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## U.S. Home to \$72 Billion in Planned 1Q ESG-Related Project Kickoffs

Projects in support of environmental, social and governance (ESG) initiatives continue to pop up across the U.S. as a host of industries continue to decarbonize their operations and add renewable sources of energy.

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## Great Lakes Leads U.S. in Q1 Food & Beverage Project Starts

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## Join IIR for Our 2024 North American Market Outlook

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Nippon Steel said in a press release its acquisition of U.S. Steel "will enhance its world-leading manufacturing and technology capabilities and enable it to expand the geographic areas in which (Nippon Steel) can better serve all of its stakeholders, including customers and society at large."

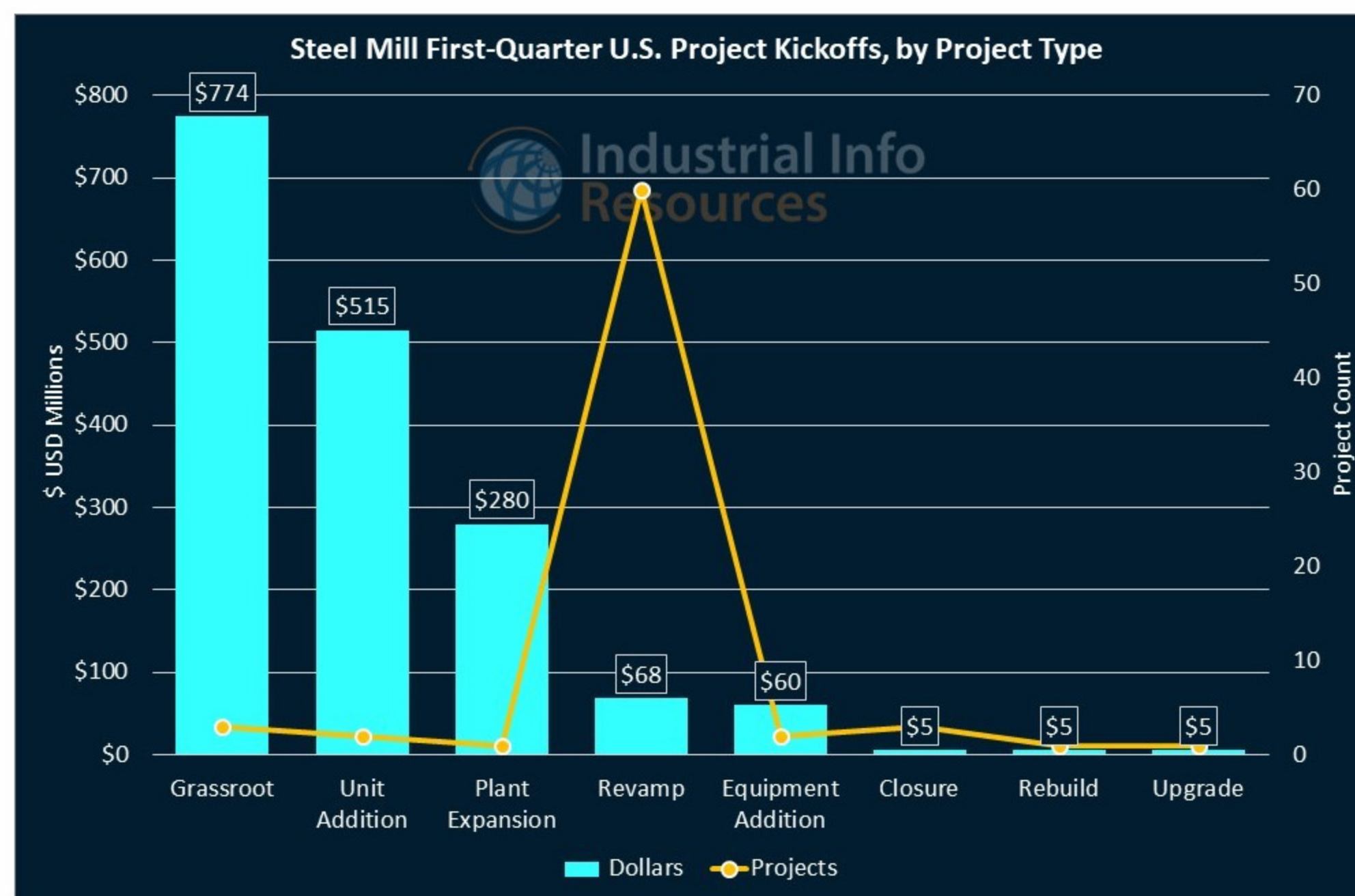
As a result of the acquisition, Nippon Steel's annual crude steel capacity will reach 86 million metric tons, accelerating its progress toward its goal of 100 million metric tons of global crude steel capacity annually.

Not everybody is pleased with the transaction, however, with the United Steelworkers (USW) union and some members of Congress opposing the deal.

For more information, see December 19, 2023, article - [Nippon Steel Beats Out Rivals in \\$14.9 Billion U.S. Steel Purchase](#).

Regardless of any controversy regarding the acquisition, several steel mill projects in the U.S. are planned to start construction in the first quarter of this year.

Industrial Info is tracking 73 capital steel mill projects in the U.S., valued at \$1.71 billion, that are planned to kick off construction in the first quarter of 2024. The projects range from grassroot facilities to unit additions and revamps.



One of the more substantial kickoffs involves a **grassroot granulated pig iron production plant** in Granite City, Illinois. [SunCoke Energy Incorporated](#) (NYSE:SXC) (Lisle, Illinois) plans to construct a 2-million-ton-per-year facility to make granulated pig iron for U.S. Steel over a 10-year initial term. U.S. Steel would supply the iron ore to produce the pig iron. In 2022, SunCoke and U.S. Steel reached a non-binding agreement for SunCoke to acquire U.S. Steel's Granite City Works blast furnaces and build the granulated pig iron plant on the site.

Project completion is planned for first-quarter 2025. The impact of the acquisition of U.S. Steel by Nippon Steel on the project is unknown.

The pig iron project could run into headwinds due to environmental permitting issues, with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) signaling its intention to deny a request to increase emissions at the plant site, industry observer Fastmarkets reported in December. Subscribers to Industrial Info's Global Market Intelligence (GMI) Metals & Minerals Project Database can [click here](#) for the project report.

Another large project planned for kickoff in the first quarter is [Nucor Corporation's](#) (NYSE:NUE) (Charlotte, North Carolina) Flat-Rolled Steel Mill Third Galvanizing Line Addition in Fontana, California. To be built at Nucor's existing facility, the third line would increase galvanizing capacity at the facility by 400,000 tons per year, for a total of 1.2 million tons per year. The new galvanizing line will serve construction end markets in the western United States. Subscribers can [click here](#) for the project report.

Nucor also is planning to kick off a modernization of its 1.2-million-ton-per-year steel coil and plate mill in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, during the first quarter. Nucor will install a new rolling mill stand to produce thinner, stronger, higher-quality plate and a new product line. Subscribers can [click here](#) for more information.

GMI database subscribers can [click here](#) for all project reports mentioned in this article and [click here](#) for the related plant profiles.

Subscribers can [click here](#) for a list of all steel mill capital projects that are planned to kick off during the first quarter in the U.S.



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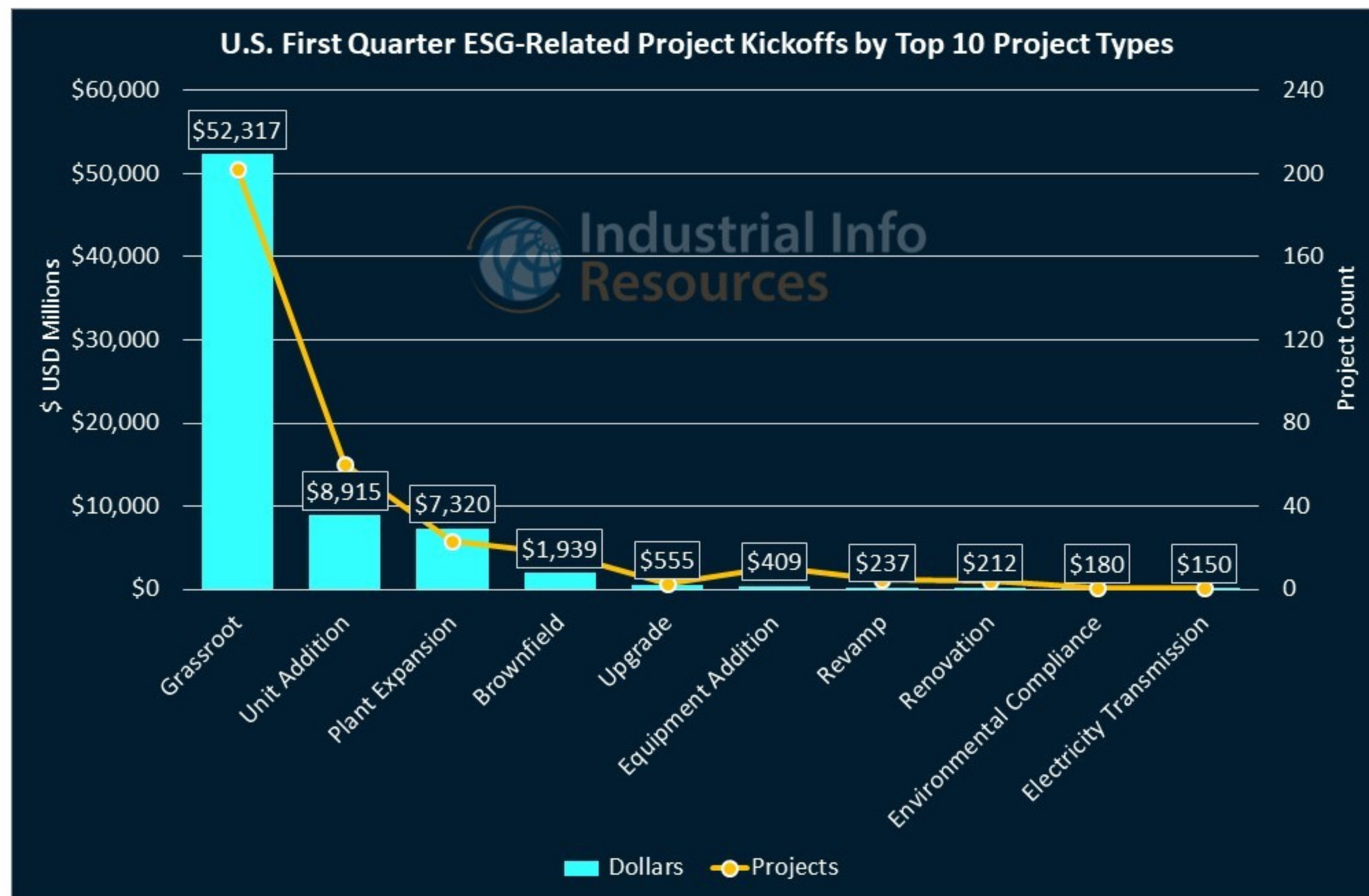
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## U.S. Home to \$72 Billion in Planned 1Q ESG-Related Project Kickoffs

Projects in support of environmental, social and governance (ESG) initiatives continue to pop up across the U.S. as a host of industries continue to decarbonize their operations and add renewable sources of energy. Industrial Info is tracking \$72 billion worth of ESG-related projects in the U.S. that are planned to kick off in the first quarter, with more than half of the spend attributed to projects that have a medium-to-high (70% or higher) likelihood of beginning construction as currently scheduled. About one-fourth of the total spend is attributed to grassroots projects, buoyed by the development of solar and wind generation.



Solar-generation project activity includes construction of Renegade Renewables LLC's planned **\$900 million Dawn photovoltaic solar farm near Hereford, Texas**, about 50 miles southwest of Amarillo. The facility will include more than 1.5 million solar panels on a single-axis, ground-mounted tracking system to achieve a nameplate generating capacity of more than 650 megawatts (MW). Major engineering, procurement and construction firm **M.A. Mortenson** (Minneapolis, Minnesota) expects to kick off construction in January, with completion in early 2026. Renegade Renewables is a unit of **Blue Planet Funding** (New York, New York). The solar farm will connect to the ERCOT North Hub, which includes Dallas. Subscribers to Industrial Info's Global Market Intelligence (GMI) Power Project Database can [click here](#) for the full project report.

While solar projects dominate first-quarter ESG kickoffs, the U.S. is not without wind project activity—and one of the largest onshore wind projects being tracked by Industrial Info is set to kick off in January. The **Sunzia project in New Mexico's Lincoln and Guadalupe counties** being constructed for **Pattern Energy Group** (San Francisco, California) will include approximately 900 turbines, each rated above 3 MW, to provide nameplate generation of 3,000 MW. The project is expected to be completed in 2026 and its output is designed to be carried via a related transmission line, to be deployed in the Western U.S. Subscribers can [click here](#) for more details, and read May 17, 2023, article - [Pattern Energy Signs PPAs for Major SunZia Wind Project](#).

Aside from renewable energy development, another ESG trend is the abatement and storage of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions.

One example is **Exxon Mobil Corporation's (NYSE:XOM)** (Spring, Texas) **equipment additions** at its Shute Creek Natural Gas Treatment Complex near Kemmerer, Wyoming, in the LaBarge Field, which will support the first phase of a carbon-capture effort that features three components. The installation of new equipment, which is planned to begin in February, includes adding a new high-pressure CO<sub>2</sub> product compressor, and other equipment, to capture 50 million cubic feet per day of CO<sub>2</sub>. Construction of the other two components is expected to kick off in April: nine miles of 10-inch-diameter **pipeline** will carry the captured CO<sub>2</sub> to a planned **disposal well** that sits on federal land owned by the Bureau of Land Management. Subscribers to the Oil & Gas Pipelines and Production project databases can read detailed reports on the [equipment addition](#), [pipeline](#) and [disposal well](#) projects.

The project will allow the Shute Creek facility, which already captures between 6 million and 7 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per year, to capture up to an additional 1.2 million metric tons per year. Operations could begin as early as 2025, according to ExxonMobil.

The Industrial Manufacturing (\$7.2 billion) and Pharmaceutical & Biotech (\$4.6 billion) industries trail Power in terms of the total investment value of first quarter ESG-related construction starts, although plant expansions account for about half of the spend.

To no surprise, activity in the Industrial Manufacturing Industry is buoyed by projects related to electric vehicles (EVs). With a medium (70-80%) chance of moving forward as planned, **Tesla Incorporated (NASDAQ:TSLA)** (Austin, Texas) expects to begin a **\$3.6 billion expansion** of its 5.4 million-square-foot gigafactory in Sparks, Nevada, which it jointly operates with **Panasonic Holdings Corporation** (Osaka, Japan). The project entails constructing two new buildings totaling approximately 4 million square feet—a high-volume semi-truck production building and a lithium ion-battery cell production building with an annual capacity of 100 gigawatt-hours—which will allow for the production of batteries for 1.5 million light-duty vehicles per year. Subscribers to the Industrial Manufacturing Project Database can [click here](#) for a project report.

Meanwhile, **Yale University** (New Haven, Connecticut) plans to begin construction on a **\$350 million expansion of a research center**, which entails adding a 253,000-square-foot research laboratory building, a chemistry safety facility and other buildings, all of which are designed to reach net-zero emissions. The university has an interim goal of reaching net-zero emissions by 2035. Subscribers to the Pharmaceutical & Biotech Project Database can [click here](#) to read a detailed project report.

For information on ESG trends in the Pharmaceutical & Biotech, Petroleum Refining, and Metals & Minerals industries, see November 16, 2023, article - [IIR Webinar: Pharma-Biotech Sector Strives to Keep up With Trends, Maximize Profits](#), July 13, 2023, article - [Petroleum Refining: How ESG Projects are Driving Energy Transition](#), and July 20, 2023, article - [IIR Webinar: Geopolitics, Resource Nationalism, ESG Initiatives Affect Mining Spending](#).

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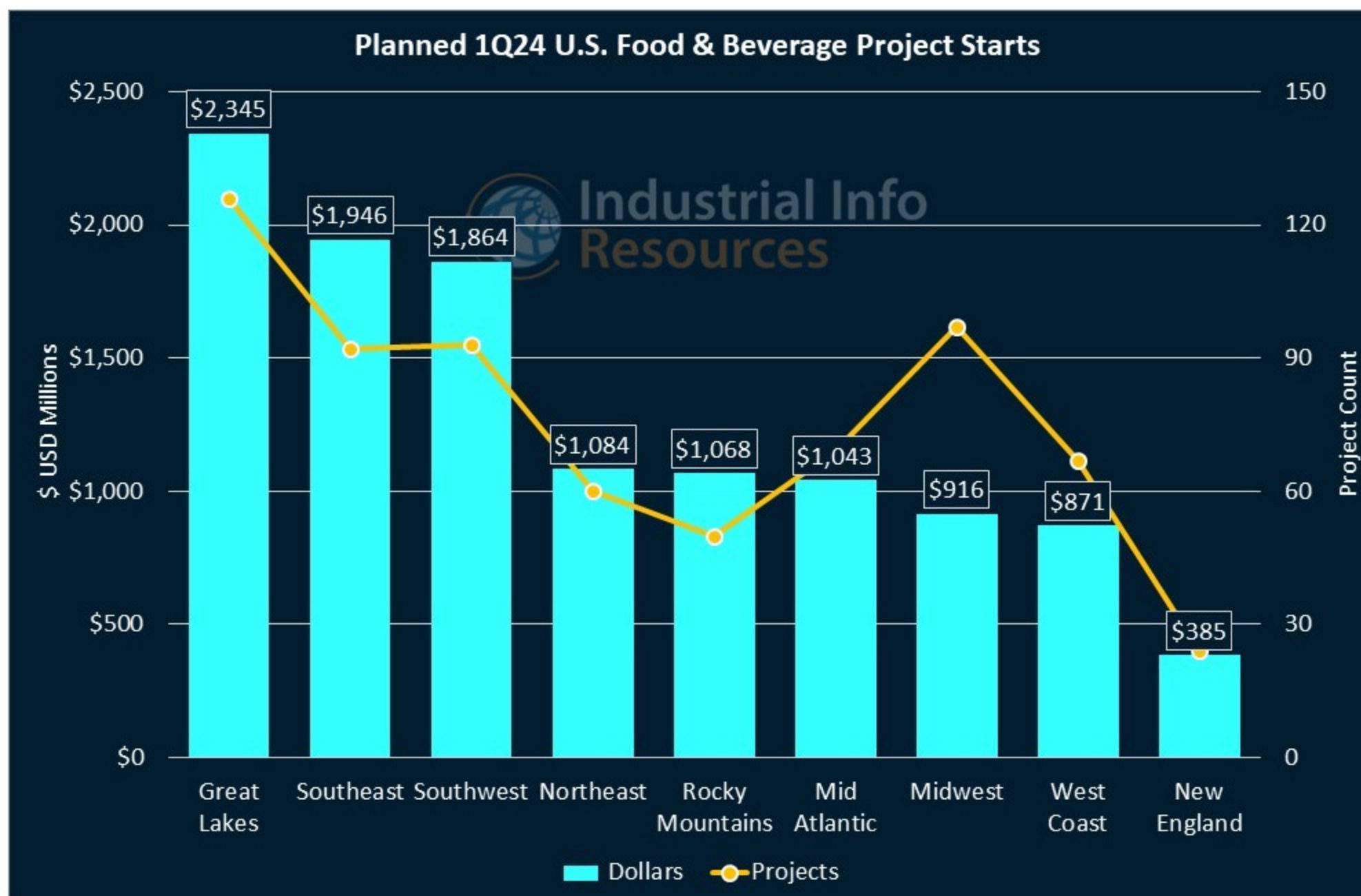
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## Great Lakes Leads U.S. in Q1 Food & Beverage Project Starts

As the new year unfurls, the results are in, and the Great Lakes region has emerged as the leading destination for U.S. Food & Beverage project spending in first-quarter 2024. With more than \$2.3 billion worth of planned first-quarter project starts, the Great Lakes region, which includes Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin, easily beats out the second-ranked Southeastern U.S. region, which comes in with \$1.95 billion worth of planned first-quarter food and beverage project starts.



Within the Great Lakes region, Ohio emerges as the highest spender, thanks to some high-dollar projects. While food manufacturing often takes front and center in the industry, two of Ohio's largest food and beverage projects are for a cold storage warehouse and a beverage distribution center. The cold storage warehouse is being developed by chicken processor [Koch Foods Incorporated](#) (Park Ridge, Illinois) in Fairfield, on the northern outskirts of Cincinnati. The facility will be constructed on an 18-acre site that presently houses a former Liberty Mutual insurance building. The building will be demolished, and in its place will rise a new 450,000-square-foot cold storage facility. The facility will complement Koch's chicken processing plant, which is located about a mile away.

Koch expanded its operations in Fairfield in the first part of last year with the completion of an additional poultry processing plant near its original facility. The 400,000-square-foot new plant created hundreds of new jobs for the area and paved the way for the construction of the cold storage warehouse and distribution center, which is expected to go into service in 2025. Subscribers to Industrial Info's Global Market Intelligence (GMI) Food & Beverage Project Database can learn more by viewing the project reports on the completed [processing plant](#) and new [cold storage facility](#).

In Columbus, Ohio, the U.S.' largest Coca-Cola bottler, [Coca-Cola Consolidated Incorporated](#) (Charlotte, North Carolina), is constructing a grassroot beverage warehouse and distribution center at the Rickenbacker Industrial Center. Early next year, Coca-Cola Consolidated will begin construction on a new 400,000-square-foot facility that will speed up the distribution of its Coca-Cola products when it opens in 2025. Subscribers can [click here](#) to learn more about the project.

But that's only two of a total of more than 125 planned food and beverage project starts across the six-state Great Lakes region. Within the region, next in line for spending is Illinois, which boasts more than 20 planned project starts in the first quarter. Many of the state's top planned food and beverage projects are firmly rooted in the agricultural sector. Among these is an upgrade project at a corn-processing plant in Decatur. [Primient's](#) (Decatur) plant in Decatur has been operating since 1969 and can process 54.75 million bushels of corn per year. For the project, Primient is upgrading two tube germ dryers with major equipment overhauls. The project is expected to be completed in the second quarter of next year. Subscribers can [click here](#) for more details.

In Creal Springs, in southern Illinois, [Saline River Farms LLC](#) (Creal Springs) will begin renovating the former Four Star arena into a meat-processing plant, bringing about 400 jobs to the area. The groundbreaking ceremony has been held, and construction is set to begin in early 2024. When completed in mid-2025, the facility will begin ramping up to a full processing capacity of more than 40.3 million pounds of beef and 19 million pounds of pork per year. Subscribers can [click here](#) to learn more.

Rounding out the top three states for first-quarter food and beverage spending in the Great Lakes market region is Kentucky, which has several planned projects at its many distilleries. Among the largest of these is [Whiskey House of Kentucky's](#) addition of four rickhouses, where spirits are aged, at its under-construction distillery in Elizabethtown. Construction on the distillery began in late 2022 and is expected to be completed this summer, with 16 rickhouses in operation. The addition of the four new rickhouses will kick off early next year, and they should be completed by the year's end. Each of the rickhouses will be able to store 41,500 bourbon barrels. Subscribers can learn more by reading the project reports on the [grassroot distillery](#) and [rickhouse additions](#).

Subscribers to Industrial Info's GMI Food & Beverage Project Database can [click here](#) to see reports for all of the projects discussed in this article and [click here](#) for the related plant profiles.



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The presentations will include the following segments:

- Global Market Outlook
- Petroleum Refining & Alternative Fuels
- Midstream Gas Processing and LNG Markets
- Chemical Processing
- Electric Power
- North America Spending Forecast

IIR staff also will be holding an interactive workshop on our products earlier in the afternoon.

We hope you are able to join us for this event! [Click here](#) to learn more and to RSVP.

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