



Press Release: For Immediate Release

Around the World Gourmet Plans \$125,000 Investment in Regenerative Agriculture

Bellaire, Ohio: January 29, 2020 — Kocher Foods International, Inc., doing business as Around the World Gourmet, along with JobsOhio, Ohio Southeast Economic Development (OhioSE), and Belmont County Port Authority, announced today plans to invest \$125,000 in a pulverizing mill to drive market expansion through regenerative agriculture processes.

With the addition of this mill, Around the World Gourmet will process grains and other gluten free ingredients that are purchased directly from regenerative farms. In turn, the new regenerative flour will be used in all of their pizza crusts and other products. Around the World Gourmet manufactures gluten-free, allergen-free, plant-based, vegan pizza crusts and other products that are sold to restaurants, groceries, and other locations including St. Jude Children's Hospital and universities.

Regenerative agriculture is an environmentally friendly growing practice that leads to increased soil fertility, increased water retention and lower carbon emissions. Healthier soil supplies more nutrients to plants, can hold and purify more water, and increases resilience to floods and droughts. Some of the regenerative practices used are no-till or low-till farming and the usage of cover crops.

Jennifer Kocher, Founder and President of Kocher Foods International, Inc. said "I'd like to think that regenerative food is the next step in the future of the food industry. It gives consumers a sense of really connecting to the foods they are eating and giving to their children. We see three problems that can be solved by regenerative farming and bringing regenerative foods to market. One is climate change, the second is consumer mistrust and the third is the lack of nutrients in the foods we eat."

Through their partnership with Grounded Growth Network, Around the World Gourmet met a regenerative rice farmer from Arkansas. "I'm very excited that we will be buying our rice directly from the farmer," Kocher said. "The first flour we will make will be brown rice flour. We will also be milling various other types of rice flour including white, sweet, jasmine and basmati, all regeneratively grown." Around the World Gourmet also has plans to mill other gluten free flours including millet, sorghum, beans, cauliflower and other vegetables and even mushrooms.

According to Mike Jacoby, President of OhioSE, Around The World Gourmet received a \$50,000 JobsOhio Inclusion Grant to support the acquisition of the new pulverizing mill. "Along with JobsOhio, we commend Around the World Gourmet for their vision of a healthier environment while creating a sustainable foundation for strategic growth," stated Jacoby. The company estimates the investment will dramatically increase product sales in out-of-state markets. Jacoby added, "This is a wonderful example of the entrepreneurial mindset and spirit that is thriving in southeastern Ohio."

Larry Merry, Executive Director of the Belmont County Port Authority, said the Port Authority is thrilled for Ms. Kocher's success to date and for the opportunity this grant will provide. "We know how hard she

has worked over the last several years and this grant provides an additional way for her to continue to grow the business in a unique way,” he said. “It’s exciting to see an Ohio Valley business and Belmont County entrepreneur wanting to grow.”

Contact: Jennifer Kocher, President, Around The World Gourmet: 740.676.6386; Matt Englehart, JobsOhio Communications Manager: 614.300.1152 and englehart@jobsOhio.com; or Sarah Arnold, OhioSE Director of Marketing: sarah@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](#).

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.

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