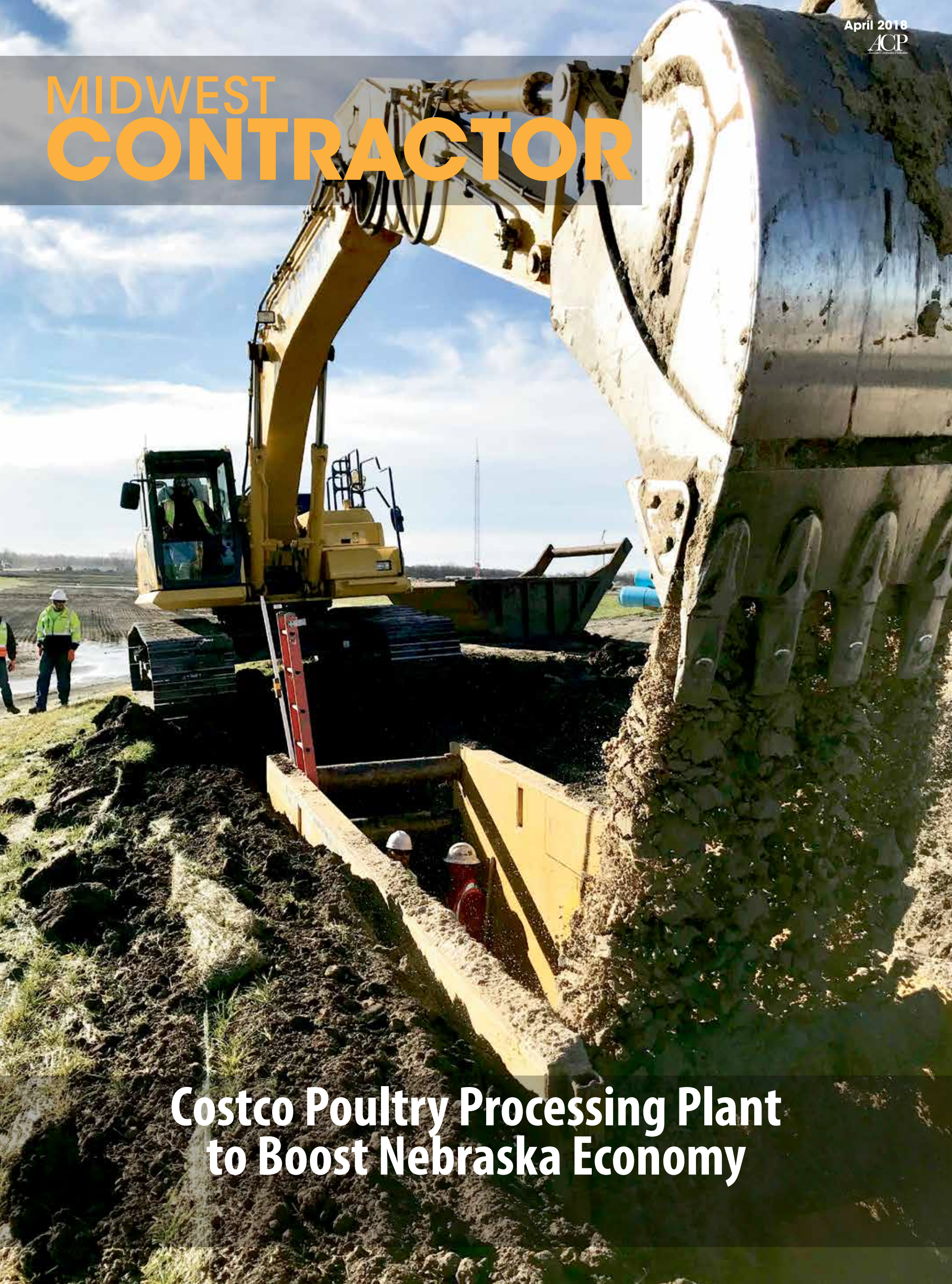


MIDWEST CONTRACTOR



**Costco Poultry Processing Plant
to Boost Nebraska Economy**



General Excavating Services to Costco

Work continues on schedule and within budget on Costco's first-ever \$350 million poultry processing plant, hatchery and feed mill facility in Fremont, Nebraska.

"Costco needs to continue to supply poultry products to its members," says Jessica Kolterman with Lincoln Premium Poultry, the company that will operate the facility, in Fremont.

Costco conducted a nationwide search for the site in 2015, looking for an area with available corn, water for processing, growers to raise the chickens in barns, and a workforce, Kolterman says. The facility is expected to create 800 to 1,000 new jobs.

"What made Nebraska stand out during the selection process was the cooperation and collaboration among the state, city, county and nongovernmental agencies," Kolterman adds.

Costco purchased about 400 acres at the site. The complex covers about 100 acres. The balance of the site will be a buffer for neighbors and at this time kept in crop rotation.

QC Supply in Schuyler, Nebraska, received the contract to build the approximately 500 barns for the grower network.

Unique Features

The Fremont facility includes a feed mill for processing the corn that will be fed to the chickens, a hatchery and a processing plant. At full production, the Lincoln Premium facility will process 2 million chickens a week for Costco stores.

The facility has some unique features, Kolterman reports. Those include space to haul the chickens into the building before unloading.

"It gives us the opportunity to acclimate the chickens," Kolterman explains. "There also should be no issues with feathers, dust or smell."

The facility will feature a glass walkway through the plant, designed to educate people about the industry.

"Costco wants to set the standard and lead the way," Kolterman says. "We are going to do our processing in an air-chill method, which uses less water than traditional methods. We also are going to use a lot of automation."

Kolterman explains the automation will replace positions that are hard to fill and have a higher turnover rate. The facility will process whole broilers and boneless breasts, thighs, drumsticks and other chicken products.



General Excavating crews install pipe.

Brings Superior Utility to Poultry Plant

By Debra Wood



Sediment tanks are made for the lift station.

Construction Begins

The project broke ground in June 2017. At the event, Nebraska Governor Pete Ricketts praised the project and Costco for providing “good paying jobs, more opportunity for our local farmers, and the all-important expansion of value-added agriculture in our state.”

General Excavating of Lincoln, Nebraska, is performing utility work. General Excavating enjoys more than 30 years in business, working throughout the Midwest. It places an emphasis on high-quality work, safety and strives to provide clients with the best value possible.

“Our mantra is to do what is right, while ensuring the customer and our employees are happy,” says Joe D’Amico, General Excavating Vice President.

General Excavating has four crews on site. The company is installing nearly 6 miles of pipe and two lift stations, under two contracts, one with the Graham Construction office based in Seattle, Washington, and one with the processing plant general contractor Whiting-Turner of Baltimore, Maryland.

“The schedule is pretty aggressive,” says Brian Egr, Project Manager for General Excavating.



Crews use an excavator to install pipe on the project.

The two lift stations reach 36 feet and 27 feet into the ground. They will pump waste from the processing plant to the property line of a municipal water treatment plant, being built by the city of Fremont.

“The 36-foot-deep station was challenging,” Egr says. “We are about one mile from the Platte River. The soil conditions are pure sand all of the way down.”

D’Amico helped put the deepest lift station into perspective by explaining that it is three stories in the ground. At its base, it will be 38-foot-long by 35-foot-wide.

“The way we dug the hole was taking 16 feet off the top,” D’Amico continues. “We have a hole about 120-foot wide down to a platform elevation where we put the shoring in for another 20 feet. It’s a big hole; they bench it and keep going down.”

The ground water level is 11 feet. Gra-

ham Construction is responsible for dewatering for the lift stations. General Excavating is responsible for dewatering required for pipe line installation. Crews drilled holes to bedrock, 70 feet down, and installed a sump pump to remove the water. Currently six wells are running. General Excavating is using a slide-rail shoring system designed specifically for this job at both lift stations.

General Excavating is also building a 16-inch fire loop around the buildings with fire hydrants. The piping also includes clean water to the plant, a sanitary sewer for three buildings, and a processing system, which goes to the lift station.

Work has continued through the winter. General Excavating also will do grading for meter houses and some cleanup of



water around the building pads. All of the work requires coordination with other contractors on site. Younglove of Sioux City, Iowa, is building the feed mill and Graham the site work and building pads.

“It’s exciting to see it coming together,” Kolterman says.

A Boost to Economic Development

Kolterman reports construction of the project is stimulating the local economy. One in four jobs in Nebraska is agriculture related, according to the governor’s office.

“It’s economic activity in an agriculture state in a downturn ag economy,” Kolterman says. “We are excited to be part of moving forward and progress in this community.”

The facility will open in June 2019. It will take about a year to reach full pro-

duction. This is the first time a retailer has collaborated with a company in this manner to provide product for its stores, Kolterman says.

“They want to maintain a good quality supply of chickens that will meet the specifications they need in the warehouses,” Kolterman says. “We will collaborate with Costco on new innovations as we continue to grow.”

The economic impact is projected to be \$1.2 billion annually, about 1 percent of the state’s gross domestic product.

“According to Dodge Global Network Reports, this is one of the largest food processing facilities in the country being built,” D’Amico says. “And for us, it is exciting to be part of bringing this to Fremont, Nebraska.”



Project Partners

- Owner: Costco, Issaquah, Washington
- Operator: Lincoln Premium Poultry, Fremont, Nebraska
- Site Work General Contractor: Graham Construction, Seattle, Washington
- Utility Work: General Excavating, Lincoln, Nebraska
- Processing Plant General Contractor: Whiting-Turner, Baltimore, Maryland