Dawn Foods closes its Modesto bakeries — Stanislaus County, 2012

Dawn Foods closed three Modesto bakeries in March 2012, eliminating about 265 jobs and relocating the work out of state — one of two Stanislaus County commodity/food-processing closures that landed within about five months of each other that year, more than a decade before the 2024–2026 wave this project otherwise documents.

265

Jobs eliminated across three bakeries making frozen cakes, cake mixes, and dry-mix bakery products.

5

Months between this closure's announcement and Patterson Vegetable Company's — a 2012 Stanislaus County cluster this project didn't previously know about.

What happened

Dawn Food Products, Inc. (Jackson, Michigan) announced it would close three Modesto bakeries — previously owned by Bunge Foods, producing frozen cakes, cake mixes, and other dry-mix bakery products since 1996 — in March 2012. A secondary WARN tracker lists a notice date of March 10, 2012, covering 265 employees; this archive could not independently verify that filing against the official state WARN report, which does not cover a period this far back.

The company described the move as part of a plan for "enhancing manufacturing operations and increasing efficiency," relocating the work out of state — local TV coverage named Georgia as the destination, citing lower shipping costs. CBS13's report on the announcement noted Stanislaus County's unemployment rate stood at 16.1% that December, and framed this as the second Stanislaus County plant closure announced within the same month — the other being **Patterson Vegetable Company**, whose first WARN notice was filed the following month.

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

- **Jobs:** ~265, per a secondary WARN tracker; not independently confirmed against an official state filing.
- **What happened to the workers:** No source found tracks outcomes for the displaced employees.
- **No street address found:** this archive could not locate the Modesto facility's exact address in any source checked.

Part of a larger pattern

Searching this project's four-county record for the 2000–2020 window — outside the 2020–2026 wave this project otherwise tracks — turned up four previously undocumented closures: **Land O'Lakes' Tulare cheese plant** (2010), this one (March 2012), **Patterson Vegetable Company** (June 2012), and **ConAgra's Hunt-Wesson plant in Helm** (2016). The two 2012 Stanislaus County closures, landing within about five months of each other, are the clearest evidence that the "compounding closures, same county" pattern this project documents for 2024–2026 isn't a new phenomenon — it already happened once, fourteen years earlier, in the same county.

Sources

- Baking Business, "Dawn closing Modesto, Calif., facility." Access: web-blocked — the outlet refuses automated requests, so no URL could be verified for it here.
- **Refrigerated & Frozen Food, "Sara Lee, Dawn closing plants,"** citing the Modesto Bee.
- **CBS13/CBS Sacramento, "Another Plant Scheduled To Close In Struggling Stanislaus County."**
- Secondary WARN tracker (not independently verified against an official state filing — predates this project's local WARN-PDF archive, which starts at fiscal year 2014–2015). Access: not-captured — a public URL exists for this source and this project has not recorded it.

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