

## CONAGRA FOODS LAYS OFF PRIOR TO CLOSURE



When it comes to the name ConAgra Foods Inc. the odds are good that you have not heard that name at all before. The odds are good however that you have heard about one of the products that the company makes. ConAgra Foods Inc. is the company behind foods such as: Banquet, Chef Boyardee, Egg Beaters, Hunts, Pam, and Wesson. The company, which as you can imagine has several facilities, is getting ready to let go of between 230 and 250 of the worker at its plant at Batesville. No matter which way it goes the layoffs will be enough to qualify as a mass layoff action. For those of you who are not familiar with the concept a mass layoff action occurs according to the federal government's [definition](#) when, " mass layoff actions that result in workers being separated from their jobs. Monthly mass layoff numbers are from establishments which have at least 50 initial claims for unemployment insurance (UI) filed against them during a 5-week period. Extended mass layoff numbers (issued quarterly) are from a subset of such establishments—where private sector nonfarm employers indicate that 50 or more workers were separated from their jobs for at least 31 days." The workers who will be cut from the ConAgra Foods Inc. are, given some extra time to figure out their next move. The layoff notices will not go into affect until an undetermined date in the month of July. While less than 60 days may not be a very long span of time, in the current long term economic down turn to get your resume up to date, being putting in applications and go an interview or two, but at least it will give some of the workers a chance to make a real plan for the radical change to their lives that is coming when all is said and done. This lead time is a condition of any mass layoff, as the government believes that this gives workers, and the surrounding community some time to brace for the impending loss of jobs before it actually happens. The layoff is the result of a plant closure. ConAgra Foods Inc. is looking to shut down its facility in Batesville, and instead move it to the state of Missouri. The facility currently makes frozen dinners for the company. The reason for the decision to move the facility has quite simply, not been explained by the company. Though it is likely that this is actually a consolidation of the existing facilities or a move that has been induced with tax breaks by the receiving state. The management of the city of Batesville was quick to minimize the amount of damage that this closure will have on the relatively small community. Citing another factory in the area, which is actually hiring at the current moment, the city's leaders seemed to be optimistic about the chances of the workers finding new positions before they were out of a job due to the layoffs, or at least in a short span of time on unemployment.

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