

Construction commences on Australia's Central Coast's Food Manufacturing Innovation Hub

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Construction has officially begun on the highly anticipated Food Manufacturing Innovation Hub, a \$17.14 million project set to position the Central Coast as a premier destination for food manufacturing in Australia. Fully funded by the Australian Government, the project is being spearheaded by Central Coast Industry Connect (CCIC) in partnership with Central Coast Council, the University of Newcastle, and Regional Development Australia Central Coast.

Slated for completion by March 2026, the state-of-the-art facility is designed to support both established and scale-up food and beverage businesses. The hub will feature dedicated pilot and training spaces aimed at boosting product development, driving innovation, and enhancing skills across the sector.

At the centre of this initiative is the Manufacturing Advancement Centre, a first-of-its-kind offering in the region. The Centre will provide tailored support to food and non-food manufacturers alike, offering:

Technical and product development support

Management and shop floor training programs

Access to a curated network of specialist service providers

“This is a long-time vision that we have had for the Central Coast, and it’s great that we are now on our way to making it happen,” said Frank Sammut, Executive Director at CCIC. “The hub will be a game-changer for our region, not just for industry growth, but for workforce development and innovation.”

While construction is underway, CCIC has already launched a series of industry-led training programs, focusing on Manufacturing Leadership, Product Innovation, and Machine Operation. These programs are being developed, piloted, and refined to ensure a smooth transition when the hub officially opens.

With support from the University of Newcastle and Regional Development Australia Central Coast, an interim Skills Hub has been established at the university's Ourimbah campus. The site has been equipped with new training equipment and is currently hosting sessions open to a wide array of participants, including students, industry professionals, and small business owners.