

THE REAL DEAL

82-year-old Brooklyn bakery opening 117,000-square-foot Newark offices#

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From left: Brothers Ed and David Mafoud at the new Newark facility and 56 Gold Street in Brooklyn

The city of Newark will become a second home to Brooklyn-based Damascus Bakeries, which has agreed to open a new 117,000-square-foot facility in the city's South Ward in 2012.

Damascus, a family-owned supplier of pitas and panini bread since 1930, has been looking for new facilities for at least three years, agreed to buy an old manufacturing plant at 60 McClellan Street in Newark and will redevelop the site to hold 180 employees, including new hires and workers from its current Brooklyn offices at 56 Gold Street.

"We've had a very good year in communicating the advantages of Newark for food-related manufacturing or distribution," said Lyneir Richardson, chief executive of the Brick City Development Corp. "From Newark they can distribute products from Buffalo to Baltimore."

The company received a number of incentives to move its headquarters, including \$7.75 million in tax-exempt bonds and \$1.75 million in loans from the Local Development Financing Fund program. The new facility was purchased with the help of \$3.5 million in financing from Sovereign Bank, working with the New Jersey Economic Development Authority.

The bakery also received a Business Employment Incentive Grant of \$414,000, connected with plans to have 180 new employees at the site.

Richardson said that BCDC spent the past three years pushing to get Damascus into Newark, as the firm was seriously interested in moving to a site in Jersey City, but the transportation access, lower land costs and other benefits helped turn the company's focus to Newark.

Newark has signed agreements with several other food-related and technology firms to either relocate or open new facilities in Newark, including Wakefern Distribution, Bartlett Dairy, Manischewitz, Mimeo.com and Pitney Bowes.

Damascus owners Ed and David Mafoud were not immediately available for comment. October 3rd,
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