INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT

Advanced manufacturing is a major driver of the Iowa economy, and the critical mass of expertise is well worth investigating for companies seeking a competitive advantage. Advanced manufacturing is Iowa’s largest industry contributing $29 billion annually to the state’s economy. That’s right, America’s largest producer of corn, pigs and eggs reaps three times more from manufacturing than farming.

- Manufacturing represents 17.1% of Iowa’s GDP (Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2017)
- Iowa ranks seventh in the U.S. for percentage of GDP derived from manufacturing (Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2017)
- In 2018, Iowa exported $14.3 billion worth of manufactured and value-added goods (GTIS, 2018)

Today, more than 6,000 manufacturers employ nearly 216,000 Iowans, representing 14 percent of Iowa’s total workforce. In Iowa, some of the world’s leading companies currently engage in the manufacture of:

- aerospace and defense products
- aluminum
- appliances
- electronic devices
- fabricated metals
- farm and construction machinery
- food products
- industrial chemicals
- medical devices
- plastics
- recreational vehicles
- steel
- wood products

PERFECTLY POSITIONED

The state is ideally suited to export products all over the globe with air, water, rail and highway systems designed for commerce. Iowa’s central geographic location in North America makes it easier to move products around the world.

Two major coast-to-coast, north to south interstate arteries (Interstate 35 and Interstate 80) pass through Iowa and are principal roads in America’s transportation grid. Barge freight is accommodated via the Mississippi and Missouri rivers.

A HIGHLY SKILLED WORKFORCE

To help manufacturing companies maximize Iowa’s skilled talent pool, state-of-the-art training programs have been established by the state’s robust community college system. Community colleges in the regions where new or existing jobs are located administer these programs, offering a one-stop-shop training approach.
IOWA’S ADVANCED MANUFACTURING NETWORK

Manufacturers in Iowa have the support of colleges and universities in providing valuable technology transfer; skilled, knowledgeable workers; and information and assistance on achieving optimum productivity through improved processes. Some centers of excellence include:

- The Center for Industrial Research and Service (CIRAS) at Iowa State University works to enhance the performance of the manufacturing industry in Iowa. CIRAS provides educational seminars and individualized technical assistance to Iowa’s thousands of manufacturers in the areas of engineering, management practices, productivity, energy, procurement, biorenewables and quality management. Staff provide access to a variety of College of Engineering laboratories to broaden the product and process design capabilities of Iowa industry.

- The National Advanced Driving Simulator (NADS) is a self-sustained transportation safety research center at the University of Iowa’s Research Park. NADS utilizes its suite of world-class driving simulators and instrumented vehicles to conduct research studies for the private and public sectors.

- The University of Northern Iowa (UNI) Metal Casting Center is a nationally recognized leader in foundry research, applied technology and technical business assistance. The Center is comprised of two facilities - the materials research and foundry site at the Information Technology Center in Cedar Falls and the additive manufacturing center. The additive manufacturing center features North America’s largest 3D printer and is located at Cedar Valley TechWorks in Waterloo.

THE BUSINESS CLIMATE IS RIGHT

- Iowa is a right-to-work state
- Iowa has the second-lowest cost of doing business (Business Facilities, 2017)
- One of only a few states in the nation to consistently offer a refundable research and development activities tax credit
- No corporate income tax on profits from sales made outside of Iowa
- No personal property (inventory) tax
- No sales or use tax on manufacturing machinery, equipment or computers
- No sales tax on electricity or natural gas used in the manufacturing process
- Competitively priced buildings and sites
- Flexible job training programs provide customized training for new and current employees
- Direct financial assistance and tax benefit programs for job creation and new capital investment projects

CONTACT US

Project managers at the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) are experienced in working with companies making confidential site location reviews in the state of Iowa. IEDA can provide all the information needed to make a decision, schedule tours of possible locations, accompany company representatives, serve as a liaison with appropriate state agencies and local development groups, and identify financial and technical assistance to serve a company’s needs. IEDA’s goal is to streamline every aspect of site location so companies can begin operation in Iowa as quickly as possible.