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JIM DAVENPORT - Associated Press - Associated Press

Go ahead and call South Carolina the tire king.

Tire companies have promised 2,900 jobs and nearly \$2 billion in investment this year. The state employs more tire industry workers than any other in the country.

The good news is coming as tire manufacturers recover from the recession and deal with factors that include getting closer to customers and cutting costs.

On Thursday, Continental AG announced it would invest \$500 million over 10 years into a plant that will employ 1,600 workers in Sumter. Bridgestone America last month announced more than \$1 billion will be invested in creating 850 jobs in Aiken County.

In Sumter, the jobs are seen as a way to broaden an economy that for years has had an Air Force base as a mainstay.

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