Cargill cuts 178 jobs in Fresno after selling its beef plant — Fresno County, 2024

Cargill Meat Solutions laid off 178 of about 880 workers at its South Fig Avenue beef-processing plant in Fresno in mid-2024, after selling the plant to Central Valley Meat Co. — not a closure, but a consolidation, and one where the buyer is itself a Central Valley commodity-meat company headquartered in Hanford, Kings County.

178

Jobs cut, effective by early August 2024, per a WARN notice.

700

Workers who stayed on after the layoffs — the plant kept operating under its new owner.

What happened

Cargill Meat Solutions' beef-processing plant on South Fig Avenue in southwest Fresno employed about 880 people before mid-2024, when the plant changed hands: Central Valley Meat Co., a Hanford-based beef processor, took over the operation. The ownership change came with a real job cut — 178 positions, per a state WARN notice, effective by early August 2024 — but the plant itself didn't close. About 700 workers remained afterward.

Impact — what we know, and what we don't

- **Jobs:** 178 cut of roughly 880; about 700 retained.
- **Exact WARN notice date:** not captured from the source checked.
- **What happened at the plant after the ownership change, beyond the initial workforce figure:** not documented in any source found.

Part of a larger pattern

This is this project's clearest example of a pattern that shows up repeatedly across all four counties: a facility changes hands, sheds some jobs, and keeps running under new ownership, rather than exiting the region outright. **Land O'Lakes' 2007 sale of two Tulare plants to Saputo** and Saputo's own later sale of one of those buildings to Marquez Brothers follow the same shape, as does **Foster Farms' Turlock turkey plant** reopening under Diestel Family Ranch at a smaller scale. What's distinct here is the acquirer: not an outside multinational, but a Kings County commodity-meat company absorbing a Fresno County competitor — consolidation concentrating within the region, not extracting from it. It's also a direct tie between this project's Fresno and Kings County research, independent of the tomato- and dairy-processing closures that otherwise connect the two counties.

Fresno County's other documented closure, **ConAgra's Hunt-Wesson plant in Helm** (2016), and **OFI's Firebaugh plant** (2024, the same year as this one) were both full exits — this consolidation sits alongside them as the honest counter-case, not every change in the county's processing sector is an exit.

Sources

- The Fresno Bee, p. A5, 14 July 2024, "LAYOFFS" (continued from 1A, byline Tim Sheehan).
  Access: paywalled — read in the print edition; the publisher's online copy sits behind a subscription.

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