

## Log Still Distilling coming to Nelson County Dant family returning with plans for Dee Head Road property

By Kacie Goode

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The Dant family is returning to Nelson County with plans to revitalize property near New Hope and build a distillery.



KACIE GOODE/The Kentucky Standard

Wally Dant speaks during Friday's National Bourbon Day kickoff about his family's distilling legacy. Dant shared plans to establish Log Still Distilling on Dee Head Road.

During Bardstown's National Bourbon Day kickoff Friday, Log Still Distilling LLC announced it will construct a premium bourbon and rye whiskey operation on Dee Head Road between New Haven and New Hope. The operation, a \$12 million investment, will include a distillery, bottling operation, rickhouses and a visitor center with gift shop and tasting room, and looks to create up to 20 full-time jobs.

"It's going to be a big renovation project," owner J. W. "Wally" Dant said during Friday's ceremony at Spalding Hall Lawn, adding the project includes plans to use an existing bottling house on the property as well as an existing water tower.

Dant's family has owned multiple distilling operations in the area since the 1800s, beginning with the establishment of the J.W. Dant brand. The property on Dee Head Road housed, at one time, a distillery owned by founder Joseph W. Dant's sons, which continued production until 1920 when Prohibition was implemented.

Following the repeal of Prohibition, the Dant family business reopened, but production was eventually relocated to Louisville in the early 1960s and the brand was later sold to Heaven Hill Distilleries.

Wally Dant said he is excited to return to his family's distilling home and build upon the Dant legacy with Log Still.

"Kentucky, Bardstown and Nelson County have gone out of their way to welcome us and really bring my family heritage back into this business," Dant said, "I cannot thank them enough for doing everything they are doing for us."

In addition to thanking Gov. Matt Bevin and numerous local and state officials for their contributions in developing the project, Dant also thanked the J.W. Nalley family for preserving so much of the former plant, which will be renovated into the new distillery.

Kim Huston, president of the Nelson County Economic Development Agency, said Dant's family history in the industry makes the project particularly special.

"It's not only resurrecting a distillery property with great bourbon heritage, but it's being done by the great-great-great grandson of distillery founder Joseph W. Dant," Huston said. "We can't wait to see all the production and activity once again return to this rural area of Nelson County."

Judge-Executive Dean Watts was also pleased about the location of the new distillery.

"The jobs will be a boost to New Hope, a rural area of Nelson County, and will bring back a historical asset to that community," he said in a press release.

The addition of Log Still Distilling brings the number of distilleries located in and around Nelson County to 11, Huston said. At least five of those distilleries were introduced in the last five years, and Huston anticipates additional announcements to be made soon on expansions and other industry momentum.

"It's going to be a good year," she said.

Incentives offered to incoming distiller

Family roots are not the only draw for Log Still Distilling to locate in Nelson County. The company was also offered up to \$500,000 in tax incentives through the Kentucky Business Investment program.

According to a state press release from Gov. Matt Bevin's office, "the performance-based incentive will allow Log Still Distilling to keep a portion of the new tax revenue it generates over the agreement term through corporate income tax credits and wage assessments by meeting job and investment targets."

The company was also approved for up to \$100,000 in tax incentives through the Kentucky Enterprise Initiative Act, allowing it to recoup sales and use tax on construction costs and other needs.

The tax incentives are just a few ways investment and job growth is encouraged in the community and state. The distiller can also receive resources from the Kentucky Skills Network for assistance in recruitment, job placement and training.

Additional information on state economic development efforts and programs can be found at [ThinkKentucky.com](http://ThinkKentucky.com).