

## Bimbo bakery closure in Fresno will affect 92 employees

By Tim Sheehan



File photo of a Bimbo baked goods truck.

### CREATIVE COMMONS

Three things to know about Bimbo Bakeries closure in Fresno

- Bimbo Bakeries USA will close its Fresno baking plant on March 27.
- The closure will affect about 92 employees.
- The plant, once known as the Rainbo bakery at L and Los Angeles streets, dates to 1925.

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[Bimbo Bakeries USA](#) will close its Fresno baking plant in late March with plans to shift production to other company bakeries, primarily in Sacramento.

The closure will result in the layoffs of more than workers from the plant at L and Los Angeles streets, in an industrial district south of downtown. This is the second large-scale layoff at the plant since last summer. In August, the company shut down its bun line due to “excess capacity” at the Fresno plant and laid off about 60 workers.

Bimbo “will cease all operations at its facility ... on or about March 27 or within a 14-day period commencing on that date,” Bimbo regional vice president Joe Dangelmaier said in a notice filed Monday with the state [Employment Development Department](#) as well as with Fresno city and county officials. “This action will result in complete closure of the employment site. ... As a result of this closure, it is presently anticipated that 92 associates currently employed at the facility will be permanently laid off from employment on March 27” or in the two weeks after that.

California’s [Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification \(WARN\) Act](#) requires companies to give workers at least 60 days notice of plant closures, layoffs or relocations that affect 50 or more employees by filing a WARN notice with the EDD.

Among the affected employees are workers and forepersons in packaging and wrapping, shipping, production and sanitation; truck drivers; machine operators; and oven operators. The workforce includes positions that are non-union as well as those represented by the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union; the International Union of Operating Engineers; the International Brotherhood of Teamsters; and the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers.

In a press release, the company said it plans to shift production from Fresno to other bakeries in the Bimbo network, “mainly to its more efficient facility in Sacramento.” Dangelmaier, in his notice to the state, said that distribution operations at the Fresno bakery will move to Bimbo’s distribution center on South Willow Avenue at the southern fringe of town. But outside of any bumping rights for union workers, “the remaining associates (at the Fresno site) will not be transferring to another location.”

The company said it will be meeting with employees and with union representatives over severance benefits and transition resources. “Please be assured that all affected associates will be paid all earned wages and agreed-upon fringe benefits due them upon separation of employment,” Dangelmaier wrote in the WARN notice to the state.

Pennsylvania-based Bimbo Bakeries USA is a division of [Grupo Bimbo](#), a Mexican multinational company that operates in 22 countries around the world. In the U.S., Bimbo operates more than 65 bakeries. Bimbo Bakeries USA became the largest bakery company in the U.S. when it acquired Sara Lee Corp.’s North American fresh-bakery business, which included the Sara Lee, Rainbo, EarthGrains, Entenmann’s and Oroweat brands.

The Fresno plant, formerly known as the Rainbo bakery, dates to 1925 and sits on just over an acre of land, according to Fresno County property tax data. The assessed value of the property is \$3.4 million, according to the county assessor’s office. Bimbo Bakeries USA did not respond to inquiries about the company’s plans for the property.

Contact Tim Sheehan: [tsheehan@fresnobee.com](mailto:tsheehan@fresnobee.com), (559) 441-6319 or [@TimSheehanNews](https://twitter.com/TimSheehanNews) on Twitter.

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