Leprino Foods closes its Lemoore East plant — Kings County, 2025–26

Leprino Foods — the world's largest mozzarella producer — is closing its Lemoore East plant, eliminating 368 jobs in two phased waves. It's the third documented commodity-processing closure to land on Lemoore and Hanford, the same pair of Kings County towns, since 2020.

368

Jobs eliminated, confirmed directly against the official California WARN report (268 effective Jan. 9, 2026; 100 effective Dec. 30, 2026).

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Commodity-processing closures now documented in Lemoore and Hanford combined since 2020 — tomato processing twice, dairy once.

What happened

Leprino announced the closure in November 2024; two separate WARN filings followed — October 2025 (268 employees, effective January 9, 2026) and December 2025 (100 employees, effective December 30, 2026). The company's separate Lemoore West plant is not affected. Combined, the two Lemoore plants process roughly 14 million pounds of milk and produce roughly 1.5 million pounds of mozzarella and related products per day, per state water board records.

A Leprino spokesperson, quoted by the Hanford Sentinel, cited the facility's age, the capital cost of upgrading its equipment and systems, high California operating costs, and the company's long-term milk-supply outlook — alongside new capacity from Leprino's $870 million Lubbock, Texas plant (850,000 sq ft, 600 jobs), completing construction in early 2026.

Kings County organized a job fair at the Lemoore Civic Auditorium, with more than 20 employers registered to meet affected workers. The plant remains under Leprino's ownership; Lemoore's mayor said the city would help find a new use for the building if the company sells it.

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

- **Jobs:** 368 total across both WARN filings. Press coverage mostly rounds this to "over 300"; some coverage puts a single job-fair's attendance at "nearly 80 workers," a figure this archive has not reconciled with the fuller total.
- **Timing:** The first wave (268 jobs) was scheduled for January 9, 2026. No source found confirms whether it occurred on schedule.
- **Site status:** Unresolved. Still owned by Leprino as of the most recent reporting found; no confirmed future use.
- **What happened to the workers:** Beyond the county-run job fair, not documented.
- **Unverified claim, flagged not used as fact:** One outlet's headline calls this a "115-year-old" plant — this may describe the physical site under a prior operator rather than Leprino's own 1950 founding date, but this archive has not independently confirmed the building's age.

Part of a larger pattern

A local news report on this closure noted, in passing, that Lemoore "has already lost a tomato plant and a grain mill." The tomato plant is **Olam's 2020 Lemoore closure**, now independently confirmed in this archive. The grain mill is a new lead with no name, date, or job count found anywhere else — flagged as an open gap, not yet usable as evidence. Combined with **Del Monte's Hanford closure**, this is the third documented commodity-processing closure to hit this same pair of towns in six years, across three different sub-sectors.

Sources

- **KMPH/FOX26 (Madison Wilber), "Leprino Foods plant closure in Lemoore to impact over 300 jobs,"** November 10, 2025.
- **KMPH/FOX26, "Kings County hosts job fair for workers affected by Leprino Foods closure."**
- **Fresno Bee (Melissa Montalvo), syndicated via Yahoo News, "Major cheese producer closes Fresno-area facility, cuts jobs as it opens Texas site,"** December 26, 2025.
- California EDD WARN report, confirmed directly: Leprino Foods Company, 490 F Street, Lemoore, Kings County — 268 employees (notice 10/23/2025, effective 01/09/2026) and

100 employees (notice 12/15/2025, effective 12/30/2026), both Closure, Permanent. Access: obtained — taken directly from the agency's own filings rather than from a web page.

Full citation detail and source archive: **Data**. Back to **all case studies**.
