

Pet treat company may fill Del Monte building

By Hannah Yang

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SLEEPY EYE — Almost a year after Del Monte Foods announced the closing of its canning plant in the city, a pet treat manufacturer is in talks to take over the facility. The closing of the Del Monte plant in the southern Minnesota town affected about 360 employees.

Minnesota-based Chasing Our Tails has signed a purchase agreement with Seneca Foods to buy the almost 215,000-square-foot facility.

Chasing Our Tails plans to expand packaging operations and business lines. Founded in 2009, the company produces dog treats and chews found in specialty stores.

CEO Elena Kalogeropoulos said in a statement that once complete, the “acquisition would triple the company’s footprint and support expanded research, development and manufacturing.”

Chasing Our Tails representatives estimate the deal could generate about 50 jobs in the next couple of years.

Company President Steve Trachtenberg, of Tracy, said Dec. 9 that the purchase agreement was the first step in a long process before they can claim ownership of the facility.

“I’m excited by the longterm potential for growth and expansion in Sleepy Eye,” Trachtenberg said. “I look forward to working with local community leaders to understand the myriad of business opportunities made possible by the awakening of this sleeping giant.”

The Sleepy Eye plant was a significant employer and had been a part of the Brown County town’s identity since 1930. Del Monte was a draw for seasonal and migrant workers who filled most of the plant’s jobs.