

From the Albuquerque Business First:

<https://www.bizjournals.com/albuquerque/news/2021/03/10/santa-fe-farms-acquires-high-grade-hemp-seed.html>

New Mexico hemp firm grows with acquisition of Colorado company

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New Mexico hemp company Santa Fe Farms added to its portfolio of companies last month with the purchase of Colorado-based High Grade Hemp Seed. High Grade joins an array of other organizations operating as part of Santa Fe Farms.

The acquisition will allow High Grade to enter a new vertical in the hemp industry. Michael Lauder, CEO of the company, said it had been looking for a way to break into the industrial hemp market, which includes applications such as paper and textiles. The deal with Santa Fe Farms closed Feb. 3 provides High Grade with capital for that move, he said.

High Grade, founded in 2011, already operates in the hemp cannabinoid market, including the production of hemp strains. The deal might lead to growth for the company, which currently employs about 18 people. Through Santa Fe Farms' "networking and affiliate arrangements and sister companies, we'll have the opportunity to expand and accelerate our business," Lauder said.

Some businesses have reportedly had trouble finding their footing in the state's burgeoning hemp industry. But some early leaders have emerged, including Santa Fe Farms, which acquired Albuquerque-based hemp services firm Fathom NM in September.



COURTESY SANTA FE FARMS

From left to right, Santa Fe Farms Vice Chairman Jeff Apodaca and CEO Steven Gluckstern

The acquisition provided Santa Fe Farms with access to a full vertical range of hemp services, from the cultivation process to the sale of product. Fathom offered agricultural services to hemp farmers — including the harvesting, shucking, drying, milling, prepping and sealing of crops — and access to buyers and sellers.

Santa Fe Farms is led by CEO Steven Gluckstern.

Prior to the deal, Fathom NM expanded into a 50,000-square-foot building at Albuquerque's Mesa del Sol development. Business First named that expansion our Manufacturing Deal of the Year in 2020.

Santa Fe Farms later planned to grow the operation even further with an expansion that Mesa del Sol Managing Partner Steve Chavez said could be 100,000 square feet in size. Santa Fe Farms aimed to raise \$25 million to fund the expansion, Business First reported. The company employed about 60 as of December.

"We are setting the stage for what will be the future of Hemp production not only in the U.S. but internationally as well," Gluckstern said in a statement.

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