



Austinville Limestone Co.

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The Most Recent Chapter in our History

Austinville Limestone Co. operates on a 1000-acre site in Southwest VA, which is the oldest continuous mining site in the US. In the late 1970's, underground mining for lead and zinc was discontinued at Austinville. In 1982, the main plant and property were purchased by James River Limestone Co. of Buchanan, Virginia. The new company was named Austinville Limestone and continued serving agricultural customers with aglime from the tailings piles and also from a new surface quarry and mills installed on site.

When James River Limestone was sold in 1996, four employees purchased the Austinville property, which continued to operate as an aglime facility. During the 10 years up until 2006, the company employed about 6-8 people and shipped 150,000 – 170,000 tons of aglime per year.

In 2006, the owners decided to expand into the lawn & garden limestone business by pelletizing and bagging their limestone, for distribution to home improvement stores, nurseries, and garden centers throughout the Southeast. The first pelletized limestone was shipped in January 2007. By 2009, the company employed 30 people full-time, having installed a fair amount of automation, and quadrupled their aglime sales with the new lawn & garden products, which are now sold throughout the eastern US.

Since 2017, the company has expanded its business twofold, by introducing new products and earning business with 3 major national accounts, while continuing to expand coverage within commercial lawncare business channels. During the pandemic, the company has responded to the surge in demand by serving its customers faithfully, while retaining and protecting employees by continuing to provide a safe work environment, good pay and benefits with overtime. During 2020, company sales exceeded \$14 million.

During 2010 and 2011, the company restored 44 acres bordering the New River and the Trail, cleaning up environmental issues left by previous owners. This land was then sold at a discounted price to Virginia's Department of Conservation and Recreation, and is now part of the New River Trail State Park. An additional 182 acres above the trail was restricted by the Company to prohibit future development, preserving the "viewshed" from the Trail.

The Company also assisted a neighboring landowner by removing limestone tailings from the property known as Austin Meadows. The reclamation was completed in 2015, restoring this property as a stream bed and wetland, visible from State Route 636.

Austinville Limestone Co. continues to renovate and improve the old facility, improving its appearance and efficiency, operating in a safe and environmentally responsible way. The owners' intent is to restore Austinville Limestone Co. as an asset to the community, while respecting our rich history.