

Greenhouse bought by O'Neill firm

Written by Elizabeth Barrett

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Owner plans to dismantle and move pieces of the building to Garden Fresh Vegetables site.

The giant glass house on south Highway 47 built in 2002 for the growing and shipping of hydroponic vegetables will disappear.

Garden Fresh Vegetables of O'Neill, owned by Marvin Fritz, is buying the real estate and personal property from Pro-Health for \$750,000.

Pro-Health is a Wray, CO-based company that specialized in raising and repacking vegetables and fruits for distribution.

The greenhouse and adjacent pack house, a \$5.8 million state-of-the-art facility, was built by Larry and Jan Gill. Pro-Health bought it in 2007 after it went bankrupt in 2006.

Fritz, who owns several greenhouses in and around O'Neill, will dismantle the greenhouse and ship it to the northeast part of the state where he plans to expand his greenhouse, according to city attorney Mike Bacon.

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Bacon said the pack house adjacent to the greenhouse and 10-acre site will later be sold as well as equipment inside the building.

On Friday, Dennis Helder, project manager of Mountain High Greenhouse Construction of Pueblo, CO, said his company would first clean the greenhouse and then begin disassembling it for shipment to O'Neill.

On its website, Garden Fresh Vegetables is described as a hydroponic, fresh tomato and cucumber operation that utilizes a biological pest control program and all-natural bee pollination.

When Pro-Health bought the facility, owners planned to repack and reship tomatoes from the pack house on the greenhouse site.

They also wanted to eventually raise the vegetable in the greenhouse but it never materialized.

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