

New distillery planned for NC Industrial Park \$25 million Bardstown Bourbon Co. facility to employ 35

By Peter W. Zubaty, Sports Editor
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With the bourbon marketplace booming, distilleries are popping up all over Kentucky, and the capital city of the bourbon world will play host to the industry's latest venture.



BARDSTOWN BOURBON CO. LLC

An artistic rendering of the \$25 million Bardstown Bourbon Company's facility, which is scheduled to open in 2016. The 45,000 square foot distillery and visitor's center will be located in the Nelson County Industrial Park, visible from the Blue Grass Parkway. Construction is to begin later this summer.



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Kentucky governor Steve Beshear, left, receives a ceremonial barrelhead from Bardstown Bourbon Company president and CEO David Mandell. Beshear and other officials were on hand Thursday at My Old Kentucky Home State Park for the announcement of the new distillery facility, which is scheduled to begin production in 2016.

“We’re here on historic ground to celebrate a historic beverage,” Gov. Steve Beshear said Thursday morning at My Old Kentucky Home State Park regarding the new Bardstown Bourbon Company distillery, which will break ground this summer and is scheduled to begin production in 2016.

Steve Nally, former master distiller at Maker’s Mark and a Bourbon Hall of Fame inductee, will serve as master distiller for Bardstown Bourbon Company.

“It’s a great pleasure to be back home,” said Nally, 63, who recently helped start up the Wyoming Whiskey distillery and still resides in Loretto. He said the distillery’s first products — which will be a fully-aged, premium line of bourbon — will arrive on shelves in “six to seven years.”

Local officials welcomed the shot in the arm for the local economy.

“The Bardstown Bourbon Company will be a wonderful new addition to our bourbon family here in Nelson County,” said Kim Huston, president of the Nelson County Economic Development Agency. “The company selected Bardstown over several other sites in Kentucky and Indiana, and we look forward to watching their distillery and destination campus be constructed here in the bourbon capital of the world. We plan to celebrate again in 2016 when their facility is completed.”

The \$25 million, 45,000-square foot distillery, warehouses and visitor’s center will be on a complex covering 100 acres in the Nelson County Industrial Park, officials said. Thirty-five new full-time jobs will be created, and Bardstown Bourbon Company has also pledged to employ local firms for the construction of the facility.

“Your swift and responsive action has brought us to this point today,” Bardstown Bourbon Company president and CEO David Mandell said, crediting local and state officials for coming up with an attractive package when they were looking for a location. “It was the people and community of Bardstown that attracted us.”

The Kentucky Economic Development Finance Authority approved Bardstown Bourbon Company for as much as \$1.3 million in tax benefits through the Kentucky Business Investment program and the Kentucky Enterprise Initiative Act in an effort to spur economic activity.

“The Bardstown Bourbon Company, with its unique brand, will only enhance our reputation that if you want to market great bourbon, then you need to be in the bourbon capital of the world,” Mayor Bill Sheckles said. “We are very fortunate to attract such a class operation to the Bardstown community.”

The company will be the fifth distillery based in Nelson County, joining Heaven Hill, Barton, Jim Beam and Willett.

“We are very excited about this new venture coming to Bardstown and Nelson County,” County Judge-Executive Dean Watts said. “We truly believe it will be a great fit for our community.”

During the ceremony, Bardstown Bourbon Company officials unveiled an artistic rendering of the finished facility, drawing oohs and aahs from the crowd of about 75. The facility will be in a highly-visible location along the Blue Grass Parkway, the stunning, well-lit building serving as a beacon and gateway welcoming tourists to Bardstown from the East.

Huston called it a “perfect storm” of a project to get everything lined up in a process that took just weeks.

Beshear said it’s a good investment for the state, given the economic hulk that is the \$2 billion bourbon industry, which has doubled its revenue in the past 13 years. Kentucky’s distilled spirits export total of \$383 million represented 21 percent of the U.S. total.

“This is another strong step toward trying to quench that thirst,” Beshear said.

Mandell said the distillery and visitor’s center experience would stress education and innovation.

“We will bring the enthusiast and the tourist as close as we can to the bourbon-making process,” he said.

Nally, who retired from Maker’s Mark in 2003, said he would be focusing on the development of the product during the construction of the facility. At capacity, he said, Bardstown Bourbon Company would produce about 1.5 million gallons per year, or about 26,000-27,000 barrels. In addition, the distillery hopes to partner with local restaurants to develop bourbon-themed menu items.

Nally said they would not be releasing any of the un-aged “white dog” whiskey on the market, choosing instead to wait until the first batches of bourbon are fully-aged before making the product available for sale.

“The first impression’s usually the lasting one,” he said.



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Steve Nally, left, discusses plans for the new Bardstown Bourbon Company distillery on Thursday while the company's president and CEO, David Mandell, looks on. Nally was master distiller at Maker's Mark — a position he will hold with Bardstown Bourbon Company — and is a member of the Bourbon Hall of Fame.



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David Mandell, president and CEO of Bardstown Bourbon Company, lays out the details of the distillery's new facility while vice president Garnett Black reveals an artistic rendering of the building.



PETER W. ZUBATY/The Kentucky Standard
 A group of about 75 people gathered at the rotunda at My Old Kentucky Home State Park on Thursday for the announcement of the plans for the Bardstown Bourbon Company's facility, which is schedule to open in 2016



PETER W. ZUBATY/The Kentucky Standard
 The Bardstown Bourbon Company is building a 45,000 square foot facility in the Nelson County Industrial Park that will eventually open in 2016, becoming Nelson County's fifth distillery.