

They're bucking the odds

Story Body: By Susan Goracke of the Daily Courier

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CAVE JUNCTION — At a time when many businesses are cutting jobs, scaling back or hunkering down to survive, Taylor's Sausage is on an economic roll and bursting at the seams.

In February, the company poured a concrete slab that will add more than 8,000 square feet to its current 10,500-square-foot processing plant.

"We're continually banging into each other," said Charles "Chuck" Taylor, patriarch of the family-owned business that employs 65 people full or part time, including 11 family members in three generations.

The addition, expected to be ready this summer, will double the plant's processing, packaging and game processing areas. It will accommodate another large cooler, a new spice room, a new laundry facility and a new loading and receiving area.

With added capacity, Taylor expects to begin filling the large orders he's had to put on hold, plus he expects to begin marketing Taylor's products to a wider range of retail stores and restaurants.

More room to work and more orders to fill also mean more employees. Taylor figures he'll be hiring an additional 10 people this year.

"Business increased 15 percent over last year," said son Scott Taylor, who oversees Taylor's Sausage Country Store, the retail end of the business that opened in 2002 at 202 S. Redwood Highway. "We had the best January we ever had in both the factory and Country Store, and February looks even better.

"I guess people still have to eat," he answered, when asked about his company's success despite the economy. "You might not need a brand new shiny flat-screen TV, but you do need to put meat on the table."

Travelers between Interstate 5 and the Oregon coast make up a sizable portion of the Country Store's customers who stop in for breakfast, lunch or dinner, or to pick up packages of Taylor's specialty sausage, jerky or smoked turkey and ham.

But it's the locals who are responsible for making Friday nights — when the Country Store brings in musical or comedy entertainment — into standing-room-only affairs.

The dining room seats about 85, but some Friday nights, the crowd can grow to 100, stretching the Country Store's tiny kitchen and small restrooms. After this year's plant expansion, Scott Taylor hopes to add onto the rear of the store to increase the size of the kitchen and restrooms, add more display area, storage and seating, plus create a larger dance area.

For more information, call the plant at 592-4185 or the Country Store at 592-5358 or visit www.taylorsausage.com online.

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