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Foremost Farms USA® to Close Chilton Cheese Plant

BARABOO, WI (May 18, 2020) - Foremost Farms USA today announced that it plans to close its Chilton, Wis., manufacturing facility in July 2020.

“Manufacturing footprints continually evolve and change over time as the market changes. We are always reviewing our manufacturing network and looking for ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our operations,” said Greg Schlafer, President & CEO.

“Closing the facility is difficult for us. But in looking at our operations holistically, we don’t think making long-term investments in the plant make strategic sense for our network,” he said. “We have other plants with upgraded technology and optimized logistics that will drive significant cost efficiencies.”

In addition, the market has changed due to COVID-19. Work order volumes from food service clients have decreased in a short period of time creating product over capacity and a sudden production demand drop. “We don’t see an immediate bounce back in cheese orders from food service clients serviced by the location,” said Schlafer.

“This is not a reflection on our employees in Chilton. This is a business decision that has nothing to do with their performance, which has been excellent. We are committed to treating our employees with respect and dignity and will be working with them through this transition.” The company will be working through the details of a severance package in the coming weeks.

Built in the 1940s, the Chilton plant makes Italian cheeses including Provolone which is sold into the foodservice market for sandwiches. The 53 employees who work at the location were informed of the company’s plans earlier today.

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