Martin Mills to build satellite plant in Abbeville

Acadiana bureau

ABBEVILLE — City officials approved a contract Friday with Martin Mills Inc. that will result in construction of a new plant which could eventually employ more than 300 workers.

Martin Mills, parent company of Fruit of the Loom, plans to build a $2.2 million plant on 15 acres of land in the Airway Industrial Park belonging to the city.

The corporation's vice president, Gary Woods, said construction should start within 30 days, and job applications will be accepted in approximately three weeks.

Woods said the operation will be a satellite plant which will cut and sew cloth patterns and ship them to the main manufacturing facility in St. Martinville, which employs 3,000 workers.

The Martin Mills executive said that the Abbeville Fruit of the Loom facility will be similar to the other satellite plants in Jeanette and Port Barre which started out employing 300 workers. Woods said the Abbeville plant could expand to an even larger operation.

Woods said the company chose Abbeville because of previous success enjoyed in the Acadiana area and because of the parish's strong labor force.

Woods also said the incentives offered by the city of Abbeville made it the most attractive location. Abbeville offered Martin Mills 15 acres of free land and exemptions from city taxes. The city also will assist Martin Mills in obtaining tax incentives from the parish and the state.

When in full production, the plant is expected to provide an annual $4.2 million payroll, and an overall economic impact of more than $29 million.