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The Joplin (Mo.) Globe, Joplin, Missouri

JOPLIN, Mo. (AP) — A pet food company has opened its first \$90 million factory in Joplin.

[The Joplin Globe](#) [1] reports the Heartland Pet Foods Manufacturing plant opened Wednesday.

Blue Buffalo Co. is the parent company of Heartland Pet Foods Manufacturing. The Joplin plant is Blue Buffalo's first. The company had been contracting out its pet food production by using other plants.

The 415,000-square-foot production plant will slowly begin operating. It is expected to be near full production by April. Officials say the plant will hire 150 full-time workers.

The Joplin location was selected in March 2012 by Blue Buffalo. Construction started in October 2012.

CEO Kurt Schmidt says about 75 percent of its dry products will be handled at the new plant.

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[1] <http://bit.ly/1toEGIL%20>