



Press Release: For Immediate Release

River Roasters Coffee Company Grows Business and Impact in Meigs County

Pomeroy, Ohio: August 02, 2023 — In 2021, River Roasters Coffee Company announced plans to expand its food and beverage business in Meigs County, Ohio. With an investment of over \$260,000, the company constructed a new building, purchased a commercial roaster, and built a commercial kitchen for food production. The new operation, supported by a JobsOhio Inclusion Grant of \$50,000 allowed River Roasters to supply business customers such as restaurants, groceries, and other coffee shops in multiple states.

Candice and Larry Hess Jr. founded River Roasters Coffee Co. in 2018. The couple purchased and renovated a historic building in downtown Pomeroy and opened the café business, which has grown rapidly due to its popularity with area residents and visitors from the surrounding region. River Roasters also sells coffee online to customers all over the U.S.

Moving into production and wholesaling was a natural next step for the company and complemented River Roasters Café, which remains on Main Street in downtown Pomeroy and serves retail customers regionally.

“To have the support from our local community, along with OhioSE, JobsOhio, and Meigs County CIC means so much to us. They invested in our dream to bring a specialty coffee roastery to Pomeroy, Ohio, and supply great coffee from our little piece of Southeast Ohio,” said Co-Owner, Candice Hess. “The OhioSE team was great to work with and everyone was so supportive and excited about our project.”

The JobsOhio Inclusion Grant assisted the company during a crucial phase of their development during expansion. “Our company was going to have to get a lower-cost coffee roaster after the facility was developed and it would’ve required way more man hours and general cost to operations just to keep up with our own café,” said Co-Owner, Larry Hess. “This would’ve also hindered our hopes of being able to wholesale our products as we would be too busy roasting coffee to keep up with our coffee shop.”

The grant allowed Larry and Candice to purchase a MillCity coffee roaster and outfit their new facility with other operational equipment for roasting, storing, and wholesaling coffee. “Being awarded the grant allowed us to purchase a roaster that essentially gives us growth opportunities beyond what we could’ve ever imagined for our company. Not only can we roast enough coffee in one day to fulfill our needs for River Roasters for the week, but within that same roasting day we are also fulfilling orders for wholesale clients.”

Since receiving the JobsOhio Inclusion Grant, River Roasters Coffee Co. has been able to add their own custom blends of coffee to their café and expand into wholesale operations for two grocery stores. “We have been featured at several other coffee shops across Ohio and have expanded into online sales of coffee as well,” said Larry. “Our business has grown beyond our hopes and we are just getting started.”

The JobsOhio Inclusion Grant exists to provide financial support for eligible projects in designated distressed communities and/or for businesses owned by underrepresented populations across the state. Larry and Candice believe this grant is important for businesses in Southeast Ohio.

“Small businesses play a vital role in the economic vitality of rural communities. By supporting these enterprises, the JobsOhio Inclusion Grant helps create job opportunities, stimulate local spending, and boost overall economic growth,” said Larry.

Rural regions often face unique challenges, including limited access to resources, capital, and business networks, Larry said. “The grant program can bridge these gaps by providing financial assistance and opportunities for small businesses to expand, innovate, and compete on a broader scale.

Inclusion grants like the JobsOhio grant aim to reduce economic disparities by providing opportunities to historically marginalized entrepreneurs and business owners. “By supporting underrepresented businesses, the program helps level the playing field and fosters a more equitable business environment or at the least, gives a business a fighting chance at success,” he said.

Programs like the JobsOhio Inclusion Grant play a critical role in nurturing small businesses in rural regions. “By providing support, fostering entrepreneurship, and promoting economic inclusion, these programs contribute to the growth and sustainability of rural communities, helping them thrive in an ever-evolving economic landscape.

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River Roasters Coffee Co. prides itself on being and maintaining the best coffee shop in the Mid-Ohio Valley area. River Roasters is here to serve the entire community and provide a coffee experience that they will not forget. Learn more at www.riverroasters.co.

Ohio Southeast Economic Development (OhioSE) is the JobsOhio Network Partner for southern, eastern, and southeastern Ohio, providing economic development work and resources in 25 rural counties; they are the newest and geographically the largest of the six regions across the state. OhioSE partners closely with regional development districts, local economic development offices, state agencies, and other entities to expand, retain, and attract businesses in the counties they serve. Learn more at OhioSE.com.

JobsOhio is a private nonprofit economic development corporation designed to drive job creation and new capital investment in Ohio through business attraction, retention, and expansion. The organization also works to seed talent production in its targeted industries and to attract talent to Ohio through [Find Your Ohio](#). JobsOhio works with six regional partners across Ohio: [Dayton Development Coalition](#), [Ohio Southeast Economic Development](#), [One Columbus](#), [REDI Cincinnati](#), [Regional Growth Partnership](#), and [Team NEO](#). Learn more at www.jobsohio.com. Follow us on [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), and [Facebook](#).