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Contact: Ray VanDriessche, Michigan Sugar Company, 989-686-0161

Michigan Sugar partners with local engineering company to upgrade equipment in Sebewaing

\$3.3 million, state-of-the-art technology upgrade will save energy, water; installation led by local business

SEBEWAING – Assembly of a new cossette mixer – used to heat sliced sugarbeets during the sugar production process – was recently completed at **Michigan Sugar Company**'s Sebewaing production facility. The installation of the equipment is being led by **Sebewaing Tool and Engineering Company**, a local business that partnered with Michigan Sugar.

“Michigan Sugar is constantly looking for opportunities to reinvest in our cooperative across the Thumb and Saginaw Valley using the latest technology, and we always seek to partner with local businesses to get that work done,” said **David Noble**, vice president of operations for **Michigan Sugar**. “In addition to pumping capital into the local economy in Sebewaing, this project will boost our efficiency, saving energy and water use, and put the Sebewaing facility on track for future success.”

The new mixer uses the latest technology available in the sugarbeet industry, developed by **BMA** – a German equipment manufacturer for sugarbeet facilities worldwide. Given the size of the mixer, a cylinder that measures 17 by 26 feet, parts were shipped to Sebewaing and assembled on-site at Sebewaing Tool over the course of five months.

“We pride ourselves on our ability to tackle a diverse range of engineering projects, so we were proud to work together with Michigan Sugar to upgrade its local production facility using this cutting-edge equipment,” said **Tim Rowbotham** with **Sebewaing Tool**. “When companies like Michigan Sugar look to local businesses to help with improvement projects, they create a win-win environment. This project helped us grow, and helped Michigan Sugar significantly upgrade its local operations.”

Cossette mixers play an integral role in the sugar production process. Once sugarbeets are sliced, the fresh slices (known as cossettes) are scalded at high heat in the cylindrical mixer to initiate sugar extraction. The new mixer marks a significant improvement to the Sebewaing facility and replaced an older version, said **Noble**.

“By installing a new mixer of modern design and made with the best materials in use in the industry, we are able to use less energy and less water, while reducing maintenance costs,” he said. “The new mixer will save about eight million gallons of water over the course of the 2016-17 beet slicing campaign, and will reduce the total energy use at our Sebewaing facility by 3-5 percent.”

The investment is part of [more than \\$125 million in facility upgrades](#) announced by **Michigan Sugar** in December 2015.

“In addition to the energy and water savings we’ll create, Michigan Sugar was proud to partner with a local business to lead installation of the new mixer in Sebewaing,” said **Ray VanDriessche**, community relations director with **Michigan Sugar**. “Local partnership is a priority for Michigan Sugar, and we wanted to seize the opportunity to invest locally on this project. Working together with Sebewaing Tool was a great opportunity to inject capital back into the local economy.”

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