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## **Wells Jenkins expands in Rutherford County**

**Forest City, NC** – The Rutherford County Economic Development Commission is pleased to announce that Wells Jenkins, headquartered in Rutherford County, NC is expanding their operations in Forest City, NC. The Company recently acquired the former 18,768 square foot Broad River Cabinet Company building and warehouse located on US Hwy 221A.

Wells Jenkins Wells, a division of T & W Holding, is a local USDA certified meat processing company. They prepare meat for retail and do special processing for local farmers, hunters, etc. They currently operate the entire business from slaughter and cleaning to cutting and packaging out of the same facility on Rollins Road in Forest City.

Seeing a need to expand and to separate the beginning process from the value-added meat cutting and retail operations, the owners decided that creating a nicer retail environment would improve their sales and increase business.

Jeff Wells, the company's owner, stated that the company has seen a steady growth in the past 6 years and that it had come to a point where they either needed to stop growing or expand. The company explored many options and ultimately determined that the best option was to buy an existing building. This will allow them to market the retail products more easily and to a wider market, while also creating space in their current facility on Rollins Road in Forest City to add a smoked meats processing line for farmers and other meat handlers (hunters) in the county. The new facility will also allow the addition of a wholesale delivery route to cater to local restaurants within the next few years.

Rutherford County Economic Development Commission stated it has been a real pleasure working with Mr. Wells and indicated this project has been underway since November 2011. It has been very rewarding to assist an existing industry with their expansion.

Wells Jenkins began operations in their new location on June \_\_\_\_\_ with 6 employees and will grow to about 18 employees within a year. The company will be investing in excess of \$300,000 in their new facility, which is partially offset by a \$144,000 Building Reuse and Restoration Grant they received from the NC Rural Center.

County Commission Chairman Julius Owens stated, "When local company is able to expand and create new jobs, that's definitely great news for Rutherford County."

The mission of the Rutherford County Economic Development Commission is to retain and recruit new jobs to the county for both industrial and commercial development. Rutherford County has a population of 63,000 and is centrally located between Charlotte, NC, Asheville, NC and Greenville, SC. With strong infrastructure in roads, water, sewer and fiber the county is well positioned for growth as the economy has improved.