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Locally-produced equipment headed for Land Down Under

Company is part of Australia project

By Heather Baril
Monday December 20, 2004

Carman Valley Leader — A new meat packing plant under construction in Australia will feature some locally-produced equipment.

Sperling Industries Ltd. is responsible for the design, supply and installation of sort coolers and the fabrication floor for Cargill Beef Australia.

Sperling Industries manager Jeff Nicolajsen, said the project is similar to one the company completed last year in Texas for Cargill USA.

“In Australia what they were looking for was a similar type of cut floor as an American-style plant,” said Nicolajsen. “We designed the floor and basically we’re supplying all the equipment and we’re going over there to put it in.”

Located in Wagga Wagga, NSW, a city of approximately 57,000 people, half-way between Sydney and Melbourne, Nicolajsen said the plant has a capacity of 150 ‘fat cattle’ per hour.

“They have a facility there and they’re adding this whole new portion onto the plant,” he explained. “What we’re going to do is get this one operational and then we’ll gut the old floor.”

Nicolajsen said they’re currently loading the parts into containers, which are scheduled for a February delivery to Australia.

The containers are trucked to Winnipeg, transported by rail to Vancouver, shipped to Australia, and trucked inland to Wagga Wagga.

In addition to equipment, Sperling Industries will also be sending employees to the land down under, for six months to install the equipment, including project manager Warren Nordquist, Australia project manager.

Nordquist, who has made one trip there already, said he’s looking forward to the experience of living and working in a different country.

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Nicolajsen said two of the main issues involved with doing business on another continent are the change in climate and time differences between the two countries.

“Warren was there last week and it was 41 degrees,” he said. In order to do business in Wagga Wagga, Nicolajsen said Sperling Industries has also opened a company there, called Sperling Industries PTY.

“You pretty much have to open up a company to do business in Australia, for the taxes, business number, etc., so we’ve done that,” he explained. “We opened up another business in Australia to do this project.”

Nicolajsen said Sperling’s portion of the new plant, scheduled for an October opening, is approximately \$9.5 million, with the total project cost between \$30 million to \$35 million.

“We’ve done other overseas work, but this is probably the largest overseas project to date,” he said.

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