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Anheuser-Busch invests $23 million to expand Michelob ULTRA production in Fort Collins

The project adds 25-oz canning, expands rail shipping capacity, opens a technical training center at the brewery.

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Anheuser-Busch said Monday it will invest $23 million in its brewery in Fort Collins, Colorado, in a move aimed at raising production of Michelob ULTRA, adding new canning capability and expanding technical training for plant workers.

The company said the project will increase the site’s ability to make Michelob ULTRA and add equipment for 25-oz cans, a package format tied to growing consumer demand. It also said the investment will expand rail capacity at the brewery, a step meant to improve shipping and distribution from the site.

The announcement was made at the Fort Collins brewery as part of Anheuser-Busch’s broader Brewing Futures program, a $600 million plan for its U.S. operations during 2025 and 2026. The brewer said the national initiative is focused on plant upgrades, workforce development and support for manufacturing jobs.

In Fort Collins, the company also plans to open a technical skills training center inside the brewery. According to Anheuser-Busch, it will be one of 15 new centers the company is opening around the country to train operators and technicians in electrical and mechanical systems used in brewery equipment. The brewer said it plans to upskill more than 90% of its manufacturing workforce over the next five years.

The Fort Collins investment adds to a recent stretch of spending at the site. Anheuser-Busch said it has invested $93 million in its Fort Collins facilities since 2021. The brewery has operated in the city since 1988 and produces more than 48 brands, including Michelob ULTRA, Busch Light, Budweiser and Bud Light.

For Colorado, the expansion is tied to one of the state’s larger long-running brewing operations. State Rep. Andrew Boesenecker, a Democrat whose district includes Larimer County, said the facility has been part of the local economy for 38 years and supports hundreds of manufacturing jobs. He said the new spending would strengthen the tax base and deepen the company’s presence in the region.

Anheuser-Busch did not provide a specific output target for the project or say how many new jobs, if any, would be created. But the company framed the spending as a way to support future production and improve the route to market for one of its strongest-selling beer brands.

Much of the investment is tied to Michelob ULTRA, which the company has identified as a major growth driver. In its announcement, Anheuser-Busch cited Circana data for the period ending July 19 and said Michelob ULTRA is the top-selling and fastest-growing

beer in the United States. The company also described itself as the fastest-growing supplier in total alcohol, a claim that was also attributed to market data.

The packaging and logistics pieces of the project could matter beyond one brewery. Added canning capacity at a large beer plant can influence product availability in wholesale channels, especially for single-serve formats that have become more important in convenience and food-service sales. Stronger rail links can also lower shipping friction across a wider network. For the beverage sector, that points to continued pressure on brewers and other drinks producers to invest in flexible packaging lines and transportation systems that can respond quickly to shifts in demand.

The training center is another sign of how producers are trying to address a different issue inside plants: the need for more workers with technical maintenance and automation skills. Modern breweries rely on complex filling, packaging and warehouse systems, and downtime can quickly affect output. By training workers in electrical and mechanical systems on site, companies can reduce reliance on outside labor and improve response times when equipment needs service.

Anheuser-Busch said the Fort Collins brewery is also one of two company breweries, along with its Cartersville, Georgia, facility, that produce emergency drinking water. The brewer said it has produced more than 100 million cans of emergency water for disaster-affected communities since 1988.

The company, whose brands also include Stella Artois, Cutwater Spirits, NÜTRL Vodka Seltzer and Michelob ULTRA Zero, has been emphasizing U.S. manufacturing investment as part of its public strategy. In Monday’s announcement, Chief Executive Brendan Whitworth said the Fort Collins spending would strengthen the company’s ability to brew and deliver beer while supporting local economic growth and manufacturing jobs.

Fort Collins has long been a key site in that network because of both its production scale and its location in the Mountain West. The new rail investment suggests the company sees transportation efficiency as part of the case for future growth there, not just brewhouse and packaging capacity. For beer producers facing shifting brand

demand, changing package preferences and tighter operating costs, those logistics decisions can be as important as the brewing upgrades themselves.