

## **Kellogg adding 180 jobs in Cary**

### **Crackers and snacks are in demand, giving the company a boost**

Vicki Lee Parker, Staff Writer

Cary is gaining jobs because Kellogg is selling more snacks.

The company best known as the largest U.S. cereal maker plans to expand its Cary factory, where it makes Cheez-It crackers and other snack foods, adding 180 workers.

Kellogg has increased advertising of its snack brands and needs to make more to keep up with growing demand.

The new jobs will bring total employment at the 450,000-square-foot facility to about 800. The expansion will make the Cary plant the largest of Kellogg's 25 manufacturing sites in the country, said spokeswoman Thuy-An Wilkins.

The company chose to expand the Cary plant because that's where it was already producing products that are selling well, Wilkins said. The Cary plant manufactures Keebler and Cheez-It crackers, Zoo animal crackers, and Austin cookie and cracker sandwiches.

Kellogg products have become more popular as the Battle Creek, Mich.-based company boosts marketing and continues to innovate its products. For example, this year Kellogg said it was trying to reformulate popular brands such as Pop-Tarts and Apple Jacks to comply with more stringent nutritional standards.

Sandy Jordan, economic development director for the Cary Chamber of Commerce, said he worked with Kellogg for two months -- selling it on the strong local work force and other features -- before the company agreed to expand the plant.

"The project was very competitive," Jordan said. "They were looking at other facilities that they owned."

Kellogg was not offered any incentives from Wake County or the state, Jordan said. The company will receive training assistance from the state community college system.

The expansion is a boon for Cary, which wants to have a broad foundation of employers, and the factory, which at its peak employed 1,200 workers.

The plant was owned by Austin Quality Foods, which was bought by Keebler Foods in 2000 for \$250 million. Kellogg acquired Keebler in 2001 for more than \$4 billion.

The company is in a strong position to stand out in the competitive snack industry, especially as it spends more money to increase sales, said David J. Adelman, an analyst with Morgan Stanley in New York.

Wilkins said Kellogg is adding a new shift at the Cary plant and plans to start reviewing applications for hourly manufacturing and managerial jobs in the next few weeks.

The company also is planning a career fair to find new workers, Wilkins said. For now, Wilkins said that job seekers can apply through the state Employment Security Commission. Managers can apply through Kellogg's Web site.

The company employs about 26,000 worldwide.

In 2006, Kellogg had sales of nearly \$11 billion from its convenience foods, including cookies, crackers, toaster pastries, cereal bars, fruit snacks, frozen waffles and veggie foods. The company's brands include Kellogg's, Keebler, Pop-Tart, Eggo, Nutri-Grain, and Special K.

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