

AGR Partners investing in ag from new Chicago office

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AGR Partners was busy last week in announcing the opening of its Chicago office and the completion of investments in two additional companies.

institutional pension investors. Their investments are focused on long-term investment in food and agriculture value-chain companies. AGR Partners looks to invest as a non-controlling equity or subordinated debt investor.

AGR Partners is an equity firm based in Visalia, Calif., with capital provided by

Ejnar Knudsen, managing partner of the AGR team, in a teleconference, noted that investment prior to the two new corporate investments included three major food and ag companies. Money has been provided for business expansions and improvements for increased competitiveness in specific markets.

“AGR Partners has provided over \$150 million in the last two years to management teams seeking strategic and flexible equity and sub-debt to support their growth plans,” Knudsen said.

He further noted AGR Partners has institutional investor money to possibly putting up to \$200 million per year over the next five years into food and agriculture value-chain companies. The institutional investors rely on AGR Partners to do the vetting of potential companies for stability and growth potential and work in an advisory role as needed to the company earning the cash infusion.

The two newly announced investments are with 3D Corporate Solutions, Monett, Mo, in the food ingredients and pet food industry and Tru-Test Limited operating in the dairy and livestock industry out of New Zealand.

AGR Partners is not looking at farmland investment at this time, Knudsen noted, but opening a new office in Chicago is part of the company’s plan to expand its national coverage from a central U.S. location.

Knudsen said companies that qualify for investment are mainly within AGR Partners’ core focus of those needing between \$15 million and \$100 million. Many banks might not be able to invest that much money and have referred companies to AGR Partners. Knudsen said, “A good third of referrals come to us through banks.”

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