going to be, for some of them, their first really live" demonstration project, said the vice president of emerging energy for Chevron Technology Ventures, Jerry Lomax.

Brightfield is the largest side-by-side solar demonstration in the country, according to Chevron. It is one of three places where the company has essentially recycled a facility for use in generating renewable power.

The project is the latest renewable energy demonstration to come to Kern. Other cutting-edge technologies being tested in the county or proposed here range from biogas to wind power to hydrogen energy.

Originally Chevron talked with some 180 manufacturers last summer about getting some of their solar panels on the 8-acre Oildale site off East Norris Road. Chevron selected the companies it considers the most hopeful in terms of their products' electricity generation and cost. These were Abound Solar, Innovalight, MiaSol, Sch&#252;co, Solar Frontier, Sharp and Solibro.

Taken together, solar panels at the site generate 740 kilowatts of energy, enough to power motors on 30 to 40 of the 9,000 oil wells Chevron operates in the area. Company officials said some of that power could be sold to Pacific Gas and Electric Co. to supply homes and businesses.

The top executive of one of the solar manufacturers represented Monday, Innovalight President and CEO Conrad Burke, expressed confidence that his company's technology would outperform the others. The Sunnyvale-based company "prints" silicon ink onto solar panels, which Burke said reduces costs and increases output.

Chevron said it covered some of the other manufacturers' costs. But Innovalight donated a relatively small solar array and let the oil company pay for installation.

We're absolutely thrilled with this," Burke said. "Chevron's been a great partner."