

COMPANY ANNOUNCEMENT - CHARD

Francois Legrain, Chief Executive of Oscar Mayer said:

“Consulting our colleagues on a potential closure has been a desperately difficult decision to come to. We believe we have exhausted every avenue to continue future production at Chard, and currently we are unable to see a way to make the economics of this site work in such a challenging market.”

“Oscar Mayer fully recognises its responsibility to the local community and sincerely regrets the distress and disappointment this move may cause. This closure, should it occur, is no reflection on the talent and capability of our dedicated staff, who have worked exceptionally hard to help us increase efficiency, for which we remain extremely grateful.

“I only hope it’s of some reassurance that every measure will be taken to assist our colleagues in their search for meaningful alternative employment, should the time come.

“Until any decision is finalised, we are determined to continue to provide the highest standard of production to meet our valued customers’ demands.”

ENDS

About Oscar Mayer

Oscar Mayer has been at the forefront of own-brand packaged ready-meals in the UK since 1985 and is a long-standing partner to many leading UK supermarket chains.

The Chard sites have been part of the Oscar Mayer Group since its origin and is the smallest of Oscar Mayer’s manufacturing units.

On 22 October 2020, Oscar Mayer informed its staff, customers and suppliers of its intention to enter into consultation with its employees over the potential closure of its sites in Chard, Somerset, over the next 12 months, with the intended transfer of production to its other UK sites.

Oscar Mayer currently employs 860 staff at its Chard sites, each of whom is sadly now at risk of redundancy. The consultation period will commence on 10th November and will be subject to a minimum of 45 days consultation, after which a final decision on the future of Oscar Mayer in Chard will be made.

In an attempt to save local jobs, Oscar Mayer management has been looking at developing alternative sites in the area – such as at Millfield – but, in the end, this was not deemed feasible for the company’s future needs.

The Covid-19 pandemic has undoubtedly changed the market for ready meals as people have had more time to cook from scratch during lockdown. Oscar Mayer is far from alone in having to meet these challenges.

Oscar Mayer continues to employ over 2,000 people in its alternative sites in the UK whose jobs are unaffected by this announcement.

For further information please contact:

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