

Ohio Success: Speyside Case Study

Speyside Bourbon Cooperage Finds Supply Chain Advantages in Appalachian Region

COMPANY PROFILE

Speyside has provided the whisky industry – scotch makers in Scotland and bourbon makers in the U.S. – with barrels made of American oak since 1947. Acquired by France-based Tonnellerie Francois Frères Group in 2008, Speyside established its first U.S. cooperage in Shepherdsville, Ky., in 2010.

BUSINESS NEED

The growing demand from U.S. bourbon distilleries that use new barrels created an opportunity for Speyside to produce new barrels in a new facility and refurbish used barrels at its Shepherdsville facility. To meet this growing demand, Speyside executives identified sites for a new facility in close proximity to its Kentucky cooperage and an abundant supply of American oak.

OHIO SOLUTIONS

According to Darren Whitmer, general manager of Speyside Bourbon Cooperage, the company had originally planned to put the new plant in Kentucky and was just a step away from closing the deal. But while on a trip to Ohio to consider lumber sources, Speyside officials met with Ed Robbins, CEO of lumber-based companies Taylor Lumber and Ohio Valley Veneer.

Robbins said he had an abundant source of high-quality white Ohio oak and a vacant building in Jackson that might serve Speyside's needs. Robbins encouraged the Speyside officials to contact APEG and JobsOhio. "We started meeting some people from Ohio – the JobsOhio folks, the APEG folks – and started really finding out what was available to us," Whitmer says.

Speyside signed its lease in May 2015. The bourbon cooperage started production in May 2016, making 20 barrels a day. By November, production was up to 400 barrels a day – half of the company's targeted goal of 800.

Jackson Mayor Randy Heath says Speyside brought some relief to a hurting community. "When other people were leaving, these people said we believe in you and we believe in the workforce," Heath says.

PROJECT STATS

- **Location:** City of Jackson
- **Total investment:** \$17 million
- **Anticipated job creation:** 35
- **Facility specs:** 200,000 square feet



Darren Whitmer

"The facility had a lot of the infrastructure that we needed and there were a lot of good potential employees to choose from. The more we met people from the state and community, it slowly started to make sense to us."

Darren Whitmer, General Manager

Watch the video for more information on how Speyside made a difference in Jackson at jobs-ohio.com/speyside



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