



Commonwealth of Virginia
Office of Governor Bob McDonnell

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**Governor McDonnell Announces up to 50 New
Jobs in Hanover County**

*~Morooka America, LLC to establish first Morooka Track Carrier manufacturing
operation in U.S. ~*

RICHMOND - Governor Bob McDonnell today announced that Morooka America, under a license agreement with Japan-based Morooka Co., Ltd, a manufacturer of rubber track carriers, will establish a manufacturing operation in Hanover County. The first Morooka Track Carrier plant in the U.S., along with its sister company Virginia Steel Specialties LLC, will establish two product assembly operations. The facilities will encompass 50,000 square feet and an output of 100 machines annually valued at more than \$15 million. The project will create up to 50 new jobs over the next three years.

Speaking about today's announcement, Governor McDonnell said, "The new Morooka America production facility is an important strategic move for the Morooka product line in the Western Hemisphere, and we are thrilled that the company chose Virginia for its first U.S. location. The new plant will build two of the most popular models in the company's line, and is a welcome addition to the corporate base in Hanover County."

"We warmly welcome Morooka America's first Morooka Track Carrier operation in the U.S. to Hanover County and the Commonwealth," said Jim Cheng, Virginia Secretary of Commerce and Trade. "The proximity to major interstates, available infrastructure and central location all were factors that helped Virginia come out ahead of competing locations across the Southeast."

Morooka America is a subsidiary of the Richmond Group LLC, a holding company for construction-related firms geared around the Morooka product and located in Ashland, Virginia. Morooka USA - East is the U.S. headquarters for Japan-based Morooka Co. and sells their rubber track carriers through a network of dealers in the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Central and South America. Morooka offers six different models of equipment that have a range of uses from clearing land for pipeline installation to agricultural applications.

"We are proud to bring manufacturing jobs to America and to Virginia," says company founder Ronnie Byrd. "I have worked with Japanese companies for more than 25 years and Morooka and its products are well recognized and respected in our industry."

"The United States has become Morooka Japan's leading export destination," said company President Masami Morooka. "I am proud to have the Morooka carrier built here in America."

The Virginia Economic Development Partnership worked with Hanover County and the Greater Richmond Partnership to secure the project for Virginia. Through its Virginia Jobs Investment Program, the Virginia Department of Business Assistance will provide funding and services to support the company's recruitment, training and retraining activities.

"It's great to see a home grown company in Hanover County continue to innovate and prosper," said Rhu Harris, Hanover County Administrator. "Their ability to expand into manufacturing the Morooka product, confirms the spirit of Hanover entrepreneurs."

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