

NEWS

[Home](#)
[2007 Annual Report](#)
[2006 Annual Report](#)
[Site Selection Research](#)
[Economic Profile](#)
[Demographic Summary](#)
[Economic Analysis](#)
[Market Access](#)
[Building & Sites](#)
[Workforce](#)
[Taxes & Incentives](#)
[Quality of Life](#)
[News](#)
[Business Resources](#)
[About Us](#)
[Contact Information](#)
[AEDC Foundation](#)

Ascension, BASF consider chemical project

By GARY PERILLOUX
Advocate business writer
Published: Jan 12, 2008 - Page: 1D

BASF, Ascension Parish's biggest chemical manufacturer, could brew more business for the area under a joint endeavor with the Ascension Economic Development Corp.

AEDC has hired SSA Consultants of Baton Rouge to identify companies that could build a new plant that would benefit from commodity chemicals already produced by BASF but typically transported elsewhere.

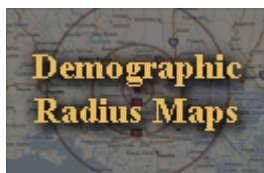
Ascension's specialty chemicals initiative will begin with the BASF pilot project and broaden to include other potential chemical plant projects.

The pilot project will cost slightly less than \$10,000, tapping private funds raised by the Ascension Economic Development Foundation, a nonprofit affiliate of AEDC.

For the Ascension group, SSA's work will include:

- Identifying available chemical streams.
- Identifying companies that could launch a specialty chemical plant in the parish.
- Developing strategies that reveal Ascension as chemical manufacturing place of choice.





A successful project likely would be one with a capital investment of \$50 million to \$200 million and 25 to 50 permanent jobs — not huge projects, but then that's the point, said Tommy Kurtz, the AEDC president.



Chemical industry recruiting in the state traditionally has focused on luring large plants and completing major expansions at the plants that are here. Ascension's downstream industry program wants to make better use of the two dozen chemical plants already in the parish while luring new investment.

"You're basically saying BASF and these particular companies have their streams," Kurtz said. "With SSA's background, we're identifying the companies that could potentially use those streams."



Ascension and BASF will market the concept at the Jan. 30-Feb. 1 InformexUSA trade show in New Orleans that convenes specialty chemical companies.



An ideal new company would be one that could locate beside BASF's facility and take a bulk chemical, process it into an intermediary product and sell that to a final manufacturer in the pharmaceutical or food industries, Kurtz said.

An example might be ethylene oxide, a gaseous product made at BASF that finds its way into detergents, polyester fibers, lubricants, paint solvents, plastic bottles and other products when used by other manufacturers downstream.



Potential firms that could locate at BASF are being assembled from chemical industry databases.

Once negotiations with a promising prospect begin, Kurtz said, "We can help with incentives and utilities and work force solutions."



The downstream chemical program is one of the planks in the Ascension Advantage Plan, a five-year program designed to enhance the parish's economy. A successful downstream project would diversify the parish's job base, leverage suppliers that exist in the area, generate more local spending, reduce chemical transportation costs and add high-paying quality jobs, according to SSA's project proposal.

Though job numbers associated with a specialty chemical manufacturer wouldn't be large, the pay would be significant.

In November, AEDC helped recruit Dynamic Fuels, a joint biofuels venture of Oklahoma-

based Syntroleum and Tyson Foods that will invest more than \$120 million in a Geismar site, where it will use utilities put in place for Lion Copolymer.

The 45 permanent jobs there will average nearly \$90,000 a year.

If the pilot project succeeds, AEDC anticipates additional co-location efforts to take advantage of the more than 20 other chemical plants in the parish. Targeted mail-outs and contacts will be made after the trade show in New Orleans, Kurtz said.

"We would hope that maybe down the road, if we get some success from BASF, that this could be a regional effort," he said. "It's much more focused than putting ads in Site Selection magazine. It's actually working hand in hand with BASF. This is a good example of things (Gov.-elect) Bobby Jindal wants to do with work force and expansion of existing businesses."

[<<BACK](#)