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REFERENCE

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✓ 30 people lose jobs at Harmony

By GUY LASNIER

Sentinel business editor

SANTA CRUZ — Citing a downturn in the snack foods business, Glico Harmony Foods said it laid off 30 people Thursday.

The layoffs represent about 8 percent of the 375 people who work in Santa Cruz, and come from all departments, said Donna Ferris, human resources manager.

"It is with a great deal of pain that we announce that as a part of restructuring the company," said company president James Honda in a memo to employees. Honda said efforts to restructure the business since Glico took over Harmony Foods have not been able to offset the larger impact from the recession.

Osaka, Japan-based Glico is a multi-national foods company. It bought locally founded Harmony in 1990.

California's snack tax has also hurt the business, Ferris said. The tax ends Dec. 1, the result of a ballot initiative. Company officials hope that will stimulate sales.

Employees who lost their jobs will receive severance packages ranging from six weeks to 26 weeks of pay, depending on length of service, Ferris said. Benefits will be paid for up to three months.