



**Illinois**  
**Department of Commerce**  
& Economic Opportunity  
JB Pritzker, Governor

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## **Gov. Pritzker, IL Congressional Leaders Announce iFAB Awarded \$51 million EDA Tech Hubs Grant**

*iFAB Tech Hub Selected for EDA Phase 2 Funding, Advancing Illinois as a  
Leader in Precision Fermentation*

**URBANA** –Today, the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) announced

that the state has secured approximately \$51 million in federal funding for the Illinois Fermentation and Agriculture Biomufacturing (iFAB) Tech Hub, leveraging the state’s leading production of raw agricultural materials to develop sustainable alternatives to fossil fuel-based products. This pivotal funding from EDA marks a significant milestone in advancing Illinois' leadership in the precision fermentation and biomanufacturing industry – propelling economic growth, business development opportunities and the creation of good-paying jobs.

“Today’s announcement demonstrates that Illinois is leading the nation in biotechnology and biomanufacturing,” **said Governor JB Pritzker**. “Thanks to this \$51 million investment from our federal partners, the iFAB consortium will have the resources they need to expand their cutting-edge research and bring innovation and growth to Central Illinois for decades to come.”

The iFAB consortium of leaders from higher education, economic development organizations, government, and industry has secured significant commitments, including over \$680 million in cash match and strategic investments, demonstrating strong confidence and backing from stakeholders. This initiative will unite cutting-edge R&D, scalable infrastructure, and abundant feedstock production within a 51-mile radius, positioning Central Illinois as a preeminent destination for biomanufacturing. The precision fermentation industry is projected to reach \$200 billion by 2040, with the potential to generate 1 million jobs by 2030.

“With today’s news, Illinois will remain a global leader in biotechnology and biomanufacturing—especially in critical fields like food and agriculture—and will stimulate local economies, and improve food security for decades to come,” **said Senator Dick Durbin**. “I commend the Biden-Harris Administration for their innovative *CHIPS and Science Act*, and for establishing the Tech Hubs program. I look forward to seeing all iFAB can achieve for future generations.”

“I’m so pleased iFAB is receiving this critical Tech Hub funding, unlocking innovation, investment and job creation for years to come,” said Senator Tammy **Duckworth**. “Illinois is already a hub of agriculture, manufacturing, transportation and technology, making our state ideally positioned for these Tech Hub awards. I was proud to help pass the *CHIPS and Science Act*, and I’m thrilled that with programs like iFAB we’re making it

clear our state has the projects and innovation ready to harness the law's new investments and help bring our state, nation and world into the future.”

“The \$51 million federal investment in the iFAB Tech Hub is a game changer for Central Illinois,” **said Congresswoman Nikki Budzinski (IL-13)**. “For years, our region has been leading the nation in groundbreaking agricultural research. The funding announced today will build on that foundation with explosive economic growth and place Decatur, Monticello and Champaign at the center of a booming bioeconomy. I’ve been proud to push for these resources and I couldn’t be more excited to see our area’s unique potential unlocked with this historic investment.”

“Securing this grant is a testament to the hard work and collaboration of our partners and the strategic importance of leveraging biology as a manufacturing technology of the future — we are thrilled to lead this charge in making Central Illinois the heart of biomanufacturing in the U.S. and beyond,” **said Beth Conerty, iFAB regional innovation officer and associate director of business development at the Integrated Bioprocessing Research Laboratory, part of the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences at U. of I.**

“The EDA Tech Hub grant for iFAB is a game changer that has the power to generate billions in economic impact for central Illinois and the state as a whole,” **said DCEO Director Kristin Richards**. “Through collaboration, Illinois continues to position itself as an industry-leading state for biofermentation and we look forward to serving as a catalyst for cutting edge breakthroughs in this critical industry.”

The approximately \$51 million in EDA funding will be strategically allocated to projects that encompass infrastructure development, industry partnerships and more. This comprehensive approach ensures that the iFAB Tech Hub will catalyze significant economic growth, attract additional private investment, and establish Illinois as a leader in precision fermentation. EDA’s Phase 2 Implementation Grant will strengthen iFAB’s ability to attract and support companies to join the growing biomanufacturing ecosystem in Champaign, Piatt, and Macon counties.

- **Bioprocessing expansion:** The EDA grant will help realize a \$40 million expansion of Integrated Bioprocessing Research Laboratory (IBRL), which will include a 1500-liter fermenter capacity upgrade.
- **Production line expansion:** Primient and Synonym will receive funding to increase fermentation capacity and ADM will use Phase 2 funding to upgrade their precision fermentation facility. This significant investment solidifies Decatur’s role as a key player in Central Illinois’ expanding biomanufacturing corridor.
- **iFAB Tech Hub Management:** The EDA grant will also support the iFAB Tech Hub’s management.

iFAB is supported by Innovate Illinois, a strategic initiative led by Governor Pritzker and co-chaired by U. of I. Chancellor Robert J. Jones.

“Today’s EDA grant not only acknowledges but actively fuels our mission to establish Central Illinois as a pivotal biomanufacturing player on the global stage. With these new resources, we are equipped to accelerate our initiatives, ensuring that our region not only meets but sets the gold standard for biomanufacturing innovation,” **said U. of I. Chancellor Robert J. Jones**. “This partnership exemplifies how the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign can leverage its expertise and resources to fuel progress and prosperity right in our backyard.”

### **The Illinois Fermentation and Agriculture Biomanufacturing (iFAB) Tech Hub**

The iFab Consortium is led by the Integrated Bioprocessing Research Laboratory (IBRL) at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and brings together over 30 partners representing Central Illinois' leading academic,

industry, and government organizations to address the growing demand for fermentation in biomanufacturing. Precision fermentation is critical for the sustainable production of the nutritional components that will feed the growing global population.

Illinois is the largest state for soy production and the second largest for corn production, which ensures the state's agricultural industry has the necessary assets needed to transform Central Illinois into a global leader in biomanufacturing. The Tech Hub award for iFAB will have profound benefits for the nation's food security, increase supply chain resilience, and boost Illinois' decarbonization efforts and global competitiveness.

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