

PIONEER HI-BRED EXPANDS, TO ADD 138 NEW JOBS



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Pioneer Hi-Bred, a US company that develops, produces and distributes hybrid seeds for agriculture, announced a plan to expand its operations at its manufacturing plant in Johnston, Iowa that will lead to the creation of over 138 new jobs in the area. Pioneer Hi-Bred officials said that the company is planning to build 100,000 square feet of greenhouses and use millions of bugs to facilitate its massive production. The company has recently developed a new corn production processes called FAST, which stands for Functional Analysis System for Traits. The new method uses controlled conditions and robotics to speed up the normal growing cycles to only 60 days. The expansion plan also entails increasing Pioneer Hi-Bred's seed productions at its various headquarters including Algona, Cherokee, Durant, Dysart, Hedrick, Mount Pleasant, Reinbeck, Renwick and Toledo, plus research facilities located at Dallas Center, Sheldahl and Marion. The company currently employs over 3,000 workers statewide. Jim Register, Pioneer's director of agriculture biotechnology programs, explained that the new strains of corn and soybeans still needs to be further tested. "The new Johnston facilities will include an insectary that will breed more than 250 million corn borers, rootworms and other pests. In order to verify the resistances, we need a supply of the insects to expose to the plants."

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