

Heinz Sells Ontario Facility

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LEAMINGTON, Ont. - Food giant Heinz says a deal to prevent closing a food processing plant that's a key part of the town's economy is now complete, saving at least 250 jobs.

The H.J. Heinz Co. said Wednesday that Highbury Canco will take over operating the 105-year-old plant in Leamington, Ont. on June 27.

"We are pleased that Canco will manufacture some of Canada's favourite products, including Heinz Tomato Juice, Heinz Beans, and Heinz canned pastas in the years to come," Michael Mullen, senior vice-president of corporate and government affairs at H. J. Heinz Company, said in a statement.

Heinz's planned closure of the plant would have put close to 800 full-time employees out of work and affected employment for about 500 seasonal workers.

Highbury Canco has said it would hire about 250 people, plus additional seasonal workers if the deal went through.

"Now that the deal has concluded, the Highbury Canco Corporation is fully focused on establishing a strong production base in Leamington for Heinz and further strengthening our own brand," said Pradeep Sood, director of Highbury Canco.

The two companies have not placed a dollar value on the deal.

Highbury Canco is made up of unnamed investors who came together to form a corporation for the deal.

Highbury Canco has said it's looking to the Leamington plant to become the cornerstone of providing Ontario's agricultural products to international markets.

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