

**Historical Marker - S432 - Peninsular Sugar Refining Company / Peninsular Sugar Refining Company (Marker ID#:S432)**



**Front - Title/Description**

***Peninsular Sugar Refining Company***

The beet sugar industry in Michigan began growing rapidly in the late nineteenth century. The declining lumber industry had cleared thousands of acres of land suitable for the cultivation of sugar beets. In 1897 farmers were encouraged further to grow this new crop when the state legislature offered a bounty to producers of one cent for each pound of sugar made from Michigan beets. Soon numerous beet sugar factories appeared. Many of them were in the Saginaw Valley area where both climate and soil were satisfactory for growing sugar beets. One of the companies started in this era was the Peninsular Sugar Refining Company at Caro. Organized in 1898, it was first called the Caro Sugar Company. Today it is the oldest beet sugar factory still operating in Michigan.

**Significant Date:**

Industry and Invention (1875-1915)

**Registry Year:** 1974    **Erected Date:** 1977

**Marker Location**

**Address:** 725 South Almer

**City:** Caro

**State:** MI    **ZipCode:**

**County:** Tuscola

**Township:** Indianfields

**Lat:** 43.48255100 / **Long:** -83.39677100

**Web URL:**

**Back - Title/Description**

***Peninsular Sugar Refining Company***

The Peninsular Sugar Refining Company owes its success in part to the willingness of area farmers to grow sugar beets. A German firm built the factory in 1899 on land donated by the community. A newspaper, the Tuscola County Advertiser, publicized the venture and Charles Montague, a local businessman, raised capital for it. Farmers hauled tons of beets to the Caro factory in horse-drawn, wooden-wheeled wagons and sleighs. In October of 1899 the company embarked on its first season of beet sugar production. In 1906 Peninsular Sugar merged with several other companies to form the Michigan Sugar Company. With Charlie Sieland as superintendent, the Caro factory became known as a training ground for sugar craftsmen. Today Caro's modern automated equipment is housed in the original factory.