



SOUTH DAKOTA AND FRANCE



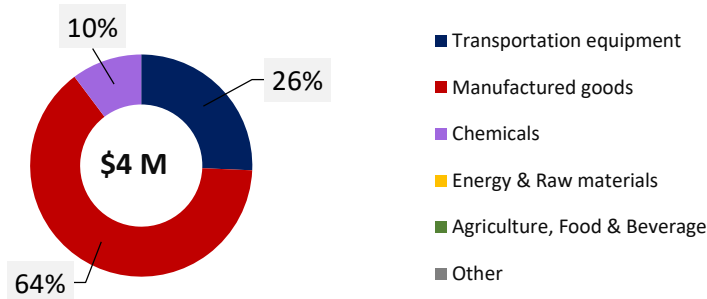
France is **#3 for jobs** created by foreign companies in South Dakota



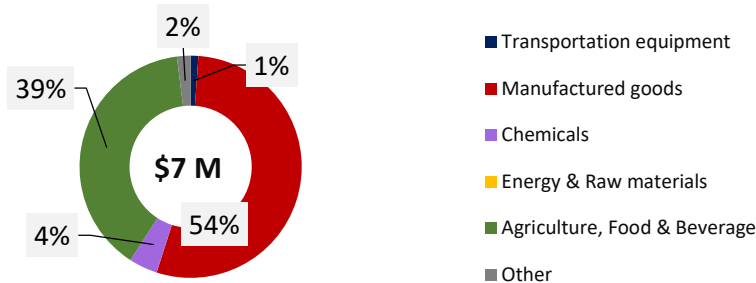
1,400 jobs created by French companies in South Dakota

TOTAL BILATERAL TRADE IN GOODS \$11 million annually

South Dakota exports to France



South Dakota imports from France



BEL

A success story in South Dakota



Group Bel is a 150-year-old French family company, the **3rd largest branded cheese manufacturer in the world**, with operations in 30 countries. Bel has been present in the U.S. since the late 1970s.

The United States is a key market because it is the largest cheese market in the world. Bel purchased its 1st plant in 1970 in Kentucky, where they produce The Laughing Cow and Mini-Babybel (MBY). The company purchased other U.S. cheese brands and a plant in Wisconsin in 1996. Bel US & Americas HQ is located in Chicago, Illinois. Bel employs 900 people in the U.S. Since 2014, the largest Bel plant in the USA is located in **Brookings, South Dakota**. It is the largest ever investment in the history of the Group worldwide, with a **\$145M investment and direct job creation for 280 people**.

Bel selected South Dakota for its **very favorable business climate** and for its position as a milk supply hub. It is a success for Bel, which is working closely with the state of South Dakota and the community of Brookings, SD, as well as the South Dakota State University for recruitment and training. The experience is so positive that Bel is now studying a production expansion with a **possible doubling of their capacity** in the U.S., creating more direct and indirect jobs in the U.S.

See appendix for data source

SOME OF THE FRENCH-AFFILIATED FIRMS IN SOUTH DAKOTA



KEEP IN TOUCH!

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