

# West Fork Whiskey lands funding to increase production, add facilities

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KEYWORDS [FOOD MANUFACTURERS](#) / [GROWTH](#) / [HAMILTON COUNTY](#) / [INVESTING](#) / [NORTH OF 96TH](#) / [WESTFIELD](#)



*West Fork Whiskey Co. opened an \$11 million agritourism facility in 2023 at the northeast corner of East 191st Street and Horton Road near Grand Park Sports Campus in Westfield. (Photo courtesy West Fork Whiskey Co.)*

West Fork Whiskey Co., an Indianapolis-based craft distillery with major operations in Westfield, has linked with an investment firm to land up to \$18 million in capital to allow the distillery to expand production and accelerate growth.

West Fork announced this week that it entered into a partnership with Indianapolis-based

Ouabache Investments that involves an initial investment of \$3 million.

An additional \$10 million to \$15 million will be spent supporting production contracts and additional real estate development at West Fork's property in Westfield, which features a 35,000-square-foot agritourism facility.

Blake Jones, one of West Fork's three co-founders, said the company needed an investment partner to grow regionally and nationally.

"Bourbon is an expensive game when you have to wait a minimum of four years before you can sell a product," Jones told IBJ.

Established in 2014, West Fork operates a 3,000-square-foot production facility and tasting room just north of downtown Indianapolis at 1660 Belfontaine St. near the Monon Trail.

Last year, the company opened an \$11 million, 35,000-square-foot agritourism facility at the northeast corner of East 191st Street and Horton Road near Grand Park Sports Campus in Westfield. The Westfield location houses The Mash House restaurant, a cocktail lounge, an event center, an education facility and production equipment.

Jones, a former banker, and his brother Julian Jones, a former medical student, along with attorney David McIntyre, started West Fork in a warehouse at West 86th Street and Zionsville Road before moving it in 2017 to a renovated former grocery store at Bellefontaine and East 16th streets in the Kennedy King neighborhood.


Jones said the investment partnership with Ouabache will allow West Fork to increase capacity to 5,000 to 6,000 barrels of whiskey per year and embark on a second phase of construction in Westfield. The company has about 25 acres in Westfield with around six acres still undeveloped.

Jones said a timeline was still being developed for West Fork's second phase of construction in Westfield and details on what it would include.

“This is just to support our growth, continue to make more bourbon and market our bourbon, and get it to more retail shelves not just in Indiana, but regionally, as we grow,” Jones said.

Ouabache Investments was founded in 2017 by the Weaver family of Weaver Popcorn Co., the world’s largest bulk popcorn company. The firm is led by Will Weaver, great-grandson of Weaver Popcorn founder Ira Weaver; former Indiana Department of Agriculture director Andy Miller; and veteran real estate investor and financial analyst Bryan Fong.

Ouabache operates much like a private equity firm and invests in agriculture, food and beverage-related companies. The company will receive an undisclosed ownership stake as part of the investment.

South Bend-based  [Holladay Properties](#) was the real estate developer for the West Fork’s project in Westfield.

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