

To: Office of Planning and Research
PO Box 3044
1400 Tenth Street, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: California Energy Commission
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Project Applicant: Sierra Nevada Cheese Company, Inc.

Project Title: Sierra Nevada Cheese Facility Decarbonization

Project Location – Specific: 6505 County Rd 39

Project Location – City: Willows 95988 Project Location – County: Glenn

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

Sierra Nevada Cheese (SNC) seeks to implement a waste-to-energy system that cuts greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) in its factory's industrial processes. The project will install Biogas Energy anaerobic digesters, a Mainspring Linear Generator, and a Flow CO2 heat pump to capture fugitive methane emissions, generate clean, renewable energy, and improve local air quality. With these environmental and operational improvements, SNC will be able to expand its operations and source more milk from small family farms in the region while creating jobs in the surrounding disadvantaged community. Through this project, Sierra Nevada Cheese will decarbonize its entire industrial process, ranging from heating and pasteurizing milk, to cheesemaking, chilling, and cleaning. SNC's innovation lies in integrating cutting-edge waste-to-energy technologies, energy efficiency measures, and methane capture to become California's first carbon negative industrial facility, cutting 124,375 MTCO2e over the project's lifespan.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: California Energy Commission

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Sierra Nevada Cheese Company, Inc.

Exempt Status: (check one)

- Ministerial Exemption (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(1); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(3); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(4); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number
Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15301 ; Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15304; Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15329
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number.
- Common Sense Exemption. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, §15061(b)(3))

Reasons why project is exempt:

Glenn County Planning & Community Development Services (lead CEQA agency) supports preparation of a Notice of Exemption (NOE) as the CEQA compliance document, and agreed the project would meet the requirements for an exemption under Section 15301, Existing Facilities, Section 15304, Minor Alterations to Land, and Section 15329, Cogeneration Projects at Existing Facilities of the California Code of Regulations.

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code. Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code. Sierra Nevada Cheese Company, Inc.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Mardy Thomas **Area code/Telephone/Ext:** 530.934.6540

If filed by applicant:

- 1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
- 2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature: Colin Lee **Date:** 4/30/2025 **Title:** CAM

Signed by Responsible Agency

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing at OPR: _____