

Hundreds of jobs threatened at pig farming and pork products maker Pilgrim's UK

Hundreds of jobs are at risk at a billion pound-turnover pig farming and pork products business.

Pilgrim's UK plans to close its meat factories in Coalville, north west Leicestershire, and Bury St Edmunds, in Suffolk, under cost-cutting plans. A site in Ashton-under-Lyne near Manchester could be cut to four days operating a week.

It is understood that more than 300 workers at the Mantle Road site in [Coalville](#) face losing their jobs, while hundreds more could be made redundant at the Suffolk plant. Management said the closures were "essential" after the pork market was hit by a [combination of lockdowns, soaring production costs and plummeting prices.](#)

The 2021 accounts for parent company Pilgrim's Pride Ltd showed revenues down from £1.34 billion to £1.05 billion and pre-tax losses of almost £21 million compared to a pre-tax profit of £6.6 million a year before.

The plans could see production at Coalville move to Pilgrim's plants in Corsham, Wiltshire, or King's Lynn in Norfolk. Consultations are getting under way and staff are being offered options including transferring to other sites.

Rachel Baldwin, vice president of HR for Pilgrim's UK, said: "The decision to propose the closure of our Coalville and Bury St Edmunds sites and put a number of roles at risk at Ashton has not been taken lightly, but is unfortunately essential to help our business recover and secure a sustainable future for all of our team members across the UK.

“Clearly, this announcement will have major implications, not just for our site, but the entire local community, and we will do everything we can to minimise the impact of these proposals, working closely with local authorities and agencies to support our team members through what we know will be an extremely difficult period.”

Earlier this month Pligrim’s UK president Ivan Siqueira, who joined the business in January, said: “Market conditions in 2021 and the first half of 2022 were the most severe the sector has known, and conditions remain challenging.

“In the face of these challenges, our commitment to backing British farmers and delivering the highest quality and most innovative food to our customers has been unwavering.

“To enable us to deliver, we have evolved, diversified and invested in becoming the best and most sustainable food business in the UK and will continue to identify ways to operate even more efficiently and effectively.”

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