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## **Mayor's message: Warwick Ice Cream expands operations**

April 08, 2009 - Rhode Island

In 1925, Charles Bucci established a small dairy operation on Bald Hill Rd. in Warwick, which he expanded several years later into an ice cream business in order to provide job opportunities for his three sons, all of whom were disabled.

Eighty-four years after that modest venture took place, the Bucci family business - now in its fourth generation - is booming, thanks to an increased offering of products and the acquisition, last year, of Creative Creamery. This subsidiary, once operating in Massachusetts, is now headquartered in Warwick and specializes in gourmet ice cream cakes like cappuccino hazelnut, Mississippi mud and chocolate raspberry temptation, and "function" ice cream cakes like spumoni, mud pie and cookies and cream.

The company also consists of a manufacturing division, co-packing business and a wholesale distributorship for companies like Good Humor, Unilever, Hood and Ben & Jerry's. With a reported annual output of at least 600,000 gallons of ice cream, the company is one of the most successful of its kind in the region, and estimates its production has increased by roughly 20% annually in recent years.

With its growth came a need for more space - and a need for more employees, a rarity in today's economy. In addition to their Bald Hill Rd. facility, Warwick Ice Cream recently announced its lease of an additional 15,000 s/f of storage space in the former Leviton site. Their employee roster currently stands at 28, with an eye to hire at least several more people in the near future.

The company doesn't anticipate a slowdown in business anytime soon, and should they need a larger facility in the future, our department of tourism, culture and development stands ready to assist them in their search. In the meantime, Warwick Ice Cream's continued growth is good news for the company, the local business economy, and ice cream aficionados near and far.

Scott Avedisian is the mayor of Warwick.

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