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The Town of Walton fully supports Empire State Development's (ESD) Kraft-Heinz retention initiative. Breakstone's, now Kraft-Heinz has been a vibrant part of our community for generations; not only offering employment, but as a market for dairy farmers, and they offer a superb product popular throughout the nation and beyond. I was proud, while stationed overseas, to buy Breakstone's cottage cheese at the commissary and see 'made in Walton' on the container.

Breakstone's has also been active in the community, donating products to the local fire department, schools, the community 'Walk for Hunger', the youth booster club, and as many may recall, at the Delaware County Fair every summer.

I know a lot of Walton residents make sure to buy Kraft, when choosing products at the supermarket to support our local plant.

Like many communities, the downturn in the economy over the past few years has taken a toll on Walton. We applaud ESD's efforts to keep Kraft-Heinz in New York State and particularly in Walton. Not only would it save the 141 local jobs at our local plant, as noted in the November 2015 press release, but it is our sincere hope that the grant will be used to continue to upgrade and modernize the Walton plant, thus paving the way for even more jobs to be created.

A November 9, 2016 article in the Wall Street Journal highlighted the growing market for cottage cheese and the expertise of the staff at the Walton plant is perfectly situated to exploit this growing market. Our proximity to the New York City market, including our large second home owner population, along with other major markets up and down the East coast provides a tremendous opportunity for growth.

We look forward to seeing the specifics on how much of the proposed \$20M grant Kraft-Heinz intends to dedicate to the Walton plant. We hope it includes what construction, renovations, and equipment/machinery purchases will occur as a result of the grant, as well as their projections for the long-term future of the Walton plant.

Charles F. Gregory  
Walton Town Supervisor