

Food maker good for

Amy's Kitchen to set up shop in Greenville, buy from area farmers

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Natural and organic foods brand Amy's Kitchen is scheduled to announce a new plant in Greenville County and more than 700 jobs today in news that's

big enough to bring Gov. Nikki Haley to town.

The California-based firm plans to spend \$63 million launching the food processing and distribution facility in the former Sara Lee Corp. bakery along Interstate 85.

It will be the East Coast beachhead for fast-growing Amy's Kitchen, whose frozen and pre-packaged vegetarian foods are carried by grocery chains around the country and abroad, including Walmart and Whole Foods Market.

The facility will mean new business opportunities for area growers because Amy's Kitchen buys

fruit and vegetables locally as much as possible.

Amy's Kitchen, based in Petaluma near San Francisco, uses all-natural and organic ingredients in its dishes. Its products include pot pies, pocket sandwiches, pizzas, soups, enchiladas, chili, pasta sauce and foods from Asia and In-

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700 jobs

WHAT DOES AMY'S KITCHEN MAKE?

Amy's makes more than 160 natural and organic products, many of which are lactose free, cholesterol free, gluten free, light in sodium and non-dairy/vegan:

- Frozen entrées, pizzas and convenience foods
- Canned soups, beans and chilis
- Jarred sauces and salsas

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JOBS

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The family-owned firm was founded in 1987 by Rachel and Andy Berliner and is named after their daughter, Amy, according to the company's website.

The two launched their business in a converted barn on a ranch in Sonoma County. Amy's Kitchen now makes more than 160 products and produces up to 5 million meals a month, according to its website.

It currently produces its products at facilities in Santa Rosa, Calif., and Medford, Oregon.

Sara Lee used the 120,000-square-foot building to make bagels and pizza dough but closed its bakery in 2009 as the economy struggled.

Mark Rudolph, chief financial officer of Amy's Kitchen, is expected to join Haley for the 10 a.m. announcement at County Square.