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A Forres-based organic vegetable producer is planning an expansion

which could create up to 20 new jobs after a getting an enterprise grant.

HIE Moray approved a £266,300 award to Tio Ltd to market the organic vegetable produce of Mid Coul Farms. The company, which was established in 1998, supplies Tesco with its organic root vegetables. The £2.5m expansion will see the upgrading of facilities including the extension of cold storage. This will enable the firm to deal with significantly increased volumes.

The company said it needed to add to its existing factory and it had planning permission for a 1,500m² extension. The move is expected to see the company's staff numbers increase from 47 to 67 over the next few months. Mandy Holmes, development manager for HIE Moray, said: "Tio Ltd is a young and vibrant company with a skilled, flexible and enthusiastic management team and workforce. "Upgrading the quality of their facility will safeguard the continued development of the customer base and will result in new jobs for the area."

William Rose, Tio Ltd managing director, said: "This is great news for the company and for Forres as it is clear that there is considerable potential for the company to expand and take on new employees so I am delighted that we are receiving support with this venture."