



GREATER GREEN BAY  
CHAMBER

press release

**PHOTOS ENCLOSED:**

- Steve Van Lannen, president and COO, American Foods Group;
- Scott Willert, president, America's Service Line;
- Kelly Armstrong, vice president of economic development, Greater Green Bay Chamber
- Laurie Radke, president and CEO, Greater Green Bay Chamber

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**GREATER GREEN BAY CHAMBER UNVEILS BACK TO BUSINESS  
GRANT - AMERICAN FOODS GROUP IS INAUGURAL FUNDER**

**SCHNEIDER FOUNDATION, CITY OF GREEN BAY AND BADGER STATE  
BREWING COMPANY ALSO CONTRIBUTE**

Green Bay, Wis. - (April 30, 2020) – The Greater Green Bay Chamber, in collaboration with inaugural funder American Foods Group (including the company's trucking arm, America's Service Line), is pleased to introduce the Greater Green Bay Back to Business Grant. The grant caters to small- and medium-size businesses whose operations have been significantly impacted as a result of COVID-19.

“The Chamber continues to find ways to serve the needs of small business as 88% of our members employ fewer than 100 employees. We also know the majority of small

businesses are seeking some form of financial support in the face of COVID-19. We created this new grant opportunity specifically for this important segment of our business community,” said Laurie Radke, president and CEO of the Greater Green Bay Chamber.

An initial \$200,000 investment by American Foods Group, including America’s Service Line, enabled the grant fund’s creation. Other contributors that have since joined the effort include The Schneider Foundation, Breakthrough, City of Green Bay and Badger State Brewing Company.

Eligible businesses (defined below) may apply for and received upwards of \$10,000 so long as they have not already received from the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) or Federal SBA Disaster Loans and Emergency Grants.

The American Foods Group assembly of Green Bay plants, known as Green Bay Dressed Beef, initiated and organized the monies for the Greater Green Bay Back to Business Grant. The idea originated in those plants; key leadership within each Green Bay plant rallied to provide the funding, including Ed Arnstad, vice president of operations at Green Bay Dressed Beef, AFG Acme Street Location (544 Acme St., Green Bay); George Cherney, vice president of operations at AFG East River Ground Beef Location (800 University Ave., Green Bay) and Rory Lasee, plant manager, Northland Kosher Location (210 Alexander St., Green Bay).

“We started as a small business and remain a family-owned business,” said Steve Van Lannen, president and COO of American Foods Group. “We support the Greater Green Bay small business community and the Greater Green Bay Back to Business Grant and we look forward to seeing our community businesses back up and running.”

“The Greater Green Bay small business community supports our employees,” said Arnstad. “We want to give back and support those businesses to ensure they will be there for our employees in the future.”

“The time is now to support our city in which our 1,500 Green Bay employees live in and depend on,” added Cherney.

“COVID-19 has affected everyone in our community and funding this grant will allow AFG to give back to our employee community,” said Lasee.

The company’s trucking arm heard about the opportunity and quickly moved to join the effort.

“Greater Green Bay’s small businesses are the heart and soul of the community and America’s Service Line is proud to be a part of it. The hardworking business owners feel like an extension of our family-owned business and we couldn’t be happier to support them,” said Scott Willert, president, America’s Service Line.

The Chamber’s goal is to provide the funds to eligible business owners as quickly as possible so they can get back up and running as quickly as possible.

“Small business is the foundation of the Chamber and at the heart of the Greater Green Bay community,” said Kelly Armstrong, vice president of economic development, Greater Green Bay Chamber. “We’re very excited to have American Foods Group provide the first ‘yes’ to create the fund and offer a true grant opportunity directly for those who need it most.”

The funds will be awarded to eligible Brown County businesses that meet a few qualifying criteria:

- An eligible business is defined as a Brown County-based business in an industry outlined in Emergency Order #12 – Safer at Home Order, or by any subsequent Emergency Order or that demonstrates it is otherwise affected by the COVID-19 outbreak due to a decrease in the physical foot traffic on which their business depends.
- Employs 5 to 50 employees;
- Has been in business for a minimum of 2 years;
- Demonstrates an income loss as a result of Emergency Order #12 or the COVID-19 outbreak.

A four-person grant committee comprised of business leaders will review and make prompt decisions on the simple and straightforward grant applications starting Wednesday, April 29, 2020.

Armstrong expects other medium and large Greater Green Bay companies will follow suit and contribute funding for the small businesses in the community served by this fund.

To apply, or for more information, visit <https://thestartuphub.org/backtobusinessgrant/>. Applications must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. on Thursday, May 7.

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Established in 1882, the mission of the Greater Green Bay Chamber is to strengthen member businesses, enhance economic and workforce development, and improve the quality of life in our community and region. For more information, call 920.593.3400 or visit [greatergbc.org](http://greatergbc.org).

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