

New Hostess Owner Prepares To Re-Start GA Plant

The Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ga. (AP) — The smell of snack cakes [could soon return](#) [1] to the Dolly Madison plant in Columbus as Hostess Brands LLC prepares to relaunch production.

Hostess Brands LLC spokesman Michael Cramer said workers will be resuming production by July. He said crews are now getting the facility ready to bake goods again, including testing equipment that's been idle since November.

The bakery had been silent since its former owner, Dallas-based Hostess Brands Inc. closed its entire U.S. operation in November — factories, distribution centers and retail stores, The Columbus Ledger-Enquirer reported (<http://bit.ly/1bx7IKv> [2]). In Columbus, that suddenly left 426 workers without a job.

Hostess Brands LLC, owned by investment firms Apollo Global Management and Metropoulos & Co., purchased the local plant out of U.S. Bankruptcy Court in April.

Cramer declined to give few additional details about the Dolly Madison Bakery's revival, including the number of employees now on site. The plant's parking lot on Wednesday was roughly half full with workers' vehicles

"We don't give out employee counts as this is ever changing as we staff up," he said. "We have given the city and state numbers that we believe we'll get to over a couple years." That would be employing 200 people initially, then adding more to the payroll as business demand increases. Cramer in April said the local workforce could reach 300 eventually.

He also would not say what products the Columbus facility will be making. In the past, it has baked the popular Twinkies, Zingers and Ding Dongs snacks, along with Dolly Madison fruit pies, doughnuts and other cake products.

Aside from the Hostess and Twinkies brands, Thomasville-based Flowers Foods purchased the bankrupt company's bread line, including the popular Wonder Bread brand, for \$360 million.

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