BUSINESS

TaylorMade to build in Pickens

Company plans golf ball production plant

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The TaylorMade Golf Co. announced plans Wednesday to build a new golf ball production facility in Pickens County that will mean an investment of $13 million and could create new jobs.

"An internationally known brand name, TaylorMade-adidas, has chosen to not only locate in Pickens County but they're going to own this building," said Ray Farley, executive director of Alliance Pickens, the economic development arm of Pickens County.

"They're sinking their roots deep," Farley said.

The company will close its facility in Westminster, where its lease will be up in summer 2014, and move the operation to a new 120,000-square-foot facility that will be built at the Pickens County Commerce Park at U.S. 123 and Cartee Road near Liberty.

Company leaders expect to break ground on the new facility in May and finish construction in January, said John Kawaja, executive vice president at TaylorMade Golf.

"We plan to be moved into our new facility here in time to make golf balls in February of (20)14," Kawaja said.

He said the company hopes to retain its work force from the Westminster facility but also expects additional jobs to be created, particularly as production increases.

Kawaja said the number of employees at the facility in Westminster varies depending on the time of year, ranging from around 80 or 90 up to 120 people at its peak.

The new manufacturing and research-and-development facility in Pickens County will be TaylorMade's North American golf ball production headquarters.

"Today we've got over 20 players that regularly play our golf ball on the PGA tour," Kawaja said. "We've got over 300 players, professional players around all of the global tours that use our golf ball, and so we're ready to grow that business."



TaylorMade Golf Co. will establish a new golf ball production facility in Pickens County. The company will invest $13 million in creating a new state-of-the-art facility, officials announced Wednesday. JULIE HOWLE/STAFF